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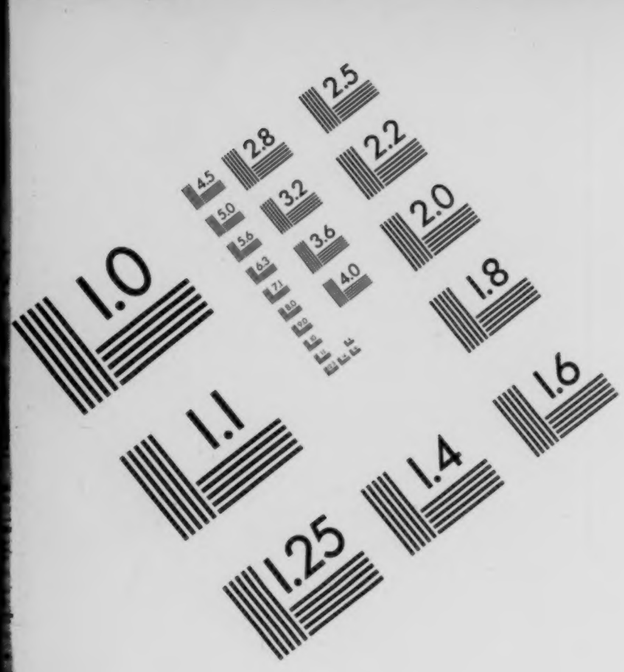
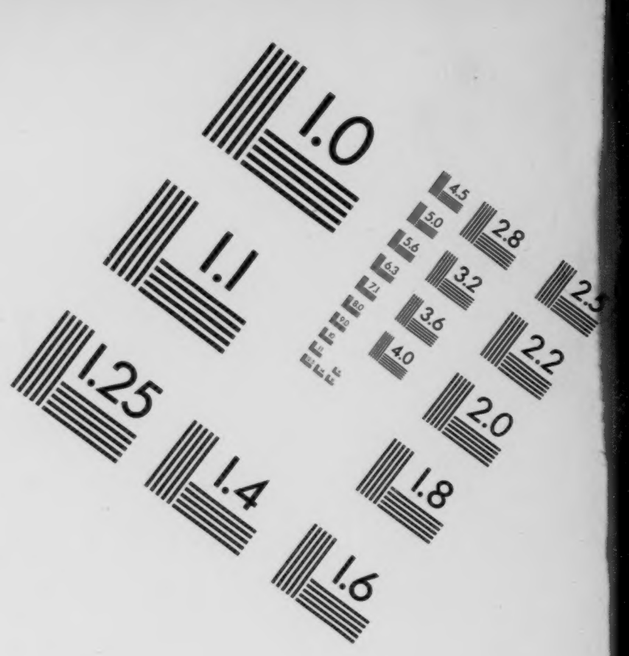
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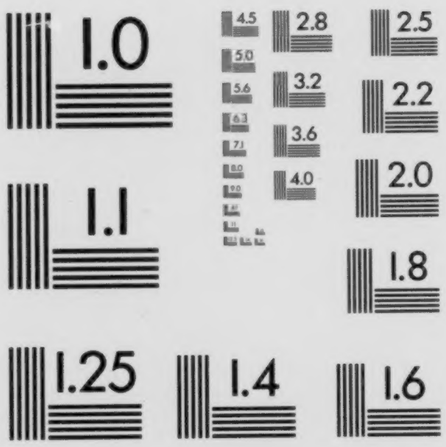

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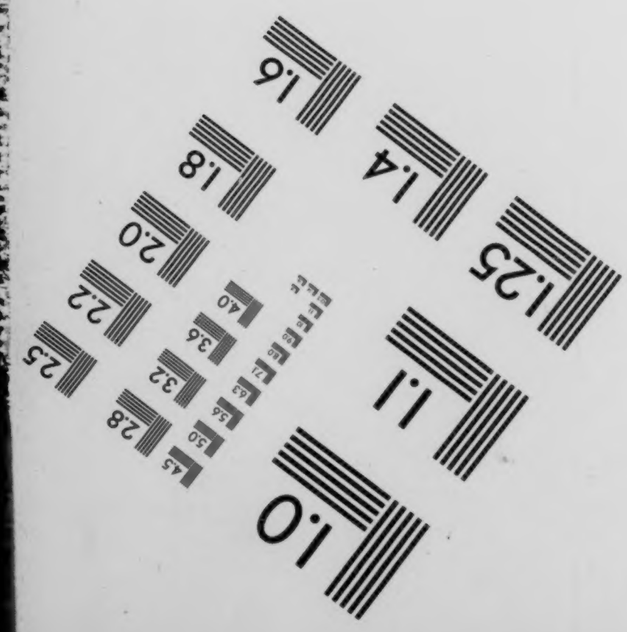
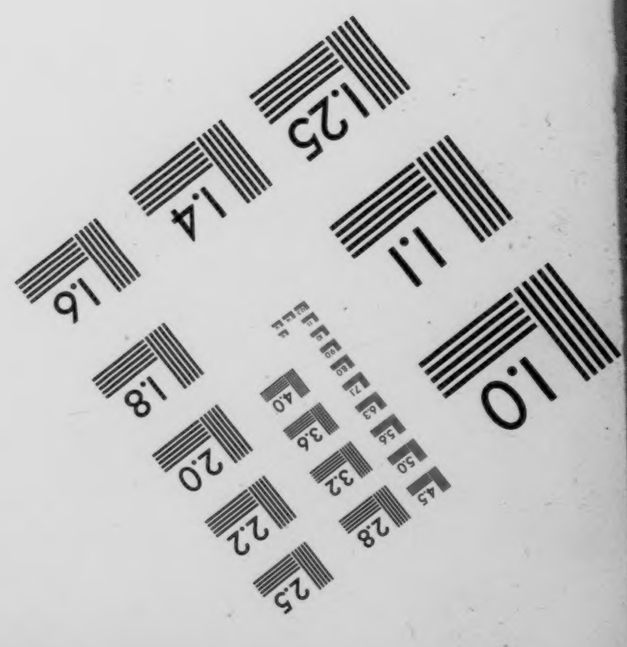
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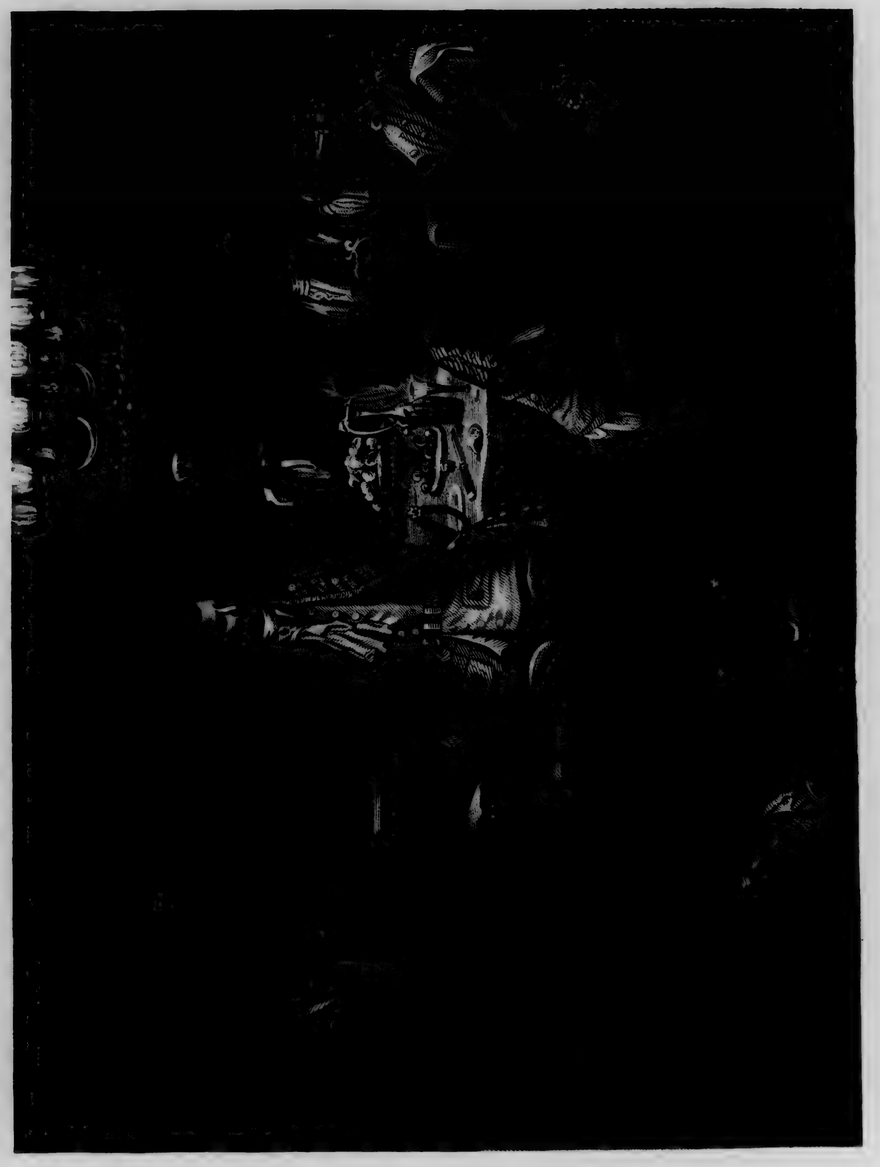



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PETER THE GREAT, BEHEADING THE STRELITZ
IN THE PRESENCE OF HIS NOBLES

THE HISTORY
OF THE
RUSSIAN EMPIRE.



Russian Cavalry Encounter.

THE [illegible] IN PRINTING AND [illegible] ING COMPANY, LIMITED.

THE

HISTORY OF

RUSSIA

FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE EMPIRE

TO THE

WAR WITH TURKEY IN 1877.

BY

H. TYRRELL,

AND

HENRY A. HAUKEIL,

Late Press Correspondent in the East.

With Illustrations and Maps.

THE LONDON PRINTING AND PUBLISHING COMPANY, LIMITED,

LONDON AND NEW YORK.

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INTRODUCTION.

WITH the abolition of serfdom, Old Russia disappeared for ever, and New Russia arose from its grave. The old distinction of classes into nobles and bondsmen was merged into that beautiful weapon of constitutional despotism, known on the continent as universal compulsory service in the army. Henceforth, instead of fighting for their king, emperor, or czar, the people of such happy lands now fight for their country only. It is true, the common populace is so blinded by its prejudices, that it is apt not to understand the difference as long as the country is under the immediate and irresponsible control of its whilom sovereign; and Russia forms no exception to this rule. Consequently, though the form has somewhat changed, the material remains the same; and where it has altered it has been sagaciously made use of to fit into the new order of things, and to form an integral portion of the new system. Thus the result of abolishing serfage was the creation of a fresh national feeling; the ex-bondsman felt that he had a stake in his newly-acquired soil; whilst, on the other hand, the noble felt that a new danger was threatening him by the growth of this national consciousness and the growing conviction of the ex-serf that he really was a unit in the empire, and that many units piled up on the top of the other, amounted to a very considerable sum, and no mean force if united in action. To counterbalance these ideas it was necessary to shape certain grooves for the new national feeling to run in. Thus three principal channels were fashioned. 1. Compulsory military service. 2. The institution of communal self-government. 3. The reunion of the Schismatics and other dissidents under the paternal care of the Orthodox Greek Church, as represented by the Holy Synod, as represented by the czar, who in turn represents the Deity himself, in Russia. These grooves having been duly fashioned, the next thing to be done was to furnish a reservoir for them to run into—a vast reservoir that would contain the national flood for long years to come, and prevent its overflowing the channels cut for it, and causing serious damage at home. This great goal was set up in the shape of Panslavism; the object of Panslavism being the reunion of all the various Slav races in Austria, in Prussia, and in Turkey, under the sceptre of him who rules at St. Petersburg. The attention of the freshly-made freeman was thus to be diverted from home matters to foreign affairs, and his black bread spread with the butter of glory abroad rather than with the fat of the land at home, for which it appears that the noble has a remarkable fancy Of the working of this new system, of the bad that exists, and the good that is latent in the communal system; of the atrocities of the Holy Synod; of the burden the army imposes upon the nation, we shall speak in the proper place. The above rapid sketch is simply designed to give in a few words the character of the change that has come over Russia, and made her again an enemy and a standing menace to the peace of Europe, and the cause of liberty, commerce, and progress. And if, as Gœthe says,

"The gods against ignorance battle in vain,"

it may well be imagined what a task Europe has before her, when she is called upon

to war against the bottomless ignorance of eighty million souls, all well armed with breech-loaders and Krupp guns. Under such circumstances, it may well be asked why Europe should submit to a continual threat in order to enable the Muscovite nobility to preserve their station against those principles of individual liberty and local self-government they are so proud of pointing to as the lever that is to raise Slavonic Russia on the ruins of an effete western civilisation, and to regenerate the sluggish blood of worn-out Europe? In short, why should Europe allow the Russian leaders and rulers to impede the development of liberty at home, by imposing a tyrannic rule on races abroad, under the catchpenny title of national glory? Is the country too small and too poor to support its teeming population? Is it a kind of magnified Montenegro, that must perforce extend its boundaries to feed its starving population? If so, there would, perhaps, be some excuse for its periodical attacks on somebody or other—on the Khan of Khiva yesterday, the Sultan of Turkey to-day, and probably the Shah of Persia to-morrow. But we find exactly the contrary to be the case; for whilst we in Europe count our inhabitants to the square mile in some cases by thousands, and in most cases by the hundred, we find in Russia a population of about ten to the square mile. Let any Englishman try to stretch his imagination to the wonderful extent of fancying himself in the possession of more than 309,760 square yards of soil—or the use of it—and he will have an accurate idea of the position of the Russian in his native land. Is there any biped, be he white, yellow, or black, belonging to the working classes—to the classes to whom labour is a necessity—who would not be satisfied with such a possession, or at any rate be content to increase it by legitimate means, and thus in possession of material independence, would not also be in possession of his moral independence, and defy the intrigues of those who will not work themselves, but buy up streams of living blood and bushels of money in exchange for a few tinsel tatters of impalpable, evanescent glory?

The reply is self-evident; so self-evident that the Russian government has never propounded the question, and works upon a system by which they hope it will never be proposed. What this system is we now propose showing, for it is the most important element foreign nations have to consider in their relations with Russia. It is the government that does everything, without consulting the people. There is no appeal to the nation. What the czar and his nobles decree has to be performed, and is performed, in the same unreasoning, slavish spirit of obedience, which the liberation of the serfs has in no way changed. In dealing with Russia, we have to deal with a crafty, unprincipled, Asiatic government, and a mass of ignorance in all things that concern the Russian's relations with foreign nations and ideas. Not that there are not communities upon communities who cultivate the soil in peace, and successfully; whose villages are all that could be desired from an agricultural and social point of view. Of these there are many; and there is an amount of good-nature and common sense in the Russian peasant that only needs time and opportunity for development to make him one of the most peaceable and industrious of men. But just for this very reason, *because* he has the capacity for attaining material and moral independence, the vast army of drones do all they can to stifle these good qualities in a mass of bigotry, ignorance, and superstition. Be it well understood—what we protest against is not the existence of the people of Russia, but of

the Russian government, which is worse than the Turkish rule, for the reason that the Russian government has not the excuse which the Turkish has, of being a weak government that has fallen into the hands of the Jews and Greeks.

As we shall show in a future chapter, the Russians discovered that the Crimean war had opened the eyes of the people to the fact, that Russia was not altogether the blessed paradise her rulers tried to make them believe, and that an entire re-constitution of the government system was necessary to satisfy the growing discontent. How to do this and yet alter nothing; how to give liberty and yet at the same time to curtail it, was no easy task. But it was accomplished.

The czar, whose official title is Autocrat—Self-ruler—of all the Russias, is the fountain-head of all legislation. All laws proceed from him; he alone makes them; he alone can unmake them. This is done as follows:—All decrees of the czar published by the Senate are Laws; all decrees published by other departments of the State are only to be regarded as Decrees; and theoretically, disobedience to these decrees, or ukases, can only be punished when such punishment can be legally justified, and it is proved that the ukase in question was known to the culprit. As a matter of fact, there is, practically, no distinction between the two. Administrative ukase, or imperial senatorial law, they both amount to the same thing, and centre in the irresponsible czar.

The executive power is also in the hands of the czar, and all departments act in his name. The Minister of Police, for instance, is responsible to no one but the czar. A man disappears; inquiries show that he has been arrested by the police; there the matter ends, and it depends entirely upon the police or the czar whether he ever reappears. Life under such circumstances would be insupportable, were it not that the communes retain a species of self-government that invests them with a show of liberty. Of the nature of this liberty we shall speak in the proper place; suffice it to say now, that the system is based on the principle, not of a division of property, as the Socialists try to make out, but upon the division of the use of the soil, which is a very different matter altogether. It is, in short, a system that fully employs the spare time and all the spare brains of the peasantry to carry out, and prevents them from agitating for that representation of the people in the councils of the nation which is the first step to liberty. To keep the peasantry in this circumscribed oasis of local liberty in the commune, or *mir*, and prevent their union with each other in the cause of universal and general liberty, is, of course, the chief object and aim of the nobility. Compulsory service is one of these means. The church affords another. To bring all the various sects of Russia under the control of the parish priest, who is under the control of the Holy Synod, and who can command the assistance of the civil authorities—aye, and even of the military authorities, if he sees fit—is the great object, for the attainment of which such measures have been taken as those that furnished the material for the Blue Book published recently by the British government. An imperial ukase was published in 1871, subjecting all the heterodox, or dissenting, churches to the authority of the Holy Synod. This is equivalent to an act of parliament, in England, placing all the Nonconformists, Catholics, and Jews under the administration and authority of the Church of England. Thus the Uniates were ordered to conform in all respects to the habits of the Orthodox clergy—to alter their churches in conformity with the system adopted by the Orthodox church. Priests obeying

these instructions were to be compensated for any pecuniary losses; disobedient priests to be transferred to some other place, or banished. An inquisitorial commission sat in permanence at Siedlce, before which the clergy were summoned from time to time, and examined as to their conduct. These measures were energetically enforced, but met with great resistance, especially on the part of the inhabitants of Chelm, Lublin, Popil, and Siedlce. On hearing of this, Count Tolstoi gave strict orders that the necessary measures were to be enforced with the utmost rigour, and no benches, organs, rosaries, mass-bells, &c., to be allowed in the churches under any pretence whatever. Most of the clergy yielded: the peasantry, however, refused to obey this tyrannical order, and many conflicts, resulting in loss of life, occurred in many places. At Myncievicz, the peasants defended their church by force, but were defeated by the Cossacks, and every one of the congregation summoned to sign forthwith a declaration of his conversion to the Orthodox church. On their refusing, each man received fifty strokes of the knout, every woman twenty-five, and every child, without distinction of age or sex, ten blows. One woman, who was especially energetic in her refusal, received more than one hundred blows, and is described as having her flesh completely mashed. These brutalities were taking place just at the time of the wedding of the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh, and created so painful a feeling at St. Petersburg that they were suspended for a time. In fact, so great was the indignation aroused amongst the foreign community, that it was openly wondered at that an English prince could ally himself with a power guilty of such atrocities; and it is said, on apparently good authority, that the coolness existing between the Duke of Edinburgh and the Russian royal family is due to a very energetic expression of opinion by the duke on the subject. This was in January, 1874. In February the atrocities recommenced; villages were occupied by troops of Cossacks, who plundered the wretched peasants, and "hunted them down" when they took refuge and bivouacked in the forests. Fines to a large amount were imposed upon the congregation, their crops trampled down, and, in one case, six hundred married men banished to Cherson (on the 14th February, 1876), and employed in hard labour—stone-breaking—all day long, whilst their wives and families remained at home, with a number of Cossacks quartered upon them. Under such circumstances, it is not surprising to read, in Count Tolstoi's report (1877), that no less than 237,000 Russian subjects saw the error of their ways in 1876, and were converted to the Orthodox faith.

Having thus undergone a preliminary preparation for their subsequent complete subjection to the autocrat government, which is supposed to represent paternal solicitude and authority, the Russian is then put into the drilling machine provided by the military system, and which ever afterwards holds him in its iron grasp. When the man who stole a loaf excused the act by saying he must live, the magistrate appropriately replied, that he did not see the necessity at all. On the same principle, the existence of the Russian is only regarded as a necessity in so far as he forms an element in the army which keeps the government and its friends on its legs. Consequently it is necessary that the army should be subjected to the strictest discipline, and be as perfect as possible. A sketch of the machine is therefore necessary to understand the working of the system.

Thus we find that the Russian infantry consists of forty-eight divisions, each

division comprising two brigades of two regiments each. In ten of these divisions the regiments have four battalions of 1,000 each; in the other thirty-eight the regiment has only three battalions, or 3,000 men. Thus the effective strength of the infantry amounts to 616 battalions of 1,000 men each, or 616,000 men. It is, however, intended to extend the four-battalion system to all the regiments, whereby another 152,000 men will be gained. To this effective must be added eight brigades of Rifles, with an effective of 28,000, and a special corps described as "line battalions." Of these there are thirty-four, pretty widely scattered: thus there are two in the province of Orenburg, ten in Siberia, fifteen in Turkestan, and seven in the Caucasus. Several have, however, been incorporated with infantry regiments to form fourth battalions. These line battalions have done excellent service during the last campaign in Central Asia. Their total effective amounts to 35,650 men. Recapitulating the totals given above, we find for the regular infantry a general total of 682 battalions, with 679,600 men. Of irregular infantry, there is extremely little—viz., the nine Orenburg battalions and two battalions of Kuban Cossacks. The former can, in case of need, be employed in Turkestan and Central Asia. The Kuban battalions, the number of which could be increased in time of war, are chiefly made use of in Russian expeditions to Asia Minor.

The regular cavalry consists of fifty-six regiments, each comprising four field squadrons and one reserve squadron. The strength of the field squadron, whether on war or peace footing, is invariably the same—sixteen non-commissioned officers, four trumpeters, and 128 men: the effective of the regiment (officers included) is 629 men; and therefore the total strength of the regular cavalry is 35,224. This number is small when compared with that of the infantry; and the War Office itself seems to admit as much, as it has supplemented the fifty-six regular horse regiments by twenty-two regiments of Cossacks.

In the event of mobilisation the Don Cossacks have to supply sixty-two regiments: sixteen of these are incorporated with the divisions of regular cavalry, four form a separate division, and two remain available. A Cossack regiment consists of 894 men, four sotnias (the two regiments of Cossacks of the Guard to be formed in the event of mobilisation are 1,134 strong). The addition of the Cossacks to the regular cavalry brings up its strength to 55,372 men. Of late years the Russian government has laboured hard to assimilate the Cossacks to the regulars as regards drill and tactics—an experiment the value of which has yet to be tested, for the free-and-easy habits of the Cossacks, who may be regarded as the Bashi-Bazouks of Russia, are ill-adapted to the strict discipline of the rest of the army. The additional forty regiments of Don Cossacks are never called out save in time of war. They are divided into two categories. The twenty regiments which form the first category must have their arms, horses, and equipment in constant readiness, so as to be able to take the field at a moment's notice; the men of the twenty regiments forming the second category are not subjected to any such obligation. In addition to the above sixty-two regiments forming the contingent of the Don Cossacks, there are ten regiments of Kuban Cossacks, five regiments of Terek Cossacks, nine of Ural Cossacks, fifteen of Orenburg, and three of Astrakhan Cossacks, besides several contingents from provinces too distant to be

available in a European war. Here then we have the total mass of the Russian cavalry:—

	Squadrons or Sotnias.	Sabres.
Regular Cavalry	224	35,000
Cossacks embodied with the regulars ..	132	20,000
Don Cossacks, 1st and 2nd categories ..	240	36,000
Other Cossacks	236	35,000
	832	126,000

Without going into technical details, it may be stated that the Russian artillery is so organised as to provide a proportion of three guns for every 1,000 infantry.

The following tabular statement will give a view of its effectives:—

	Batteries.	Guns.	Men.
Foot Artillery	288 ..	2,304 ..	73,500
Horse and Cossack Artillery ..	34 ..	204 ..	7,650
Sundry Cossack Artillery ..	24 ..	164 ..	6,150
	346	2,672	87,300

The guns of the foot artillery are akin to those of the French artillery before the war: they are of two calibres, four-pounders and nine-pounders. The guns are not to be compared with those of either Germany or Austria. The organisation of the force also leaves much to be desired.

There are eleven battalions of sappers and miners, six half-battalions of pioneers, parks of field engineers, two parks siege ditto, nine telegraph parks, and four battalions of reserve sappers. The total efficiency of the scientific corps is 14,340 men; thus bringing up the total of the army to 907,000 men. In addition, there are about 254,000 "local troops," for garrison duty, and to keep order at home.

As regards the armament of this huge force, it is far from uniform. The infantry have two different kinds of muskets; some corps having the Berdan rifle, others the Krnka musket. Each man is supposed to go into action with sixty rounds of ammunition. It has been recently ordered that an ammunition cart, with reserve ammunition, should follow every battalion into the field. A cart carrying a few trenching tools is attached to each company. The armament of the cavalry is peculiar to Russia. In every corps, with the exception of the dragoons, the first rank are armed with lances; the second rank have neither lance nor revolver, but a Berdan rifle. The dragoons alone have the Krnka musket. The Cossacks are armed with lance, sabre, and musket. The men armed with rifles have twenty rounds of ball-cartridge; those armed with revolvers only eighteen rounds.

The training of the Russian army leaves much to be desired, and the drill seems in a transition state—between the close order of former days, and the loose formation which long-range fire-arms have rendered necessary. The men are fairly trained in marksmanship. Their *sang-froid* is admirable; their movements are possibly not rapid; but they will follow their officers anywhere with unquestioning docility, will take good aim, and not fire without orders. Whoever encounters them will have to deal with a formidable foe.

Nevertheless, there is, unquestionably, a falling-off in the rigid bearing, in the smart performance of movements that used formerly to be a characteristic feature of Russian infantry. There is, perhaps, a little too much of the French *laisser-aller;* and as regards the drill for action in loose order, it is performed without either the precision or dash of the Prussian or Austrian armies. Respecting the cavalry, all that can be said is, that the addition of the Cossacks has deprived it, to some extent, of its gallant and soldierly bearing. The regulars have learnt from the Cossacks their bad habits. The teams of the artillery are excellent, and the movements rapid. There is, however, a great dearth of men able to lay a gun. The distinction between divisional and corps artillery appears to be unknown.—The most important element in an army is its officers; and here great changes have been effected of late years. Formerly, a great many officers got a commission through mere favour; but this abuse has been reformed by the able war minister, General Milutine. No man can now obtain a commission without undergoing a strict examination. To promote the means of military education, General Milutine created "Junker," or, as we should say, cadet schools. These schools, since their creation, have turned out upwards of 10,000 candidates for commissions, and 2,000 cadets duly qualified for commissions now pass through them every year: they remain at the disposition of the State, and get appointments as vacancies occur. In spite of many praiseworthy efforts to raise it, the intellectual level of the officers is not high; but they know the routine of their business thoroughly well, and are regarded generally with respect and affection by their men. As to the question, "Has Russia a general?" it would be difficult to answer it. The march to Khiva, and the more recent campaign in Central Asia, has not revealed the existence of any man of genius in the Russian ranks.

In time of peace the Russian infantry has no ready-formed reserve, with the exception of the skeleton of a battalion of the Reserve Regiment of the Guard, which has to be created in time of war. There is something quite peculiar about this regiment which requires little detail to be made intelligible. When the decree is issued for the mobilisation of the army, it becomes necessary to create 164 battalions of reserves—that is to say, one battalion for each infantry regiment, with the exception of the Guards and the Grenadiers. This latter is the sole four-battalion reserve regiment to be created in case of war: it consists of twelve line companies and four companies of Rifles, the reserve battalions having no Rifle companies. Up to the present time, there exists no machinery in the Russian service for the formation of infantry reserves in peace-time: all that is provided is, that, in the event of the formation of a reserve being deemed advisable, a field-officer, and four officers of lower rank, together with a quartermaster and two clerks belonging to the active or local troops, should be transferred to these reserve battalions. An intention, however, is entertained of drawing up the cadres thoroughly on paper in time of peace; but as there are really no cadres at the command of the government, the question yet remains unsettled. The strength of the reserve battalions of the line and the Guards is estimated at 960 men. To provide the requisite reserves in the event of mobilisation would require 168 battalions, and an effective of 168,000 men. When the mobilisation is decreed, 192 depôt battalions are created for the supply of men to the line, and nine depôt battalions for the Rifles. But a mobilisation in Russia is a matter of no small difficulty, on account of the extent and scanty population of the territory,

the scarcity of communication, and the precautions which require to be taken against the population in Poland and other provinces. The country, indeed, is divided into a certain number of recruiting districts; but as the corps belonging to these districts are generally quartered elsewhere, when the order for mobilisation goes forth, there is a *chassez-croisez* of men and horses all over the empire. As regards the artillery, its mobilisation requires a supplement of 40,000 horses. Under the most favourable circumstances, the mobilisation of the Russian army cannot be effected under from five to six weeks.

Such, in few words, is the character of official Russia. But there is another Russia —the Russia of the masses,—unofficial Russia, which slowly, but surely, is modifying and influencing the government and its principles; so that, even in the army, there is a marked difference between the old generation and the younger, that is much in favour of the latter.

Down to the time of the Crimean war, Russia was an earthly paradise for diplomatists of the old school. Enjoying great social consideration, and living in an almost constant round of splendid festivities, they had only very light and very simple duties to perform. They never required to undertake such complicated operations as calculating the strength of political parties or the force of public opinion. All the springs of government were to be found within a radius of a mile from the Winter Palace; and beyond this small enchanted circle there was nothing for a diplomatist to observe. The czar and his ministers worked the great machine as they pleased, free from control and extraneous advice, and the nation confined itself to unquestioning obedience. If any voice did happen to rise from the crowd, it was very soon silenced. Once, in a moment of heroic self-forgetfulness, a rash newspaper editor ventured to hint that some new seats in the imperial garden were not quite in perfect taste; but the all-seeing eye of the press-censor was upon him, and he was severely punished for venturing to criticise seats that had been fortunate enough to obtain the imperial approval!

These halcyon days for old-fashioned diplomatists and statesmen of the Metternich type are now beginning to be numbered amongst the things of the past. The czar, though still as autocratic as ever in the legal sense of the term, no longer drives the machine by his own unaided energy. There are still, it is true, no regularly constituted political parties, no National Assembly; but the great silent inert mass, composed of eighty millions of human beings, has begun to show, here and there, symptoms of human intelligence and human will, and the government is no longer at liberty to act entirely as it pleases. Russia has now, in fact, many of the blessings which belong to advanced political development, and which complicate enormously the art of government. There is a press which, though liable to be gagged occasionally, criticises things much more important than rustic seats in imperial gardens; and a public which, though enthusiastically loyal to the head of the State, insists sometimes on having opinions of its own. There was a Slavonic Committee which supplied the Servians with a commander-in-chief, and sent several thousand volunteers to fight the Turks; and there are even secret societies which aim at overthrowing the government and inaugurating a Socialistic millennium. In a word, this is the unofficial Russia, which exercises a certain influence on the government, and which must therefore be taken into consideration by diplomatists and statesmen in their endeavours to forecast the policy of the country.

This new political factor, and the part it has played during the last twenty years, will be described in its proper place; but we may give here a short account given on excellent authority by the *Examiner*, of that section of official and unofficial Russia which has its centre in Moscow, and which has recently played a prominent part.

"Between St. Petersburg and Moscow there exists an antagonism of long standing. Ever since its foundation, St. Petersburg has striven to be a European city, and to adopt all the products of West-European civilisation. Moscow, on the contrary, strives to be distinctively Russian, and affects to look down on her younger rival as a half-caste *parvenu*. Abandoned by the imperial family and the heads of administration, she glories in her ancient monuments and her ancient spirit, and boasts that she still holds the first place in the veneration and love of the Russian people. All Moscovites are more or less imbued with this Platonic hostility to the capital on the Neva, and love to reproach its inhabitants—the ministers and other official dignitaries not excepted—with gross ignorance of Russia and the true Russian character; but when they come to discuss the present and future of their country, they are by no means unanimous. We easily distinguish amongst them two groups or *coteries*, holding peculiar views, which distinguish them from each other. The one is composed of the Slavophils, the other may be called the Moscovites proper. These groups are often confounded, and the confusion is excusable, for many worthy Moscovites themselves do not clearly distinguish between the two, and consider that they belong to both; but in reality there is a decided distinction, for the leaders are by no means at one, and do not generally entertain very friendly relations. The chief difference may be briefly stated. The Slavophils are the representatives of the old Russian orthodox spirit. They idealise and admire ancient Russia, condemn the sweeping reforms of Peter the Great, and the foreign principles of administration in vogue since his time, profess an inordinate admiration for the uneducated, uncorrupted peasantry, aspire to the creation of a specifically Russian culture on the basis of the Slavonic character and Eastern orthodoxy, are deeply imbued with Slavonic patriotism, and hope to see some day a great Slavonic federation or Panslavonic empire. With regard to questions of home policy, they are adherents of the Mir, or Rural Commune, with its periodical reallotment of the land, advocate the fostering of native industries by means of protective tariffs, desire the elimination of the German element and German influence from the administration, and would like to see the church emancipated from the supervision and control of the State. The party of the Moscovites proper is at once more modern in its conceptions and more modest in its aims. Though desiring equally to see the German influence eliminated from the administration, it has no feeling of hostility to Peter the Great and Western culture, and no sentimental love of ancient Russia. It thinks that Russia ought to adopt all manner of civilisation and enlightenment from Western Europe, and shows no sympathy with institutions simply because they are specially Russian. On the contrary, it holds that the social and political development of the country must be fundamentally the same as that of the West-European nations, and hails with delight all reforms conceived in the West-European spirit. Whilst the Slavophils believe that the mission of Russia is to develop certain very abstruse principles which are supposed to be hidden in the Slavonic nature and in Greek orthodoxy, this party—less dreamy and wiser in its generation—think that Russia

should develop her institutions by the light of modern experience, and extend her political influence by the same means as other nations.

"In ordinary times the influence of the Moscovite spirit, as represented by these two parties, is very small. The Petersburgians look upon it with kindly condescensions as an amiable provincialism, and some Russians are rather proud of it, as they are of the old picturesque buildings of the Kremlin; but it has little practical significance. The Slavophils, with their mystical principles, which have an interest for those who study the philosophy of history rather than for practical administrators, stand apart from the busy crowd in a region of philosophical abstraction. If they indulge in any practical activity, it takes the form of educating young Bulgarians or sending ecclesiastical vestments and sacred vessels to the Slavs of Turkey and Austria. All this, however, is changed when certain political complications arise. As soon as the Eastern question is raised, and Russia finds herself in antagonism with Western Europe, Moscow always comes prominently to the front, as the representative of Holy Russia and of the genuine national spirit. Words which at ordinary seasons would only provoke a smile are now listened to with attention and respect. For the moment the two sections of Moscovite society combine. The Slavophils declare that the time has come for emancipating the oppressed Slavonic brethren, and protecting them against the insidious influences of Western Europe; whilst the more moderate party urge [the government to uphold the honour of the country, and maintain legitimate Russian influence in the Slavonic world. In view of the national danger, the government thinks it necessary to know the real sentiments of the people, and considers that Moscow is the truest representative of these sentiments. The czar visits the ancient capital, and the inhabitants show him the most unbounded devotion—humbly urging him, in more or less disguised language, to impregnate himself with the genuine national spirit, to close his ears to the seductive voice of foreign counsellors, and to act as a czar who can rely implicitly on the boundless devotion and self-sacrifice of his loyal subjects. Though his majesty may be a man of cool head and unimpulsive character, he cannot remain wholly impervious to the patriotic excitement. It was during one of those visits that Alexander II. pronounced the famous speech, in which he pledged himself to act independently, if the powers would not act with him, for the protection of the Christians in Turkey."

Thus we see, though autocracy is still unshaken in Russia, that section of unofficial Russia which is represented by Moscow exercises a certain influence on the imperial government, and consequently its views and aims are deserving of attention. Now the bulwark of unofficial Russia—of the masses—is undoubtedly the Zemstvo. It is impossible to translate this word Zemstvo by any other phrase than local government. But the very existence of such an institution, hedged in as it is, and as we have already seen, by the government and its autocratic principles, is in itself a most remarkable feature; and it is from this institution that the future, not only of Russia, but of all the Slavonic races, is expected to blossom forth in a perfection so far distant that it must be regarded as Utopian—at any rate, as far as Europe is concerned, as it presupposes the possession of an abundance of ground that does not exist in Europe in sufficient quantity to allow of each individual holding his own acres, whether personally or communally.

The Zemstvo was instituted in 1864. There is a provincial Zemstvo and a district Zemstvo. Each district Zemstvo consists of a Zemstvo assembly and a Zemstvo executive. The assembly consists of the landowners of the district and members chosen by the municipal and country communities. Neither the governor nor vice-governor of the district can be a member of the Zemstvo. Nor can any member of the government nor lawyers be elected. The term of office is three years. The executive is chosen by the assembly, and consists of a president and two assistants, who are paid by the assembly. The executive thus has to carry out the orders of the assembly, and depends upon it entirely.

The provincial Zemstvo is constituted in a precisely similar manner, divided into an assembly and an executive. Both Zemstvos meet once a year.

By this means the government has transferred a great burden from its own shoulders to those of the people, which has accordingly no small sum to pay for the privilege. The people are placed in a condition thereby—and it is part of their duty—to provide for their material and moral progress; but at the same time, in making these concessions, the government has not ceded one jot of its own rights. The Zemstvo may build hospitals, appoint surgeons and doctors, construct roads, and open schools, all at its own expense. But further than this it cannot go. On the policy of the central government, it has but the smallest, if indeed any, influence. Still, as we said before, the development of the Zemstvo is the only hope the Russian has of progressing; and, though slowly, it is doing its work. Thus there was a debate recently in one of the Ural Zemstvos, when a proposal was brought forward by a Colonel Steinfeldt, to award an increase to the school funds of 15,000 roubles. The proposal was supported by one peasant only, and that peasant an ex-serf. He said—"It has been fully proved that, with the education of the labourer, his wealth also increases. Even for this reason alone, it would be the duty of the Zemstvo to promote the cause of education by all the means in its power. Those who say that the existing town schools suffice, and that we have no need of primary village schools, forget that the case is the same for us as with the buffet here in the ante-chamber. It is open to all: quite true! But it does not suit our pockets. We do not want champagne and Strasburg pies." But, in spite of the sturdy peasant's good common sense, the proposition wss almost unanimously rejected. Nor are such matters confined to the remote districts of the Ural. The Zemstvo of Odessa, for instance, can only boast of thirteen schools, with 500 pupils, upon which it expends a sum of 6,000 to 7,000 roubles; whilst the sale of playing-cards, which is a monopoly of the Zemstvo, brought in a nett profit of 32,000 roubles. But then gambling is a vice to which the Russians, especially the higher classes, are notoriously addicted, more so than in any other country. Still it is satisfactory to find even one peasant endeavouring to promote the cause of education. Some of the seed has fallen on good ground. On the other hand, nothing exemplifies the spirit in which the government instituted and regards the Zemstvo so much as the fact, that when several Zemstvos endeavoured to introduce compulsory education, the home ministry placed its veto on the proposal, saying—"All compulsion prevents, but does not forward, the development of the good!"

Of the country which is thus governed, we find that European Russia comprises 2,261,657 square miles, with a population of 78,281,447; Asiatic Russia, 6,170,882

square miles, with a population of 7,229,495: forming a total of 8,432,549 square miles, with a population of 85,510,942. Gifted with an almost boundless territory, with enormous tracts of land yet unreclaimed from the primitive wilderness, with mines which yield prolific stores of wealth, what a power of expansion such a population must necessarily possess! What will that population be within a century? What, even in the year 1900? Evidently an enormous, perhaps irresistible, power for good or for evil. A solid foundation for European despotism, or a glorious aid to that rationally free and constitutional government which appears to be so safe and wise in action. Russia may abandon a policy which exhausts the energies of the people, in adding to its already overgrown dominions countries it cannot benefit by; but its present czar does not seem to have forgotten the ambitious lessons of Peter and of Catherine, whilst directing his attention to promoting the prosperity of the vast empire he possesses. Russia, with all her craft and crime, has yet been the pioneer of civilisation in the sterile and savage north: it is now time that she should rest in her dazzling and feverish progress, and, turning back her eyes on the lands and peoples she has subdued, devote herself to cultivating the one, and elevating the other. Her nobles and officers are among the most polished gentlemen of Europe; but her people are yet scarcely more than semi-Asiatic hordes, deeply plunged in barbarism and superstition, and almost as much an anomaly in Europe as the Turks. In political, as well as in social progress, it may be certainly pronounced that

"The bells of time are ringing changes fast."

The present age is one of transition for Russia. She cannot continue into the future that which she was in the past. Nature cries aloud, in tones of commanding eloquence, to empires as well as to men—"Advance, or perish!" The statesmen of Russia are too wise to remain insensible to an injunction which is as unalterable as destiny, as "unshunnable as death." Should their successors be blind to the great problem which will stand before them for solution, the work of an empire's progress and redemption will be done in other ways. Czardom is not necessarily eternal; and revolution may accomplish what the slow and silent progress of genial reforms could not effect. In spite of political statistics and ominous inferences, we have great hope for the future of Russia. The young giant is wilful and sullen, but we think he is growing wiser, though it may not appear so at the present moment.

We shall here speak particularly of European Russia only; the Asiatic portions of that empire we shall briefly describe when we state how they were annexed to the dominant power. European Russia comprises the north-eastern portion of the continent most distinguished for power and for civilisation. The long range of the Ural Mountains and the river Ural divide it from Asia. From thence it is bounded by the waters of the Caspian, the snow-clad mountains of the Caucasus, and the shores of the Black Sea. On the west, Russia extends to the frontier of Roumania; while further north, between Austrian Galicia, Silesia, and Prussia, no natural boundary can be said to exist. On reaching the Baltic, the confines of the empire are marked by nature by the gulfs of Riga and Finland, and up to the northern extremity of the Gulf of Bothnia. Still farther north, it touches Sweden and Norway. On the extreme north,

this gigantic empire is washed by the Arctic Ocean, which, at that point, forms the extensive gulf known as the White Sea.

Russia is, for the most part, one extensive plain; much of which is covered with bogs, and swamps, and forests; while in other districts there exist dry, woodless, and indeed desert tracts, called steppes. In some places the swamps are from fifty to one hundred miles in width, though frequently interrupted by tracts of drier and more elevated land. Other portions are covered with interminable forests of pine and fir, and are nearly uninhabited. Some tracts of the soil are almost as sterile as the Great African Desert; while in others its fertility will bear comparison with the most favoured spots of nature. Bordering upon Archangel is the largest forest in Europe, if not on the entire globe: it is said to cover 150,000 square miles, and consists chiefly of different kinds of pine, mingled with fir, larch, and birch. Here and there occurs a cultivated spot, on which rye, barley, oats, peas, hemp, and flax are grown; but as the brief summer which prevails in this gloomy region is frequently interrupted with fogs and rain, the crops often fail. West of the river Onega lies the region of rocks and lakes which extends over the immense tract between the gulfs of Finland and of Bothnia on the west and south, and the White Sea on the north-east. The land is level and very swampy, and though not devoid of fertility, requires great labour for its successful cultivation. The consequence is, that most of it is left in its natural state; and even within twenty miles of the extensive and gorgeous city of St. Petersburg (where, notwithstanding the trying severity of the climate, the refinements of magnificence and the delights of all that is rare and elegantly sensual in civilisation find a home), those forests commence which spread over nearly the whole of the country. They consist almost entirely of fir, pine, and birch; among which are dispersed immense boulders of granite. To an imaginative mind, their vast and gloomy grandeur, and wild, savage sublimity, may be regarded as a symbol of the empire itself.

The most important, and in many respects the most fertile, portion of the empire, is the basin of the great river Volga, which occupies about 650,000 square miles, and is equal in extent to three times the area of France. All connected with this interesting empire is on a scale of rude, uncultivated greatness. The lower course of the Volga traverses an immense steppe or desert, which stretches out eastward to the banks of the river Ural. This region, extending over about 336,000 square miles, is unfit for cultivation, and merely supplies a scanty pasture for the wandering tribes which inhabit it. Coarse tall grass grows in turfs several feet apart; a few wild plants, such as wormwood and salsola, are also found; but with the exception of these, the soil consists of a bare yellow clay, without vegetation. The Kirghiz steppe, east of the river Ural, has a similarly desert and forbidding aspect; and it is conjectured that the whole region, as far as the lake of Aral, was once covered by the waters of a now shrunken and diminished sea. The soil is still impregnated with salt; while saline plants and short wormwood are the vegetation most commonly met with.

The principal rivers of European Russia are the Volga, the Dwina, the Duna, the Niemen, the Neva, the Dnieper, the Dniester, the Danube, Don, Vistula, and the Ural. On account of the flatness of the country, they present a greater line of inland navigation than those of most other countries; though necessarily, all are not equally

subservient to the interests of man in this respect. The Volga is navigable to its greatest length, extending as it does more than 2,000 miles over a course devoid of cataracts, rapids, or whirlpools. Lakes are numerous in some parts of the empire, especially in the north-west and south-east. Those of Ladoga and Onega are the most important; the former being the largest in all Europe.

The severity of the climate in Russia, though it has retarded the civilisation of its people, has yet braced them up to a vigorous manliness. Her prolonged winters, and her snowy deserts, have been the nurseries of a race hardened by privations and inured to suffering. Though her people may be apathetic, they spring to action at the call of their rulers. The North has ever been the cradle of conquering races; and its dreary plains produce the simple man, neither contaminated nor unnerved by the enervating pleasures and vices of a higher civilisation. But the soldiers of Russia are debilitated by the crushing despotism of their government, apparently to a greater extent than they are strengthened by the bracing severity of their climate. Happily, the thinking citizen-soldiers of the West are fully a match for the ignorant, machine-like, hardy warriors of the North.

With regard to climate, Russia is divided into what is termed the Arctic region, the cold region, and the temperate region. Russian Lapland, and the broad district of Archangel, are comprised within the first, over a considerable portion of which the mean annual temperature is below 32 degrees. Near the mouths of the rivers Pechora and Mezen the temperature is much lower, and, with the exception of a shrub a few inches high, vegetation is rarely met with. To the south of this locality lies the cold region, in which the mean annual temperature varies between 32 and 40 degrees. The southern limit of this region begins on the shores of the Baltic, on the Gulf of Riga, and runs thence east-south-east to the confluence of the Moskwa and Oka, whence it continues in the same direction towards the southern extremity of the Ural Mountains, terminating south of Uralsk, on the river Ural. In this latitude the winter lasts from seven to eight months in the northern districts, and from five to six in the southern. Spring and autumn are both short, and the transition from cold to heat is rapid; the latter is very great for two or three weeks during summer, the thermometer rising to 86 and even 90 degrees. Both heat and cold are greater in the interior than on the coast. The temperate region commences at the boundary just mentioned, and extends over the southern provinces. It is distinguished by severe though short winters, and by long and very hot summers. The mean annual temperature varies between 40 and 50 degrees; though in the Crimea, and the country adjacent to it, it rises occasionally to 56 degrees.

Russia exports a large amount of grain, and is regarded as one of the most important storehouses in Europe. Great crops of rye are produced in all parts of the empire, except the steppes and the Arctic region. Oats do not succeed so well, but wheat is extensively cultivated in the fertile tracts along the rivers in the southern districts. Flax and hemp are grown more largely than in any other country in Europe. Along the river Don, and even on the steppes of the Volga, they are found in a wild state. Tobacco is cultivated in the Ukraine; and in some parts of southern Russia, millet and maize are grown in large quantities. Fruit-trees are rare, except in the south; but in the most favoured portions of this district there are peaches, apricots, quinces, mulberries, and

walnuts. The orchards of the Crimea also produce almonds and pomegranates. Grapes are also found, but the wine produced from them is generally badly made, and of inferior quality. Hops and asparagus are found growing wild, and liquorice thrives luxuriantly on the banks of the Volga. Potatoes, cabbages, turnips, and carrots are grown abundantly; while melons, especially water-melons, are very numerous in the hot and dry countries near the steppes. The forests of Russia, gloomy and impenetrable as they seem, also constitute one of the principal sources of its wealth. Large quantities of timber, fire-wood, tar, pitch, pearlash, and potash are exported. Horses are numerous in Russia, but are of a small breed. The horses of the Cossacks, which pasture on the steppes, and are almost wild in their nature, are famous for their power of sustaining the greatest fatigue upon a very scanty allowance of food. Cattle are abundant; and although the home consumption of both tallow and hides is great, yet large quantities of both are exported. Sheep are even more numerous; and although the wool is mostly of an indifferent quality, the skins form the common dress of the peasantry during the winter. Goats are plentiful in Russia; hogs are largely reared (especially where oak forests are to be found); buffaloes are found at Astrakhan; while the nomadic tribes, which wander about the steppes, keep a great number of camels. In the extreme north reindeer are found. Where there is so much uncultivated land, wild animals necessarily exist. The bison roams in the forests of Bialoviza; while in those of the north are to be found elks, deer, hares, wild hogs, bears, gluttons, badgers, wolves, foxes, martens, polecats, weasels, ermines, otters, squirrels, and marmots. In the steppes, besides wolves and foxes, wild asses, saiga antelopes, konsaks, and the dipus jerboa, prowl and prey—like nations—the stronger on the weaker. Fierce contests are waged where perhaps the foot of man never left its impress, and the jaws of the tyrants of the forest and the desert drip with the blood of the weak or the defenceless. Nearly all the birds met with in England are to be found in Russia, and the pelican is sometimes seen on the lonely and romantic-looking shores of the Caspian and the Euxine. Fish, though plentiful, are not largely exported, but isinglass and caviare are sent to foreign markets. In the steppes serpents and lizards are common, while the districts adjoining these sterile spots are occasionally infested by swarms of locusts. Wild bees are found near the large forests; and wax, though largely used in the churches, is exported. Scorpions, millipedes, tarantulas, and the scorpion spider are among the noxious insects to be found in Russia.

The mineral wealth of Russia is very great. Its European mines produce gold, platinum, copper, and iron; while from those of Siberia silver is obtained. The mines most extensively worked are in the government of Perm, which lies on both sides of the Ural Mountains. Here most of the inhabitants are employed in the mines, of which there are 200 of different kinds in operation; while 7,200 furnaces, and above 180,000 men, are engaged in different branches of metallurgy. Besides iron, copper, and platinum, they produce lead, graphite, gold, silver, salt, marble, jasper, agates, amethysts, loadstone, and some diamonds. The mines of the Ural Mountains yield annually about 300 poods (a pood is thirty-six pounds) of gold, 200,000 poods of copper, and 5,500,000 poods of iron. The neighbouring government of Viaka and Orenburg are also important mining districts. In addition to the metals we have enumerated, quicksilver, arsenic, nickel, cobalt, antimony, and bismuth are found. Marble, granite, and malachite are quarried

at the northern extremity of the Lake of Onega, and on the northern shores of Lake Ladoga.

With this extent of territory, of population, and, to say the least, latent wealth, it is not surprising that every fresh attempt of Russia to extend her boundaries should be regarded with something very like dismay by a large party—perhaps the majority of people—in this country. At once we are loudly warned that every advance of Russia towards Constantinople, or the valley of the Euphrates, is a menace to British rule in India. It would be well to inquire what amount of truth, and how much exaggeration, there is in these warnings; and this we shall do in a chapter devoted to the subject. We shall then find that it is quite true that the interests of the British mercantile community would be threatened and seriously injured as soon as the Russians show that aptitude for trade, commerce, and manufacture of which they have as yet certainly given but slight proof. When the Russian shall have become the equal of the British merchant, then, no doubt—premising that the British merchant remains stationary whilst the Russian progresses—the annexation of considerable portions of Asia Minor would materially affect British commercial interests. But that is a question for the very remote future. What we now have to consider is, whether we are commercially in need of further centres of raw produce, and whether we are prepared, if we have that need, not simply to refuse Russia the exclusive possession of any large portion of Asia Minor, but to acquire a share of it for ourselves also. As for the political interests involved, we are quite unable to see any cause for alarm until Russia makes such progress as to threaten the Persian Gulf. That would certainly be a step which would render counteraction on our part imperative. But until then, we hold that the outcry of the military party can only be explained by the fact—as a simple arithmetical fact—that the proportion of privates killed to officers killed is, at least, as fifty to one, and, consequently, that each surviving officer, either directly or indirectly, benefits by the value of the work of which fifty lives are the equivalent. We commend this view to the notice of those who are inclined, from ignorance or vanity, to follow the lead of the war-at-any-price people.

RUSSIA IN EUROPE

PETER THE GREAT

THE TERRITORIAL ACQUISITIONS OF THE CZARS

1689 1725 1762 1772 1783 1793 1795 1806 1809 1812 1815 1829 1856

Longitude East from Greenwich 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70 75 80

ARCTIC OCEAN

BALTIC SEA

MEDITERRANEAN SEA

BLACK SEA

CASPIAN SEA

WHITE SEA

GULF OF FINLAND

GULF OF BOTHNIA

SEA OF AZOV

EUROPE IN TURKEY

ASIA IN TURKEY

ASIA MINOR

PERSIA

TARTARY

ARABIA

SWEDEN

NORWAY

POLAND

PRUSSIA

TURKEY

CONSTANTINOPLE

ASTRAKHAN

STAVROPOL

KIEV

MOSCOW

ARCHANGEL

PETERSBURG

NOVGOROD

PSKOV

REVEL

RIGA

MITAU

WILNA

GRODNO

WARSAW

KALISZ

LUBLIN

TARNOPOL

LEMBERG

CRACOW

KAMENETZ

POLTAVA

KHARKOV

KURSK

ORYEL

TAMBOV

PENZA

SIMBIRSK

SARATOV

KAZAN

PERM

VIATKA

VOLOGDA

OSTROMA

TVER

SMOLENSK

MOHILEV

MINSK

TULA

KALUGA

TULCHIN

ZHITOMIR

KIEV

KAMENETZ

VITEBSK

ORSHA

MOGILEV

GOMEL

CHERNIGOV

NOVGOROD

PSKOV

REVEL

RIGA

MITAU

WILNA

GRODNO

WARSAW

KALISZ

LUBLIN

TARNOPOL

LEMBERG

CRACOW

ACQUISITIONS FROM TURKEY (1783)

ACQUISITIONS FROM PERSIA (1806 1813 1828)

ACQUISITIONS FROM SWEDEN (1721 1743 1809)

ACQUISITIONS FROM POLAND (1772 1793 1795 1815)

ACQUISITIONS FROM TURKEY (1774 1792)

PRINCIPALITY OF MOSCOW IN THE 15TH CENTURY

ACQUISITIONS OF PETER THE GREAT (1689)

MUSCOVY OR TARTARY

Mountains of the Moon

Sea of Darkness

Cape Horn

Cape of Good Hope

Terra Australis

Asia

Africa

Europe

America

HISTORY

OF THE

RUSSIAN EMPIRE.

CHAPTER I.

THE ANCIENT INHABITANTS OF RUSSIA; KIEF AND NOVGOROD, THE NUCLEUS OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE; THE PIRATES OF THE BALTIC; RURIC'S CONQUEST, AND HIS ASSUMPTION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF NOVGOROD.

"WHAT is history," said the emperor Napoleon, "but a fable agreed upon?" Though we are by no means inclined to admit of the extensive application of this aphoristic inquiry, which was doubtless intended; yet it is certainly true with regard to the remote records of most nations. The early chronicles of all European nations are clouded by the mists of antiquity, and distorted by the national vanity of those who have, perhaps, returned to the dust centuries ago. Rays of truth struggle faintly through clouds of suspicious traditions; and it is ever difficult to say where fable ends and actual history begins.

This is especially the case with the history of the Russian empire. Its early chroniclers were the monks, whom we are probably guilty of no injustice in describing as partial, credulous, careless, and ignorant of the importance of the labour they had undertaken. The jealousy of its despotic princes, also, led them rather to withhold information concerning the states they ruled; and although manuscript chronicles were deposited from age to age in the public libraries, yet permission to inspect them was rarely to be obtained. Unfortunately, also, these records are written in the ancient Slavonic dialect, which has become obsolete; and labour in this mine of information has rather bewildered than enlightened those who have attempted to profit by it. Under these circumstances, a modern historian observes, that "commentators sometimes grew bold, from the very want of materials, which made detection doubtful or impossible, and sometimes obscure, by leaving the enigmas of dates, names, and events, as unsolved as they found them." Happily, the mystery of doubt hangs only over the early portion of Russian history: for the record of its marvellous progress and proceedings in modern times, we have generally ample materials. Necessarily, the vital interest of Russian history commences with the time when that state first took a prominent part in the great drama of European politics. Prior to that time, it has the interest of a wild romance of barbarous life; subsequently it possesses a more sober tone, but is yet crowded with startling adventure and gigantic events, and is pregnant with that wisdom which the observing mind gathers from the recital of the great actions, the vices, the errors, and the virtues of the past.

There are satisfactory reasons for the supposition, that the greatest part of the numerous tribes that inhabited Russia before the ninth century (about the middle of which its history may be said to commence), sprang from the Slavonic stock. The rest were composed chiefly of the Fins, who occupied the north, and the Scythes or Scythians, who dwelt in the south. Of the latter race very little is known; and a mist of doubt surrounds even the country from which they came. Some writers speak of them as sweeping into Europe from the savage wilds of Tartary; but various tracts, both in Asia and Europe, have been spoken of as the ancient Scythia—a country of which the exact site is unknown, and the inhabitants of which have been extinct as a people for ages. The antiquity of the Slave race in Europe is such, that no clue remains to show when they first settled in it.

Equally uncertain are the speculations as to whence they came. Asia is presumed to have been their cradle, though what portion of it, is unknown. It is probable that they were settled in Europe before Rome was founded, or the progress of nations placed upon record. Attempts have been made to trace their descent from Japhet, the third son of Noah; but the authors of such speculations are guided rather by idle imaginings than stern facts. The name Slave, or Slavi, is supposed to signify "glory" or "glorious," one which it was natural for a warlike and ambitious race to assume. Other antiquarians, however, consider it to be derived from the term Slovo, which means "word" or "speech." Either they had earned great fame by heroic achievements, of which no records remain; or their language was distinguished by its power or copiousness. In remote times they appear to have subjugated every country into which they pushed their arms; and the extent of dominion they acquired assumes proportions almost incredible. From the shores of the Adriatic (says an historian) to the coast of the Frozen Ocean, and from the shores of the Baltic, through the whole length of Europe and Asia, as far as America, and to the neighbourhood of Japan, we everywhere meet with Slavonian nations either ruling or ruled.

From the pages of a writer who appears to have spent much labour on this part of his subject,* we extract the following account of a race which was, as we have said, for the most part the parent of the modern inhabitants of Russia:—"The character of this people was such as the uncertainty and peril of their habits were calculated to produce. They were courageous and reckless of life; cruel and rapacious; prompt to secure, by any means, the conquest that was necessary to their wants; but as their excursions were undertaken from meaner motives than aggrandisement or ambition (being chiefly to make provision for their immediate necessities, or to procure resources for a future supply), their intervals of repose were passed in supineness and indolence. They were hospitable to the excess of that virtue. It was a law amongst them, that a poor man might steal from his rich neighbour the means of entertaining his guest. The debasing usages of the East, respecting the treatment of females, they carried with them into the North. Women were considered as drudges and slaves. Polygamy was allowed; and the power of the husband asserted beyond the grave. Widows were consumed at the funeral pile; and, as if to complete the last show of household authority, a female slave was sacrificed on the body of her master. This custom arose from the notion, that women, wives, and slaves, were destined to serve their lords in the next world as well as in this, and they were accordingly put to death, in order that their lord should not be left in want of their attendance. It is probable that the *suttee* of the Indians may be traced to the same origin. All the male children of the Slavi were dedicated to war; but the curse of proscription awaited the females, even at their birth. Whenever it happened that the number of female infants in a family appeared to exceed the probable wants of the community, they were at once destroyed. These inhuman customs of the parents generated a corresponding inhumanity in their offspring. The old and feeble were deserted by their children, and left to expire of hunger and disease. These revolting practices were to be attributed to the unsettled and migratory habits of the people. Their mode of life required that they should always be prepared for action. They struck off the incumbrances of age and superabundant infancy, in order that their motions might be free to rove wherever their vagrant desires pointed. The same inordinate thirst after new scenes and strange adventures that enabled them to conquer those sacred associations which, under a different organisation of society, are universally reverenced, also enabled them to surmount the physical obstacles that constantly lay before them. We know that the Scythians removed their families from place to place in waggons, covered with hides, to protect them from the inclemency of the weather; but we have no means of ascertaining how the Slavi crossed seas and rivers, traversed vast deserts, penetrated untrodden forests, and made their way over trackless mountains.

"It was amongst such a people, who lived in a constant state of excitement, that poetry may be believed to have originated. The earliest Slavonian records describe them as practising the arts of music and poetry. In the sixth century, the Winidæ, a northern extended branch of the Slavi, informed the Emperor of Constantinople that their highest pleasures were derived

* Bell's *History of Russia.*

from music; that in their journeys they seldom encumbered themselves with arms, but always carried lutes and harps of their own workmanship. There were other musical instruments, too, which are still retained amongst their descendants. In their warlike expeditions they never appeared without music. Procopius informs us, that they were once so much engrossed by their amusements within sight of the enemy, as to have been surprised by a Greek general, before they could arrange any measures of defence. Many of the war odes and ballads of the Slavi are still in existence. They exhibit a wild and original spirit; are replete with mythological allusions; and those that are of a peaceful cast, are particularly remarkable for the quiet sweetness of their character, of a kind quite distinct from the elaborate and artificial felicity of the Greek and Roman pastorals.

"The religion of the Slavi resembled, in all essential respects, the mythology of the Romans, to which were superadded some features of a more superstitious and cruel nature. They offered up human victims to their Jupiter, who, built up with a trunk of hard wood, a head of silver, ears and mustachios of gold, and legs of iron, was called Perune. Like all other rude nations of antiquity, they trembled before thunder, which they received as the voice of the god in anger. But their notions of a supreme deity were very vague; for, although they entertained some half-formed idea of the existence of a First Cause, they yet inconsistently attributed all events to chance. They personified the elements in a similar way. They had their sacred rivers and forests. They had their god of the waters, and attendant dryads and sea-nymphs: also a benevolent god, who presided over their games and festivals; a goddess of love and marriage; a pastoral divinity; and a goddess of the chase; nor did they omit some hieroglyphical Penates, whom the boors of Russia, to this day, scrawl in uncouth figures on the walls of their houses. The outline of the Slavonian mythology was not destitute of imaginative qualities. All the leading or chief deities had subordinate ones, to perform the functions identified with the elements or objects to which they were assigned. Their fauns, and satyrs, and forest spirits, and demons of fire, and of midnight dreams and pestilence, were all conceived distinctly enough, and helped out a sort of system that was well calculated to act upon the fears of a superstitious race. There were innumerable idols, of various degrees of power, and all differing in particular attributes. The ceremonies by which these were propitiated were usually very costly, as were the temples in which they were performed, and the apparel of the priests who officiated. These ceremonies were generally closed by horrible immolations to the frenzy, or abandoned festivals to the honour, of the god. The mixture of the sanguinary and the ridiculous, of the poetical and the animal nature, of the elevated and the degraded, were visible throughout all their rites. Not a solitary want or enjoyment of mankind appears to have escaped the fertile invention of the Slavi, in the corresponding application of their image-worship. They had gods for all possible occasions, and gorgeous preliminaries to their invocation. But this kind of religion wanted unity. It was incomplete, both in its materials and its purpose. It made the savage more savage, and the timid more timid. To quail before the storm, or to dare it, were the only effects it produced. It never softened ferocity, nor inspired its believers with reverence for eternal wisdom. It was the rudest religion of external nature, and exacted servitude without love, or reason, or hope. In this, of course, the Slavonian superstition was not singular; but, perhaps, it was the most complicated and comprehensive that prevailed amongst the barbarous tribes that flourished in the age of the world in which it arose.

"The Slavi, in the original state in which we find them, admitted no particular form of authority in the government of their affairs. Their paramount doctrine of chance had much to do in settling the mode by which their domestic concerns were managed. The people at first met in large bodies in some of their temples or holy places. Gradually the national concerns fell into the hands of particular persons, who, according to their superior military talent, and the amount of individual esteem in which they were held, insensibly acquired the ascendancy. Out of this unconscious delegation, at last, sprung the hereditary tenure: fathers who had deserved well of their countrymen, bequeathed their honours to their children; that which was, in the beginning, but a personal distinction, ultimately became a permanent dignity; and finally, the formless chaos assumed a shape;

chiefs, and civil judges, and petty magistrates, springing up rapidly enough when once the lawlessness of the great body had been overcome. But the Slavi were slow to yield the right of election. They asserted, for a long time, the privilege of electing and deposing their rulers. The principal seats of power were, however, rendered hereditary by force; and the popular prerogative, thus extinguished by one decisive innovation, could never again be recalled. The manner of the election of a voyvode, or duke, in Carinthia, may be taken as a proof of the tenacity with which the people clung to their electoral privileges as long as they could. When the duke was elected, he was ordered to appear before his constituents, clothed in the poorest attire. A throne, formed of a huge stone, was placed in the centre, upon which was seated a common labourer. Before this organ of the multitude the new governor took the oaths of office, which bound him to respect truth and religion, and to support the friendless. This temporary magistrate then descended; the duke ascended; and the vows of fidelity were immediately subscribed by the people. Such was the simple, but impressive form, by which rulers, in the early stages of society, were pledged to the interests of their subjects."

The Slavonians in Europe suffered many vicissitudes. Overthrown in turn by other races of barbarians, they appear to have lost something of their original vigour and ferocity, or, at least, of their conquering power, and the close of the seventh century found them located chiefly in Russia and in Poland. In the former country they were cast away into a variety of widely separate settlements; and, as time rolled on, became known by distinct appellations. The aboriginal population of Russia was, however, swelled from other sources, and the Fins, the Tartars, and the Mongols, contributed to the roots of what, after a succession of wars and revolutions, was to become, perhaps, the mightiest, though rudest, state of modern Europe.

These various tribes were known by the common name of Russians, prior to the time of Ruric, the founder of the first dynasty of the present empire; and many conjectures have been formed as to the origin of this term. One is, that the name was derived from a tribe called Rhoxolani or Rhoxani, and thence corrupted into Russian; another, that a prince called Russus gave his name to the people. It has been attempted to be shown, that the followers of Ruric, the northern pirate (of whom we shall speak presently), called themselves Russians, and transferred the name to a state which they had a large share in founding. Again, it has been somewhat fancifully conjectured, that the nymphs or goddesses called Russalki (with which the vivid Slavonian imagination, fertile as that of the ancient Greeks, peopled the waters and the forests), might have had their names assumed by their devotees, as a token of regard and veneration. M. Levesque, in his interesting essay on the religion of the Slaves, observes—"The Russalki were nymphs, the subordinate goddesses of waters and forests. They possessed all the graces of youth, enhanced by the charms of beauty. They were frequently seen sporting on the banks of rivers and lakes; sometimes bathing in the limpid streams, or swimming on the surface; and in this exercise, some of their charms were only concealed from the prying view for the sake of presenting more enchanting attractions; to attitudes full of grace succeeded movements still more voluptuous. Sometimes they were seen on the margin of the waters, combing their fine long azure locks; at others swinging, now with a rapid motion, now with a gentle vibration, on the flexible branches of the trees. Their light drapery, flowing to the sport of the winds, in its varied undulations alternately concealed and displayed the treasures of beauty. Sacrifices were made to these amiable beings."

We have said that the nucleus of the Russian dominions was comparatively small. The first Slavonian state was established on the banks of the Dnieper (the ancient Borysthenes),* and possessed a chief city called Kief, from Kivi; a Sarmatian word, signifying mountain. The capital of the Slavi who had settled in the north, on the river Volkhof, was called Novgorod or New Town, and stood a hundred miles from the site of the present city of St. Petersburg. Its early annals, like those of Kief, are involved in obscurity. It is, however, sufficient that we are enabled to arrive at the conclusion, that the kingdoms or settlements of which these cities were the capitals, constituted the germ of the future

* The name Borysthenes signifies a rampart formed by a forest of pines. It is derived from the word *bor*, a forest of pines, and *stena*, a wall. The banks of the Dnieper are still in many parts bordered with dense pine forests.

empire of Russia. So powerful were the resources of Novgorod, and so great its distinction above rival states, that it gave rise to a proverbial expression of remarkable arrogance and audacity. "Who," said its inhabitants and their dependents, "shall dare to oppose the gods and great Novgorod!" It extended its commercial intercourse to Persia, and even to India, in one direction, and to the settlers on both shores of the Baltic in another. Its government was a republic, and its people were bold and hardy. Its prosperity, however, excited the jealousy of its neighbours; dissensions arose within its walls, and the famous city was at length torn by distractions from within, and surrounded by enemies without.

At this period the waters of the Baltic were haunted by Scandinavian pirates, who necessarily were a great impediment to the commerce of the people of Novgorod, which their depredations threatened altogether to annihilate in that direction. The Northmen, inhabiting that large peninsula anciently known as Scandinavia, but now comprising Norway and Sweden, and located chiefly in the vicinity of rivers, friths, and bays, where the climate was severe and the soil unproductive, became pirates, just as the wandering Arabs of the desert became robbers—from a stern necessity. In barbarous times, when agriculture was little understood, and even when practised rendered comparatively unproductive by the barrenness of the soil and the severity of the elements, it may be supposed that many seasons of famine occurred. These drove the hardy Scandinavians, who were no strangers to the sea (which they loved to brave in its fiercest moods), to seek from its waters by fishing, that sustenance which the hardened land, irresponsive to their rude efforts, appeared to deny them. Once upon the sea, the conversion of these fierce people from fishermen into pirates was a very rapid one. It was easier to take a vessel laden with fish, than to discharge the patient labour of catching fish for themselves. Piracy, from an accident, became a vocation; and, by degrees, vessels were equipped for that purpose alone: then the villages on the coast were plundered; and any trading vessel that was unfortunate enough to come in the way of the rovers, made a prize. The inevitable dangers attending such a profession did not damp the spirit of adventure. Courage was a part of the religion of the Northman; and if he died fighting against his fellow-men, and with his weapons stained with the blood of his adversaries, his superstition induced him to believe that he entered at once on the enjoyments of the halls of Odin—the Scandinavian paradise of the brave.

The dominant tribe of these Baltic pirates were the Varangians;* and the citizens of Novgorod, oppressed and enfeebled by the attacks of many enemies, made overtures to them for assistance. The hardy Northmen, ever ready for war, and as mercenary as they were fierce and brave, sold their services to the wealthy traders of Novgorod. Thus reinforced, the latter were enabled effectually to subdue their surrounding enemies. Tranquillity was restored, the mercenaries rewarded for their assistance, and it was then expected that they would return to their ships and their former occupations. Like many other reasonable expectations, however, this was not fulfilled. The pirates were pleased with the locality of their recent exploits, while a sense of power made them ambitious. They had no desire to depart. They felt also that a wealthy body owed its safety to their arms, and that they could not be too largely rewarded for their services. The feeling was natural, and the consequences resulting from it immense. A resolve to settle on the banks of the Volkhof was soon formed; and under the direction of Ruric, their leader, a town was built, and called Ladoga. To secure themselves in this position, the intruders surrounded it with a rampart of earth. Ruric also established his brothers, Sinaus and Truvor, in a similar manner; and the alarmed Novgorodians saw that, in inviting assistance, they had created a fresh enemy. They repented of the confidence they had shown, but it was too late; the new-comers had seen their weakness, and were resolved to hold by force what they had acquired by stratagem.

Enfeebled as the Novgorodians were by dissensions and long-continued conflicts, they yet resolved to expel their unceremonious invaders by force of arms. Such a

* The term Varangian seems rather to indicate a profession than a tribe. It was synonymous with a pirate; but an old author says, that there were Swedish, Norman, English, and Russian Varangians. General Count Segur, in his *History of Russia*, observes, that everything leads us to believe that these Russian Varangians were Normans. Perhaps they were a confederation of outcasts of the Baltic shores.

step was doubtless expected by the Varangians, who, fearless and desperate, at once turned their swords against those whom they had so recently succoured. A conflict took place, in which the republican traders were defeated, their leader slain, and themselves thrown into confusion. Ruric and his fierce associates followed up their advantage, and advanced upon Novgorod; for an ambitious project had arisen in the mind of the Scandinavian pirate;—might not this fine and well-reputed city become in his hand the nucleus of a kingdom, and he the founder of a regal dynasty? It was a brilliant day-dream, which his courage and energy enabled him to convert into a reality. When he and his ruthless bands appeared before Novgorod, the inhabitants were thrown into despair. Demoralised by recent defeat—without leaders, and without hope—they anticipated the result of a siege, and submitted. Ruric entered the city a conqueror; and assuming the reins of government, converted the trading republic into an absolute monarchy.* Thus, in the year 862, was laid the foundation-stone of the Russian empire. Little, however, did Ruric dream of the mighty work he was beginning; or of the vicissitudes to which his descendants would be subject.

CHAPTER II.

REIGN AND DEATH OF RURIC; THE REGENT OLEG; HE SUBDUES KIEF AND INVADES CONSTANTINOPLE; HE IS SUCCEEDED BY IGOR; HIS FEROCIOUS EXPEDITION TOWARDS CONSTANTINOPLE, AND RETALIATIVE VENGEANCE OF THE GREEKS; HIS SECOND INVASION OF GREECE; HIS OPPRESSION OF THE DREVLIANS, AND ASSASSINATION.

The people of Novgorod, tired of a form of government where individual ambition had latterly pushed the forms of democracy to the verge of anarchy, submitted passively to the new mode of rule forced upon them, in the hope that it would be better than the late one. Ruric assumed the title of Grand Prince, which, as it recognised other princes subordinate to himself, was calculated to satisfy the ambition of his own immediate chieftains, and also to soothe the national feelings of the people who had submitted to his sway: since by such an arrangement minor princes might still arise from amongst them. Ruric's government was of a military character; and the Varangians regarding themselves as conquerors, and having swords in their hands, naturally seized upon all posts of honour or profit. From this period the country, under the sway of Ruric, took the general name of Russia. That which the new sovereign had acquired by force, he preserved with firmness, and governed with some wisdom. He gave laws to the people, enlarged the boundaries of the city, and endeavoured to restore its former prosperity and reputation. Having established his authority, he returned to Ladoga, which he made the chief seat of the infant empire.

Ruric, in his capacity as grand prince, claimed the right of granting separate principalities to his two brothers, who in return were to do him homage, and to be held as his vassals. By a decision of Ruric's, or perhaps in consequence of a custom existing among the Varangians, the right to grant was accompanied by the right to resume, and also to remove the subordinate ruler from principality to principality. At the same time, any of these subordinate princes who were left undisturbed in their possessions at the death of the grand prince, acquired in consequence an hereditary title and power. The result was extremely injurious to the consolidation of the empire contemplated by Ruric. In course of time these princes became small independent

* An ancient chronicle, to which no authority is attached, represents the Novgorodians as soliciting the powerful Ruric and his brothers to assume a sovereign power over them. The principal citizens are reported to have sought an interview with the Varangian princes, and observed, "Our country is large and fruitful, but it is without order; come and govern it according to our laws." It is added, that Ruric hesitated, for he knew the licentiousness of the people, but that he eventually complied with their desires. Perhaps a few citizens were bribed or intimidated into this surrender of their independence.

sovereigns, and instead of one powerful, united state, there existed many feeble, jealous, and even antagonistic principalities. The curse of division was to affect the new state, but not yet. Sinaus and Truvor, the brothers of Ruric, who had been appointed to the government of chief towns in dependent territories, both died childless before the demise of the head of their family, who, as if conscious of the error he had made, then reunited their territories to his own.

Ruric, doubtless, was a man of superior talents, and of a firm and resolute character. He appears not only to have been respected by his subjects, but to have been looked up to with admiration by the inhabitants of surrounding territories. He had not swayed his iron sceptre for any length of time before another city appealed to him for assistance against its enemies. The inhabitants of Kief, the other Slavonian city we have mentioned as standing on the banks of the Dnieper, appealed to him for protection against the Khazares, and desired him to appoint a prince of his own blood to be their ruler. This was an opportunity for the extension of his rule, which he was far too active a man to neglect. Conferring the new sovereignty on his step-son, Oskold, he sent him at the head of a considerable force on the mission of aid and annexation. Oskold's sword was not drawn in vain; he defeated the Khazares, and assumed the sovereignty of Kief, which thus became subordinate to the growing power at Novgorod. Dir, a Scandinavian warrior, was united with him in the government.

Ruric reigned in peace during a period of seventeen years, and died in 879. His iron determination awed his fierce dependents into tranquillity, and the firmness of his rule restored to the state that security without which commerce must ever decline until it hovers on the verge of dissolution. His only son, Igor, was but a child; and although the right of the infant prince to the throne was acknowledged, the affairs of the government were placed in the hands of Oleg, his guardian and relative, until the young prince was of an age to administer them himself.

Oleg, though possessed of many of those qualities which are commonly found in the characters of successful rulers, was cunning, unprincipled, and savage. Count Segur, the historian, himself a soldier, estimates this barbarian as a great man; a circumstance which, he truly remarks, is sufficient to account for the most remarkable events. "Oleg," he says, "seems to have possessed in a high degree the qualifications, the vices, and all the passions most suitable to the age in which he lived. A true specimen of barbaric greatness: brave, crafty, insatiable, adventurous, indefatigable; faithful, as with respect to Igor, his ward, yet with others occasionally treacherous." To such a man it was not sufficient that he should rule the dominions committed to him in peace and wisdom. He desired the excitement arising from war, and from unjustly despoiling his neighbours of their possessions. The habits of the pirate were not forgotten in the dignity of the ruler, and he remembered with pleasure the savage exploits of earlier days. Similar feelings dwelt in the minds of the Varangians. Their love of the sea and of daring adventures was not extinguished; and a citizen's life was doubtless irksome to these wild spirits. Even the warlike and ambitious feelings of the Novgorodians were again awakened; and a desire for war animated the whole people. No enemy required chastisement—no necessity existing for taking up arms in self-defence; but war was wanted merely for the excitement of the pursuit and the love of plunder. Oleg was the very man to respond to such a feeling; and he speedily planned a campaign that promised employment for the idle, and reward for the discontented. That it was wickedly aggressive and unjust was a matter totally disregarded by his followers. Semi-barbarians never seem to look at events from that point of view. To the state of mind apparently inseparable from such a stage of existence, that which promises success is to be undertaken—that which proves successful is deemed right.

The city of Kief owned the supremacy of the grand prince of Novgorod; while Oskold and Dir, its rulers, had been followers of Ruric, and appointed by him to the authority they held. Yet against Kief did Oleg resolve to direct his arms; and trampling upon the rights of the subordinate princes, annex it to the dominions he governed as regent. Such was his ambition, that he even looked upon Kief only as a step forward in the direction of the gorgeous and wealthy city of Constantinople, then the seat of the Greek emperor, and the capital of the great empire of the East. In such a direction conquest was perhaps not

dreamed of; but a sudden attack upon the rich city promised great opportunities for plunder. Oleg soon collected a numerous army, consisting certainly of discordant materials; for it was composed of fragments of tribes of different languages, costumes, and habits, but all animated by one feeling—a love of violence and plunder. Taking with him the young prince Igor, he directed his march towards Kief, capturing Smolensk, the capital of the Krivitches, in his way, and spreading terror among the inhabitants of the small towns and villages through which he and his army of marauders passed.

Oleg did not rely for success on force alone, but had recourse to cunning and treachery. On approaching Kief he hid his troops in the neighbourhood of the river Borysthenes, or Dnieper, and disguising himself as a merchant of Novgorod, proceeded up the river with a few followers only to the gates of the city. He had previously sent a messenger to the two princes, to request permission to travel through their territory into Greece. The messenger added, that illness prevented his master from attending to pay his respects to them in person, and begged that they would come and honour him with an interview. Oskold and Dir, not suspecting villany, and desirous of paying respect to a powerful merchant of Novgorod, consented, and shortly arrived at the river's bank, attended only by a very few followers. When they appeared, the soldiers of Oleg sprung from their vessel, and the ruffian chief holding aloft the young Igor in his arms, shouted, "You are neither princes, nor sprung from princes; but I am a prince; and, behold, here is the son of Ruric!" The ferocious soldiers, who had doubtless been instructed in the part they were to take in this repulsive tragedy, rushed upon the unarmed chiefs, and laid them dead upon the spot. While the bodies of the victims were distorted with the convulsions of dying agony, and their blood yet dripped from the swords of the murderers, Oleg shouted exultingly, "Let Kief be the mother of all the Russian cities!" An observation which revealed the extensive schemes of territorial extension his ambitious nature had engendered.

The inhabitants of Kief, struck with amazement, and unprepared for defence, opened their gates to the regent of Novgorod; and the two Slavonian states were soon united under one government. Oleg transferred the seat of his government to the city he had so unjustly obtained, and fixed his residence there. His object in doing so, was chiefly that he might be nearer to Constantinople, with the promised spoils of which he bought the mercenary loyalty of his wild followers. His energy raised new towns in the vicinity of Kief, and subdued or won over all the neighbouring tribes who had previously been under subjection to the feeble khans of the eastern Khozars. He was a man wise in his generation, and eminently fitted to rule the diverse tribes of barbarians whom fear or interest induced to acknowledge his authority. In their estimation, a just man would have appeared an insipid character, and a merciful one, an imbecile. The savage nature of Oleg won their respect, while his subtlety attracted their attachment. He wisely relaxed the severity of the laws within the neighbourhood of the city where he resided, and reduced the amount of tribute money.

He pursued his cherished design of the invasion of Constantinople with remarkable tenacity. The vanquished tribes flocked readily to his standard; for they were all animated by a greedy desire of gain, and a thirst for the excitement of war and its unbridled gratifications. In those barbarous times, an army rather resembled an aggregate of bands of robbers, each individual of which followed his own lawless and savage desires, than the rigidly disciplined and machine-like masses of life which modern military art has found to be most efficient. Oleg collected an army said to amount to 80,000 men, whom he embarked on board 2,000 of the primitive vessels which the rude constructive skill of his artisans enabled them to build. Leaving Igor to rule at Kief during his absence, the robber-warrior and his hordes sailed down the waters of the Borysthenes, or Dnieper, in their progress to the Black Sea. Elated with excitement, and mad with the thirst for spoil and blood, they met and overcame obstacles which appear almost insurmountable even in these days of science, when so many of the forces of nature are rendered subservient to the designs of man. For a considerable distance the navigation of the river was impeded by cataracts, where its waters fell in foam and spray over seven rocks. Barbarian energy was equal to this emergency. Unloading their small vessels, the followers of Oleg dragged them by sheer strength over

the rocks; an enterprise attended by herculean labour, and great risk of life. Other difficulties also lay in their path. On the banks of the river dwelt hostile tribes adverse to the advance of the marauders, who had frequently to fight their way onward, and leave behind them many ghastly evidences of their destructive trail. At length they emerged into the waters of the Euxine, or Black Sea; and then their vessels entered the Bosphorus, and took up a position near the walls of the queen of cities, and the seat of the power and magnificence of the East.

The inhabitants of Constantinople were almost taken by surprise at this formidable visitation. The emperor Leo, surnamed "the philosopher," though without much justice, as he employed his time rather in speculating on abstruse theological questions than in attending to his duties as a sovereign, had made no other defensive preparations than that of ordering a heavy iron chain to be slung across the harbour, for the purpose of preventing ships from entering it. This obstacle Oleg is said to have overcome by a laborious scheme, which in its singularity has an air of incredibility to modern ears. Unable to break or pass the chain, he ordered his 2,000 vessels to be drawn up on land. Then placing their flat-bottoms on wheels, he caused all sails to be spread, and actually proceeded in his ships on land up to the gates of the city. As they passed along, his ruffian troops committed every sort of atrocity. They massacred the inhabitants in mere wantonness, and left their habitations in flames. They even appeared to be actuated by a frenzy of cruelty; and not content with putting their victims to death, subjected them to every torture and indignity which a brutal nature could suggest. These atrocities produced the intended effect. Oleg and his ruffian troops created such terror, that on their arrival at Constantinople, it submitted; and the invader having proudly hung his shield over the gate as a symbol of conquest, entered the city in triumph. Thus the lance of this warrior, "cut from the forests of Lagoda, penetrated the gates of Byzantium."

The emperor Leo attempted to accomplish by artifice what he had been unable to effect by force. Inviting Oleg to a feast, he endeavoured to remove him by poison. The plot failed, and the baffled emperor was compelled to purchase the retirement of his enemies by a disgraceful peace. He bound himself to pay a large tribute to every vessel sailing under the flag of Oleg; or, according to other accounts, to give a considerable gratuity to each of his followers. In addition to this, he was to remit all duties upon Russian merchants trading in the Greek empire, to support them for half a year, and to furnish them on their departure with means to prosecute their journey homewards. Such terms form a painful comment on the insolence of the aggressor, and the helplessness and humility of his victims. The treaty being ratified, Oleg and his barbarians returned in triumph to Kief, laden with plunder and trophies. The people, astonished at the ease with which he had accomplished so great a victory, received him on his return with an enthusiasm approaching to veneration. Their superstitious minds at once yielded to the spreading belief, that a chieftain who conquered so readily must be a favourite of the gods.

For some years the victor seems to have rested contented with the blood-stained laurels he had acquired. During this period the Greeks observed the galling treaty to which they had bound themselves; and the Russians enjoyed all the advantages arising from it. Oleg then exhibited a fresh instance of his power, by extorting the acquiescence of the emperor Leo to a fresh treaty, embodying several stipulations which, he said, he had omitted on the former occasion by inadvertence. These conditions, relating chiefly to the terms on which intercourse should be conducted between the two nations, were moderate, and might have been regarded as inoffensive, but that they were so couched, as to imply indirectly the supremacy of the Russian sovereignty in all matters over that of Greece. Oleg governed nominally as regent, but he was in reality an actual sovereign during the whole of his life. Such a man was too powerful to be displaced from an authority it did not please him to resign; and Igor passively consented to wear a shadowy crown, while the real one encircled the brows of his relative. Resistance would have endangered his safety, and probably have led to his death. He did wisely in leaving the real power in the hands of Oleg, whose iron despotism and fierce energy cemented and enlarged the infant state laid by the pirate Ruric. Oleg ruled for three-and-thirty years, and died in 913. The ancient chro-

nicle of Nestor contains an account of the mode of his death, which, however, has all the air of a fable, and has been applied to other characters in more modern times. According to this narrative, he possessed a favourite horse which he had ceased to use, as the diviners had foretold it would be the cause of his death. After a lapse of five years something reminded him of the prediction, and inquiring for the horse, he was informed that it was dead. With a natural feeling of exultation, in consequence of the presumed failure of the prophecy, he desired to see the body of the animal. On being conducted to it, he placed his foot upon the skull, and exclaimed, "So, this is my dreaded enemy!" No sooner were the words uttered than a serpent, which had lain concealed in the cavity of the head, darted out and inflicted a mortal wound on the foot of the sovereign, whose death in consequence verified the truth of the prediction. The world has outlived a belief in diviners and secular prophets, and will doubtless accept this tradition for no more than it is worth. The wild fancies of romance have ever a tendency to intrude themselves into the early history of nations.

Igor I., the son of Ruric, now ascended the throne, which had long been his by inheritance, though not in fact. Arrived at the mature age of forty, he had been for some time married to a Slavonian lady of great personal attractions; a union wisely intended to promote the gradual fusion of the two races. As might be expected in so young and unsettled a state, a new rule was not commenced without some disturbances. The recently subdued tribes evinced symptoms of insubordination, and resisted payment of the tributes imposed upon them. Igor enforced his authority with some energy, and succeeded in reducing to submission those who dared to oppose his authority. One tribe, occupying the southern branch of the Dnieper, prolonged its opposition during a period of three years; but was then subdued by the gallantry of one of his chieftains. Events of this kind, however, brought neither distinction to the prince, or plunder to his followers. Their military ardour was excited by the riches of the capital of the eastern empire, where wealth abounded, and commerce and arts flourished. It was but a small and unproductive triumph to reduce tributary nations, composed of poor tribes, living by their cattle and rude methods of agriculture. Igor also had made an inglorious peace with the Petchenegans, a fierce people who had descended on Russia from their lairs on the Yaik and the Volga; and his subjects chafed under the indignity. Grown used to conquest, and feeling the necessity of the excitement produced by war, they felt no regard for a sovereign who did not seek to extend his rule by conquest, and impress surrounding countries with the terror of his arms, while he converted them into fields of spoil for his followers. Igor seems to have felt this; and in an unhappy moment he resolved to imitate the aggressive career of Oleg, by again directing the arms of Russia against the Grecian empire.

A considerable period must have been occupied in preparing for this wanton and uncalled-for war, which was undertaken with no other object than that of plunder. It was not until the year 941 that Igor had completed his arrangements. These were of a gigantic nature. It is said that he had collected an army of 400,000 troops on board 10,000 barks. This is doubtless a great exaggeration; for it seems incredible that such a sovereign could have raised and maintained an army of a fourth part of that number. We may, however, fairly assume that Igor sailed for Constantinople with a force which was regarded as not only powerful, but almost invincible.

His course was marked by barbarities which far exceeded those of his predecessor Oleg. He displayed all the ferocity of a mean nature, intoxicated with the fatal possession of irresponsible power. He overran and ravaged Paphlagonia, Pontus, and Bithynia. Unhappily for the inhabitants of these countries, the troops of the empire were at a distance, and therefore unable to protect them. Such a circumstance might have elicited the forbearance of generous foes; but it only aggravated the ferocity of Igor and his savage followers. None of the unfortunates who fell into their hands were spared. The Russians gave themselves up to the most revolting excesses of what may be termed a carnival of blood. Some of their helpless victims they crucified; many they impaled, deliberately cut to pieces, or buried alive. Others were suspended by the arms from trees or gibbets, and then used as a target for the arrows of these predatory fiends, to whom their agonies afforded a horrible amusement. The wretches especially sought out the priests, whom they bound and then

put to a dreadful death, by driving with their iron maces long nails into the heads of their miserable victims. Everywhere the track of the invaders was marked by burning villages and mutilated corpses. The ferocious Igor, instead of restraining, encouraged his troops in these shameful outrages upon a defenceless people.

Reports of these terrors soon reached Constantinople. The awe-struck Greeks were roused from their apathy, and resolved this time not to resort to the miserable expedient of purchasing a peace, but to meet their invaders in the field, and extirpate them, or hurl them back. While Igor and his ruffians were leisurely wallowing in blood, the Greeks prepared for vengeance. Marching their troops from all parts, they succeeded in surrounding the invaders, whom they fell upon and slew with as little mercy as they had shown during the time of their unopposed triumph. Igor lost great numbers of his followers, and was scarcely able to reach his ships with the remainder. There new and unexpected terrors awaited them. Theophones, who commanded the Grecian fleet, attacked them by surprise in sight of the Pharos, and threw amongst them that unquenchable preparation known as the Grecian fire, the art of composing which is lost, but which was ever regarded with terror in ancient times. It was an inflammable substance, which spontaneously kindled on falling, and consumed everything near it. Water made it burn with renewed fury; and only vinegar, wine, or sand were supposed to have the power of restraining its ravages. Its motion is said to have been contrary to that of natural fire, and always followed the direction in which it was thrown—whether downwards, sideways, or in any other manner.

The followers of Igor, terrified by a mode of warfare with which they were unacquainted, leaped into the sea to avoid the fires that appeared to threaten and pursue them. Their dispersed vessels, left to themselves, were, many of them, consumed and sunk; others were run on shore; and the remains of the Russian army who escaped death from fire and water, reached the coasts of Bithynia, along which they fled in panic-stricken confusion. In this situation they were fallen upon by the Greek patrician, Phocas, at the head of a small but efficient army. The invaders had lost faith in themselves; to use a modern word, they were altogether "demoralised:" great numbers perished beneath the weapons of the Greeks, and the rest again fled in disorder.

Regaining the remains of their fleet, they put out to sea under cover of the darkness of night, but were pursued by Theophones, who again attacked them, and burnt and sunk several of their remaining barks. Indeed, such were the retributive terrors of this unprovoked aggression, that when Igor reached his own territories, scarcely a third of his immense army survived.

Disgraced and weakened, and advanced in years, it might be supposed that this feeble prince would have sought only to spend the remainder of his life in peaceful repose. Such was not the case; his vindictive nature prompted him, by another effort, to obliterate the stigma he had drawn upon himself and his people. He devoted his energies to the collection of a fresh army; and even purchased the mercenary services of his natural enemies, the Petchenegans. The latter eagerly consented; for mutual hatred was for the time forgotten in the common hope of plunder. In the year 944, Igor again advanced against the capital of the Grecian empire. On this occasion the savage monarch met with a fortune he did not deserve. On arriving at the Chersonesus Taurica, now named the Crimea, he was met by messengers from Romanus, the Greek emperor. That potentate having usurped the throne of the Cæsars, felt more anxious to consolidate his power than to repel the external enemies who threatened him. With an almost incredible meanness, he offered to resume the payment of the tribute which had been imposed on his predecessors by the conquering Oleg. Igor was not disposed to accept this offer; for barbarians appear to consider it a sort of disgrace to obtain their demands without bloodshed. His followers, humbled by a remembrance of the issue of their last expedition, were more reasonable than their chief. "Is it not better," said they, "to get gold, silver, and precious stuffs without fighting? Can we tell who will be the victor, and who the vanquished? and can we enter into a covenant with the sea? We march not on land; we are borne upon the abyss of the waters, and are menaced by one common fate." Igor yielded to these representations, accepted the offers of the Greek emperor, and withdrew his army. The Petchenegans, who would not remain satisfied without slaughter and plunder, he sent to ravage the country of the Bulgarians.

Haunted by a restless desire for excitement, or by the insatiable rapacity of the leaders of his troops, Igor now resolved on a less dangerous project, and turned his arms against the Drevlians, a people who had already submitted to his authority. He met with little resistance from a foe unable to oppose his power with much hope of success, and returned loaded with the additional contributions he had exacted. His mean and grasping spirit urged him again to smite or terrify an unresisting people. Despising the Drevlians as a spiritless people incapable of resistance, he dismissed a great part of his army, and returned with but a small body of troops to desolate their country, in the hope of extorting further advantages. He demanded a double tribute, and it was paid. This ready compliance rather excited than satisfied his cupidity, and he insisted on a threefold payment. To enforce his orders, he imprudently pushed forward into the country, blind to danger in his thirst for gain. The oppressed Drevlians, rendered desperate by repeated outrages, resolved to assassinate him. "He is a mere wolf," said they, "who begins by stealing the sheep one by one, and then comes to fetch away the whole flock. He must be knocked on the head." A number of the Drevlians lay in ambush for their oppressor, and rushing out upon him suddenly, left him dead and weltering in his blood. This act of retribution took place in the year 945, in the neighbourhood of a town called Korosten. There he was buried, and his widow afterwards raised a gigantic mound or high hill over his grave. The close of his inglorious reign of two-and-twenty years terminates what is commonly regarded as an epoch in the history of Russia. The next period was distinguished by the introduction into the country of the Greek form of Christianity.

CHAPTER III.

REGENCY OF OLGA; SHE AVENGES HER HUSBAND'S ASSASSINATION; BECOMES A CHRISTIAN; RESIGNS THE THRONE TO HER SON SVIATOSLAF; DANGER OF KIEF; SVIATOSLAF DIVIDES HIS TERRITORIES BETWEEN HIS THREE SONS; PROCEEDS TO BULGARIA; INVADES GREECE; IS DEFEATED AND SLAIN.

Igor left a son, named Sviatoslaf; but as he was very young at the time of his father's death, Olga, his mother, assumed the government during his minority. She was the Slavonian lady whom Igor had married at the desire of his predecessor Oleg. Her real name is said to have been Prekrasna, which signifies "very beautiful;" but she assumed that of Olga out of compliment to Oleg, who desired her to do so as a mark of the friendship he entertained towards her. She was a woman of more than ordinary ability, and possessed of a more than common portion of the savage temper characteristic of those times. Her first act of power was to avenge the murder of her worthless husband; and this, not upon the assassins, but upon the whole people to which they belonged.

The Drevlians were a Slavonian people, who, dwelling in a locality thickly studded with forests, derived their name, which signifies "a wood," from the land they inhabited. This extended along the river Pripet, where several of the towns once belonging to them are still to be found. They were long regarded as the most savage of Slavonic tribes, and lived like barbarians, without any form of government, or even any idea of the social and civilising rite of marriage. The great teacher Time had, however, modified their barbarism; and in the period of which we are now speaking they cultivated the land, dwelt in towns and villages, and were governed by a prince, named Male. Influenced by ambition (for it cannot be supposed that he was smitten with the faded charms of a princess advanced in years), Male sent ambassadors to Olga to make an offer of his hand. The subtle tigress listened with a seeming pleasure to the description they gave of the person and qualities of their master, and then, abandoning her dissimulation, caused them to be hurled into a pit and buried alive. The savage act was carefully concealed, and a

second and more considerable deputation, the attendance of which had been requested by herself, shared a similar fate. On their arrival, the treacherous woman sent a messenger, who desired them to enjoy the luxury of a bath before they entered her presence. They complied; and while in the bath the doors were made fast, the house set on fire, and the whole of the unsuspecting men perished in the flames. Still using every conceivable precaution that a report of these murders should not reach the ears of the Drevlians, she set out on an expedition to their country, attended by a small army. Arrived there, she dressed her face in smiles, and invited some hundreds of the principal citizens to a solemn banquet. Solemn indeed was this entertainment; for death hovered in the air, and murder lurked behind the seat of every guest. At a given signal, they were surrounded and massacred by the orders of the regal demon, who, with a dreadful sense of enjoyment, thus offered up a sacrifice to the memory of her husband.

Her vengeance, however, was not appeased by this act of wholesale slaughter; for she next proceeded to ravage the whole country, and especially to direct her arms against Korosten, the city near which Igor was slain by those whom his oppressions had provoked past endurance. Though she had ravaged the surrounding country, she was unable to take the capital by force of arms. As usual, therefore, Olga had recourse to artifice. She sent a message to the Drevlians to this effect:—"Why do you hold out so obstinately? All your other towns are in my power; the rest of your people are peacefully tilling the fields whilst you persist in dying of hunger. You have no more to fear from me; I have sufficiently revenged the death of my husband." The unfortunate Drevlians fell into the snare, and offered her a tribute. Olga pretended to disregard it, and said she would accept nothing but a present of three sparrows and a pigeon from each house. The birds were sent readily, and the implacable princess having caused lighted matches to be attached to their tails, immediately set them at liberty. Flying back to the nests under the eaves of the wooden houses of the city, they set it on fire in a thousand places. The inhabitants rushed forth in terror, and perished by the swords of the enemy, who lay beneath the walls awaiting the result of the catastrophe. The prince and all the chief citizens were among the victims; the common people only being spared from motives of policy. The whole country of the Drevlians was thus subjugated and incorporated with the territories of Russia.

The regal fury then visited the northern part of her dominions, where she built towns and villages, constructed bridges and roads, and left many traces of a superior administrative ability. At this period, Christianity had penetrated into pagan Russia, and obtained a few converts at Kief, where they were not only tolerated but respected. It may seem strange that the merciless Olga should have been attracted by its doctrines; but such was the fact. It has been acutely observed, that, perhaps, the very fanaticism of mind which produced such enormous crimes in the satisfaction of what she deemed a pious revenge, led her, by a somewhat similar impulse, to indulge in the consolations of religion. However that may be, she resolved to become a Christian; and, in order to do so with a becoming dignity, she proceeded in 955 to Constantinople to be instructed in its doctrines, and to receive baptism from the hands of the Greek patriarch. The numerous atrocities of which she had been guilty, formed no obstacles in the estimation of the Greek emperor and priesthood, who were pleased to receive as a convert the chief of a powerful and barbarous nation, which they had hitherto regarded only as a scourge. Constantine Porphyrogeneta, the historian, then occupied the throne of the empire of the East, and he himself led Olga to the baptismal font, and introduced her into the Christian communion under the name of Helena. During her stay at Constantinople, she was treated with an imperial ceremony and honour, and on her departure the emperor made her some valuable presents, consisting of vases and beautiful stuffs, of a kind only to be procured in the East. She, in return, promised to send him furs, wax, and soldiers; for the troops of her nation were held in great estimation by the Greeks; but she never kept her word.

The conduct of Olga was not of a kind likely to induce her subjects to follow her example with respect to religion. The mild precepts of Christianity were despised by such of the fierce Russian chieftains who understood anything of them, and disregarded by those who did not. Sviatoslaf, Olga's son, considered them as calculated to effeminate a soldier and make him a coward.

To the appeals of his mother he returned the inquiry, "Would you have me be a laughing-stock to my friends?" It is worthy of remark, that the people, though they generally held aloof from the new religion, did not attempt to resist it by persecution. To that very circumstance may be attributed the tardiness of its progress. Had the new converts been made martyrs to their faith, it would have taken a rapid root in the sympathy and superstition of the multitude. Olga founded churches and encouraged the residence of priests in her capital with no better success. The Russian people were not prepared for Christianity, and as yet it took no root. Olga's new-born zeal for religion appears to have dictated her next public act, which was the resignation of the throne to her son. Some uncertainty exists as to the time when this event took place; but it followed rapidly upon her conversion, which appears to have exercised a beneficial influence upon her ferocious nature.

Sviatoslaf I. was a princely barbarian, who revived the predatory and savage habits of the Varangians, together with the ambitious feelings of the Slavi. He was a remarkable character; animated with a passion for war, and a defiance of fatigue and hardships. Ségur terms him the Achilles, the Charles XII. of that epoch. The social and moral progress of a state, its advancement in agriculture, commerce, or other primitive arts, he neither understood or regarded. War, without any suitable cause; conquest, for the sake of extending his authority;—these were the cherished aims of his existence. Regarding the regal palace at Kief as little better than a magnificent prison, he abandoned it, and took to the field with an army composed of the most reckless and savage of his people. For the future, the camp was his home; and he appeared ambitious of exhibiting the hardihood and rough self-denial of his nature. Emulating the roving Kalmuks, he lived chiefly upon horseflesh, which he cut up himself with his sword, and broiled upon the naked fire. He used no vessels for culinary purposes, and dined in common with his guards. The use of horseflesh was convenient to one whose life was devoted to war, since the same animal that carried the soldier, served in times of extremity for his food. The other habits of the new sovereign were as rude and as severely simple as his diet. He disdained to sleep in a tent; but, braving the inclemency of the Russian sky, passed his nights upon the bare earth, with a saddle for a pillow, and a saddle-cloth or a cloak for a covering. In matters of personal indulgence, he abolished all distinction, and shared the hardships of the meanest of his followers. Such a leader was necessarily popular; and his soldiers were prepared to follow and obey him with a rigid submission amounting to devotion. One point of the character of Sviatoslaf is deserving of honourable notice. Unlike his subtle mother, he did not avail himself of the advantages likely to result from unexpected attacks, but always prefaced active hostilities by a declaration of war.

For some time the warlike prince was at a loss to find an enemy upon whom he could exhibit his prowess. At length he turned his arms against the Kozans, a people who had poured down from the eastern shore of the Euxine, and subdued some of the Slavonic tribes dwelling in the south of Russia. The khan of the Kozans was defeated in a sanguinary battle, and his capital, a fortified city on the Don, taken possession of by the victor in the year 964. Other successes over these people followed; and thenceforth, it has been dramatically said, the name of the Kozans disappears from the page of history.

The warlike services of Sviatoslaf were next purchased by Nicephorus Phocas, the Greek emperor. The repeated incursions of the Hungarians upon the territories of the latter had been secretly assisted by the Bulgarians, and it was against them that Nicephorus derived the aid of the Russians. Sviatoslaf eagerly embraced the design, and entering the Danube with a fleet containing 60,000 men, captured the chief towns that lay along the banks of that extensive river. His success inspired him with the idea of annexing these newly acquired possessions to his Russian dominions. To accomplish this ambitious but unwise design, he resolved to transfer the seat of his government to the city of Yamboly.

While the grand prince was in the pursuit of conquest abroad, his own territories were subjected to the rude feet of invaders. Those ancient enemies of the Russians, the Petchenegans, taking advantage of his absence, desolated the whole country in the direction of Kief, and then set down before the city in great force. Though it was strongly built and enclosed within fortifications, yet the garrison it contained was

feeble; and the inhabitants, amongst whom were the mother and sons of Sviatoslaf, were in the most imminent danger. Besides, the city was not supplied with provisions necessary to enable it to stand a siege; and the only choice of its inhabitants appeared to lie between famine and the swords of the invaders. They contrived, however, by a stratagem to inform Prititch, a Russian general, who was posted with a small army on the other side of the Dnieper, of the position in which they were placed; and he resolved on making an effort for their relief. Embarking at daybreak, he commanded his soldiers to blow their trumpets and raise their voices in tumultuous shouts. These were answered from within the city by the clang of military instruments and joyous shouts of welcome. The stratagem succeeded; the Petchenegans, believing that the victorious army of Sviatoslaf was approaching to the rescue, were seized with terror, and scarcely restrained by their leader from taking to an ignominious flight. Requesting an interview with Prititch, he inquired whether he was the grand prince. The Russian leader adroitly replied that he was but the commander of the vanguard of Sviatoslaf, who was himself advancing with a formidable army. After a courteous interview, and an exchange of gifts, the two leaders parted; the prince of the Petchenegans retired with his followers, and Kief was saved.

On receiving information of the danger of his capital, Sviatoslaf hurried from his conquests in Bulgaria, and following the retreating Petchenegans, overtook and defeated them. After the infliction of this punishment, he generously permitted them to return to their homes without further chastisement. Soon afterwards the aged princess Olga, or Helena, was gathered to that silent resting-place to which, during her turbulent career, she had sent so many of her enemies. History has accorded to her the merit of being an able ruler; yet it is scarcely possible, in its numerous records, to find a woman more vindictive, savage, and remorseless. Her crimes did not prevent the Russian church from bestowing upon her memory the inappropriate honour of canonization; and the name of St. Olga was long cherished as that of the princess who introduced Christianity into Russia.

Sviatoslaf now resolved on returning to Bulgaria, and concluding there the conquest he had begun. The Bulgarians were at this period rising rapidly into importance as a trading nation, and they carried on extensive commercial operations with Persia, India, Greece, France, and, through Russia, with the countries that lay to the north. Their wealth aroused the avarice of Sviatoslaf; and telling his chieftains that he preferred Yamboly to Kief as a residence, he prepared for a second expedition, with the intention of converting the Bulgarian city into the capital of Russia. Before departing, he committed an error that might have led to the utter ruin of the state, and which was not rectified without much bloodshed. Considering the claims of his family, and regardless of the interests of his people, he divided the Russian territories between his three sons, retaining in himself only the nominal sovereignty. Yaropolk he installed in the government of Kief; Oleg, that of the country of the Drevlians; and Vladimir, a natural son by one of Olga's attendants, in the ancient throne of Novgorod. In addition to the danger of thus partitioning a state, the principle was introduced that the grand prince had a right to divide his territories, and regulate as he pleased the order of the succession.

Having provided for the government of his dominions, Sviatoslaf, in 970, set out on his second expedition to Bulgaria, from which he was destined never to return. Advancing upon Yamboly, his troops were attacked with great bravery and driven back with terrible loss. Deeming their destruction certain, they determined to sell their lives as dearly as they could. This resolve once taken, they fought with such ferocity as to strike terror into their assailants, and to turn the scale of victory. The efforts of the Russians appeared almost superhuman; the astonished Bulgarians were defeated, and yielded their capital to the enemy, who once more was master of the fertile territory on the right bank of the Danube.

Submission did not restore peace to Bulgaria: that country was yet to be the theatre of more important struggles. The Greek emperor Nicephorus, who had originally engaged Sviatoslaf to descend upon Bulgaria, had been succeeded on the throne by his assassin, John Zimisces. The latter at once perceived the error his predecessor had committed in attracting the ambitious Russians to the banks of the Danube; for they were a far more dangerous enemy than the less warlike Bulgarians. Finding that a pledge had been given to Nicephorus that the Russians should not occupy the con-

quered territory, Zimisces demanded of Sviatoslaf the immediate evacuation of Bulgaria. The Russian prince not only refused compliance, but added, that he would shortly come to Constantinople and drive the Greeks into Asia. On receiving this defiant answer, Zimisces instantly prepared for war; for he was a man who, to quote the language of Gibbon, "in a diminutive body possessed the spirit and abilities of a hero." The Russian prince was secretly encouraged in his breach of treaty by a Greek patrician, named Kolokir, who aspired to the throne of Constantinople himself, and hoped to obtain it by the assistance of the Russians, whom he intended to bribe by the relinquishment of Bulgaria. Sviatoslaf fell in with the schemes of the traitor; for it was important to him to place an emperor of his own choosing on the throne of the Eastern world.

Sviatoslaf commenced the war. Compelling the conquered Bulgarians and other nations to join his forces, he succeeded in raising an army, said to amount to the enormous number of 300,000 men. Advancing into Thrace, he ravaged the country as far as Adrianople, where his vast host was defeated through a stratagem of the commandant of that town, and driven back upon Yamboly. He was followed and besieged there the following year by a Greek army, under Zimisces in person. The assault was rapid and successful, and the city taken by the Greeks. Eight thousand Russians threw themselves into the royal citadel; though held to be impregnable, it was soon set on fire by Zimisces, and the greater part of these wretched men perished in the flames. Sviatoslaf, however, kept the field with a remnant of his army, whose fidelity he attempted to secure by the ferocity with which he punished disaffection. Victory still sat upon the standards of the Greeks, and most of the towns of Bulgaria surrendered to them. The Russian prince, after pursuing a wandering and predatory career, shut himself and his followers up in Durastole, the last important town which had not yet submitted to the Greeks. There he was followed by the energetic Zimisces, and defeated in an obstinate combat in which he ventured to engage. Blockaded by land and sea, the Russians were threatened with the horrors of starvation. In vain did they frequently rush out upon their foes, and exhibit the most despairing courage. They were constantly repulsed; and the advisers of Sviatoslaf implored him to sue for peace. The undaunted prince rejected this advice, and resolved to risk everything upon one last effort. Placing himself at the head of his troops, he made a final sortie; and having no hope but from the desperation of his followers, ordered the gates of the city to be closed the moment they had left it, thus leaving no alternative but death or victory. The battle, though obstinate and sanguinary, was but a brief one, and ended in the total defeat of the Russians.

Their prince was now compelled to beg for peace, which the victors had the moderation or prudence to grant. Having bound himself, by the oaths he regarded as most sacred, to observe the conditions dictated to him, Sviatoslaf turned his steps towards Russia, attended by the half-clothed and half-starved remnant of his army. Notwithstanding the entreaties of those by whom he was surrounded, this wilful man insisted on embarking on the Borysthenes, the shores of which were inhabited by his ancient foes the Petchenegans. The latter, aware of the deplorable condition of the retreating Russians, assembled in great force, and awaited their approach near the rock of the cataracts. The year was closing when the grand prince arrived near that spot; and there he was compelled to pass the winter, beset by the miseries of cold and famine. On the return of spring he endeavoured to cut a passage through the ranks of his enemies; but defeat again attended him, and this time he himself perished in the encounter. The prince of the Petchenegans had his skull converted into a goblet, and encircled it with gold, on which this moral reflection was inscribed—"In the attempt to seize the property of others, thou didst lose thine own." Sviatoslaf fell a victim to his own turbulence in the year 973.

Again are we about to enter upon what is justly regarded as another phase in the history of the Russian state. "The five sovereigns," says a writer whom we have previously quoted, "Ruric, Oleg, Igor, Olga, and Sviatoslaf, reigned alone and dominant. In each of these cases there was but a single heir to the throne, so that the country was, in its infancy, auspiciously saved from the evils of partition, and enabled to accumulate strength and coherence. The only instances of delegated rule—those of the two brothers of Ruric—lapsed before

the death of the sovereign; the accession was therefore regulated by an accident that confirmed the conservation and power of the state. During these reigns the character of the sovereigns, with the exception of the feeble Igor, harmonised admirably with the demands of the time. The firmness of Ruric, the boldness of Oleg, the wild devotion and ferocity of Olga, and the savage valour of Sviatoslaf, contributed severally to enlarge, to bind, and to establish the empire. Many mistakes were doubtless committed; but the science of government was then young; and better tempers and more consistent laws might have failed to preserve the allegiance, as they could hardly have permitted the lawlessness, of the banded savages that prowled over the face of the country. But with the partition of the land amongst three princes of unequal capacity came a long train of misfortunes, which we shall find alternately averted and exasperated by circumstances quite as fortuitous as those by which the first struggles of this formidable power were rendered successful."

CHAPTER IV.

YAROPOLK SEIZES UPON THE DOMINIONS OF HIS BROTHERS; IS DRIVEN FROM THE THRONE BY VLADIMIR I.; HE PUNISHES THE TRAITOR BLUDE; EXTENDS HIS DOMINIONS; INORDINATE LICENTIOUSNESS OF VLADIMIR; HE ADOPTS CHRISTIANITY, AND INTRODUCES THAT FORM OF RELIGION INTO RUSSIA; HIS SUBSEQUENT WEAKNESS AND DEATH.

Russia was now governed by three princes. The title of grand-duke no longer existed, and with it the paramount sovereignty was destroyed. Yaropolk ruled in Kief, Oleg in the country of the Drevlians, and Vladimir in Novgorod. Yaropolk is described as of a weak, inactive nature, ever prone to be led into wrong by the counsels of his subordinates. Oleg was rash, vindictive, and unprincipled; while Vladimir was ambitious, romantically brave, inordinately licentious, original in genius, and energetic in action. Under such circumstances, it was not difficult to predict which of these princes would become paramount, if even he did not subdue his brothers and reunite their territories to his own.

Svenald, an old warrior, who had been the esteemed friend of Sviatoslaf, followed the fortunes of Yaropolk. The savage Oleg had, either from provocation or caprice, conceived a dislike for the son of Svenald. Meeting the young man in a wood during a hunting party, Oleg fell upon and assassinated him. The father resolved on revenge, and instigated the feeble-minded Yaropolk to raise an army and invade the country of the Drevlians. The fierce Oleg collected his forces, and the brothers met in battle. The Drevlians were defeated; and in the confusion of flight, Oleg was hurled over the broken parapet of a bridge, and either drowned or crushed to death by the multitude of horses and troops that fell upon him. Yaropolk pretended to mourn for his brother's fate; but he took possession of his territory.

Vladimir is described as giving way to such a passionate grief in consequence of the violent death of Oleg, that he retired from Novgorod; and crossing the sea in a fit of despondency, took up his abode with the Varangians. It is far more probable that he feared the power of his surviving brother, and fled to provide for his own safety. Yaropolk, finding Novgorod left without a ruler, yielded to the importunities of his followers, and seized that also. Thus the Russian dominions became again united under the sway of a single prince.

Vladimir remained a fugitive among the Varangians for a period of two years, during which he occupied himself in collecting a band of adventurers sufficient to enable him to recover his lost territory. Returning suddenly to Novgorod, he was received by the people with joy. The chiefs who governed in the name of Yaropolk were taken by surprise, and, without attempting resistance, sought their safety by submission.

Vladimir dismissed them with a message to his brother, that he would soon see him at Kief.

While Vladimir was preparing to seize his brother's throne, he was attracted by the charms of the daughter of Rogvolode, prince of Polotsk. Yaropolk also was a suitor for the hand of the lady; and the father, fearing to offend either of the brothers, referred them to his daughter. The lady's choice was rapid, and her answer coarsely uncourteous. Vladimir was the son of one of the attendants of the princess Olga; and in reference to this stain on his birth, and also to a custom which then existed for brides to pull off the boots of their husbands on the wedding night, she replied, "I will never unboot the son of a slave. I choose Yaropolk." This insulting answer naturally aroused the anger of Vladimir, and he resolved on a revenge in the severity of which we forget the offence. He marched against Rogvolode, defeated him in battle, slew him and his two sons with his own hand; and, while reeking with their blood, compelled the indiscreet princess, who had been the cause of these calamities, to become his wife.

Flushed with this savage triumph, Vladimir led his army against Kief. The city was capable of prolonged resistance, and its inhabitants were faithful to their ruler. The feeble mind of Yaropolk, however, was influenced by the suggestions of a villanous counsellor, named Blude. Though this traitor had received the highest marks of distinction from his prince, yet, influenced by promises of reward, he entered into a conspiracy with Vladimir for his destruction. He persuaded Yaropolk that the people were treacherously disposed towards him, and convinced the shallow prince that his only chance of safety lay in flight. The latter adopted this suggestion; and the inhabitants of Kief, finding themselves deserted, were induced to submit to Vladimir. The timid Yaropolk did not by flight secure the safety he coveted. The traitor Blude accompanied him, and, as the wretched prince fled from place to place like a hunted hare, informed Vladimir of his hiding-place and his designs. Yaropolk was at length rendered desperate by a fear of his pursuers and the sufferings he endured, and resolved to throw himself on the mercy of his brother. He trusted to a man devoid of fraternal emotions: as he was advancing to throw himself into the arms of Vladimir, he was assassinated by some of the attendants of the latter. Again the Russian dominions were united under one prince, who, despite his crimes, possessed the ability to govern them.

The throne was now filled by Vladimir I. His first act was to seize and debauch the widow of his brother Yaropolk, a lady far advanced in pregnancy. As a reward for her submission to his desires, he adopted the infant of which she subsequently became the mother. His next was to punish the traitor Blude, notwithstanding that he derived the advantages arising from the guilt of this northern Judas. Vladimir knew that a man who was so ungrateful and treacherous to one master, was incapable of faithfully serving another. For three days he entertained the miscreant at his court with a royal magnificence, and conferred on him the chief dignities of the state. On the fourth, Blude was summoned to the presence of his sovereign, who said—"I have kept my promise strictly. I have received you with welcome, and heaped unwonted honours upon your head. This I have done as your friend. To-day, as judge, I condemn the traitor and assassin of his prince." This sentence was followed by immediate execution, and the traitor expiated his guilt with his blood.

The fierce Varangians, by whose assistance Vladimir had recovered his authority, were clamorous for the reward of their services, and desired that he would compel the inhabitants of Kief to pay them a tribute. The grand prince had a wise objection to subject his people to any oppression but his own. Though unprepared to resist the demands of his greedy dependents, he hesitated to comply with their demands, and fed them with promises, while he avoided giving any decisive answer to their applications. During the delay thus created, he so strengthened himself that the Varangians became convinced of the hopelessness of pressing their claims. He was too powerful to be influenced by intimidation, too crafty to be deceived into compliance, and too firm to yield to solicitation. Perceiving this state of things, the Varangians requested his permission to make an incursion into Greece, and pay themselves by plunder. To this he consented, after selecting the bravest of them for his own service. Still unwilling to convert the Greek emperor into an enemy, he secretly informed that potentate of the designs of the desperadoes, and desired him to arrest them and disperse them over his

dominions, so that thus divided, they should cease to be an object of alarm to either government.

The brave and subtle Vladimir was now firmly seated upon his throne, the authority of which he greatly extended by his ability and warlike exertions. He subdued many neighbouring peoples, and enlarged his dominions on almost every hand. Inflated by success, he appears to have been inspired with a sense of gratitude towards the pagan gods of his nation, though it is not unlikely he was desirous of captivating the people by a pompous display of religious ceremonies. He caused a new statue of the god Perune, with a silver head, to be erected near his palace, and announced his intention of propitiating the image by a sacrifice of some prisoners taken in war. His followers suggested that the god would be better pleased with the blood of a victim selected from his own people. Vladimir consented to this arrangement; and the lot, probably by design, fell upon a young Varangian, who had been educated by his father in the Christian faith. Great preparations were made for the savage ceremonial; but, at the appointed hour, the afflicted father not only refused to surrender his son, but denounced the proceeding as a sanguinary superstition. The priests and people, enraged equally by the disappointment and the insult to their carved deity, rushed into the house, and put both father and son to death. The unfortunate men were eventually canonised, and remain the first and only martyrs of the Russian church.

Vladimir indulged in an inordinate licentiousness. He had married six wives; and had so many establishments of concubines, that these female ministers to his pleasure are said to have amounted altogether to eight hundred. Still his lustful nature was not satisfied; every fresh pleasing face and form attracted his attention, and he violated the honour of the wives and daughters of many of his subjects. An ancient chronicler remarked, that no woman of any personal beauty was safe from the lust of this second Solomon. He did not, however, perceive the incongruity of this reckless gratification of his passions with his zeal for any religion that recognised even the scantiest moral duties. A wild zeal for the religion of his country filled his mind, and communicated itself, in some degree, from the ruler to the people. He built new temples in honour of the pagan gods recognised by his nation, and enriched them with a magnificence new to their barbarous worshippers. The valour of the Russian sovereign in war, his power over his dominions, and his awakened zeal in favour of his religion, attracted the notice of distant states; the representatives of four of whom sought to convert him to the faith they followed. The eastern Bulgarians solicited his attention to the sensual and warlike religion of Mohammed. The voluptuous mind of Vladimir dwelt with pleasure upon the description of its paradise, where rose-lipped houris ministered to the pleasures of the faithful; but he was repelled by the doctrine of circumcision and the interdiction of wine. The Germans unfolded to him the doctrines of the Roman church; but this he rejected on account of its pope, whose asserted power over princes he regarded as not only inadmissible, but monstrous. The laws of Moses were laid before him by the professors of Judaism; but this he rejected, because he thought it irrational to accept a religion from a people without a country, who were, moreover, wanderers under the curse of heaven. A priest from Constantinople described to him the doctrines and ceremonials of the Christian church of the East, and these did not seem open to any apparent objection.

Discussion and reflection had shaken the faith of Vladimir in the ancient superstitions of his people; but a conflict took place in his mind as to the religion he should adopt in lieu of them. In this situation, he composed a commission of ten of the most thoughtful of his chiefs, and sent them into the several countries where the various religions were received, to investigate the arguments on which they were based, and to report which was the most worthy of adoption. The envoys proceeded on their journey. The church of the Arabian prophet was not to their taste, because it made too many demands upon their self-control. The Roman churches in Germany repelled them, on account of the meanness of their decorations and the tawdry finery of their priests. When, however, they beheld the minarets of St. Sophia at Constantinople, and the extravagant magnificence of the Greek religion, they were touched with emotions of wonder and awe, and concluded that they had at length found the true mode of worship. Returning home, they made a highly favourable report of it to Vladimir, and added—"If the

Greek religion was not the best, Olga, your ancestress, the wisest of women, would never have thought of adopting it." The imagination of the grand prince was excited by the narratives to which he listened; and after some deliberations with his council, he resolved to adopt the Greek form of Christianity, and undergo the public ceremony of baptism.

Here, however, a difficulty arose; for Vladimir would not be made a member of the Christian church unless the baptismal rite was performed by an ecclesiastical dignitary of the highest order, and none such were to be found in Russia. To solicit from the Greek emperors, Basil and Constantine, the assistance of their archbishops, seemed derogatory to his imperious nature; and therefore he resorted to a singular and circuitous mode of obtaining that which he would not condescend to accept as a favour. Actuated even in this matter by the fierce spirit of his times, he declared war upon Greece, that he might extort from her that service he was too haughty to obtain by the readiest means! Having assembled a numerous army, he proceeded, by sea, to the rich and powerful city of Kherson, in the Taurica Chersonesus, now called the Crimea. Laying siege to the city, he put up this strange prayer to the Deity:—"O God, grant me thy help to take this town, that I may carry from it Christians and priests, to instruct me and my people, and to convey the true religion into my dominions!"

The siege was prolonged over six months, and a terrible destruction of human life took place, to satisfy the whimsical pride of a pagan prince. So obstinate was the resistance, and so numerous the reverses experienced by the army of Vladimir, that he would have been compelled to retire from the walls of Kherson, but that a treacherous priest within the city betrayed it to him. This traitor, either from malignity or a mad excess of zeal in favour of his religion, contrived, by means of a letter tied to an arrow, and shot into the Russian camp, to inform Vladimir that the water-springs from which the subterranean pipes of the city were supplied, were situated immediately in his rear. The springs were discovered, the water diverted into other channels, and the citizens, after suffering the horrors of extreme thirst, were compelled to surrender.

Vladimir could now be baptized with such an amount of ceremony as he deemed becoming his dignity. But his religious emotions, though probably sincere, were not unmixed with political motives of a very worldly nature. He demanded from the Grecian emperors the hand of their sister Anna in marriage, and accompanied his message by a threat, that he would lay siege to Constantinople in the event of refusal. It was his intention, by this match, to acquire an indirect claim upon the throne of the Greek empire, which, at some favourable time, he or his successors might enforce. The emperors Basil and Constantine were not in a condition to refuse compliance; and, after some hesitation, they yielded—stipulating, however, that he should embrace the Christian faith. Accordingly, in the year 988, Vladimir was received into the bosom of the Greek church, under the name of Basil, and united to the Princess Anna, who is reported to have been by no means flattered with the conquest she had made. The Russian sovereign, in return, restored the territory he had so recently captured, listened to an exposition of his new creed, and returned to Kief, carrying with him priests, relics, vases of holy water, and images of saints.

The royal convert resolved on at once forcing upon his subjects the religion of which he had so recently become a member, and with which he must necessarily have been very imperfectly acquainted. With a decision natural to a despotic barbarian, he resolved on the disgrace and destruction of the pagan gods, from the worship of whom he had fallen so lately. Perune, the silver-headed and golden-whiskered father of the gods, first excited his anger. He caused the image to be stripped of all its costly ornaments, and after exposing the naked log to the people, had it tied to the tail of a horse, beaten with cudgels by twelve stout soldiers, and then thrown into the Borysthenes, amidst the shouts and groans of the multitude. No divine vengeance followed this seemingly impious act; and the people began to think that Perune was but a wooden and powerless god after all. A belief in his divinity was not, however, universally extinguished. For, some time afterwards, a legend related, that when the statue of Perune at Novgorod was hurled into the river, the figure of the god rose from the water, and, casting his staff amongst the people, exclaimed, "Citizens, I leave you that in remembrance of me!" The minor gods of Russia were disposed of

in a similarly arbitrary manner; and Vladimir then issued a proclamation, commanding all his subjects to assemble on a certain day at Kief, and be baptized there, on the banks of the river. The people appear to have entertained but little affection for the ancient faith, as they offered no opposition. "That must be a good religion," said they, "which is adopted by the prince and the boyards." In the remote districts of Russia, however, paganism lingered for some centuries; it was more in acordance than the new faith with the rude and wonder-loving barbarians of those northern forests.

Not satisfied even with these vigorous proceedings, Vladimir zealously endeavoured to enforce Christianity wherever he had formerly enjoined the superstitions of paganism. He lavished the revenues of his state in building churches and houses for pious purposes, and instituted public repasts, in imitation of the love-feasts of the early Christians. Certainly, it must be admitted, that the religion he adopted exercised a softening influence upon his mind, and induced him to lead a purer life. He dismissed his trains of concubines, and is reported to have become a pattern of conjugal fidelity. Instead of the avidity he had shown to shed blood in unjust wars, he hesitated even to condemn a criminal to death. He also introduced some good judicial regulations, and effected many improvements in the various towns throughout the country.

Always prone to go to extremes, Vladimir now became effeminate and almost imbecile in his mildness. The Petchenegans, taking advantage of this state of the Russian prince, made frequent incursions into his dominions. In one of these, the two armies lay on opposite sides of the river Sula, the waters of which fall into the Dnieper. A battle appeared inevitable; when the Petchenegan chief proposed to Vladimir to spare the blood of their respective troops, by deciding the quarrel by single combat between two champions, one chosen from each army; the people whose representative should perish in the strife, binding themselves to abstain from hostilities for the space of three years. Vladimir's pride forbade him to reject the proposal; but he acceded to it unwillingly; for he knew not where to find a man of sufficient strength and courage to cope with the gigantic champion of the Petchenegans. On the day appointed for the combat he was compelled to request a delay. During the interval thus obtained, an old man, who, together with his four sons, had long served in the Russian army, came forward and offered the services of a fifth son, who, though but a youth, was gifted with prodigious strength. Before the offer was accepted, the aspirant was ordered to exhibit his prowess in an encounter with an infuriated bull. The animal was irritated with red-hot irons, and then set at liberty. The young athlete struck the bull down, and speedily dispatching the animal, tore off his skin as a trophy. Vladimir was satisfied, and surveyed the beardless champion with feelings of hope. The day of trial arrived, and the combatants met in an open space between the two camps. The bulky Petchenegan looked contemptuously on the undeveloped yet well-proportioned and muscular frame of his adversary. His feeling of triumph was, however, premature; his antagonist rushed upon him at once, brought him to the earth with a well-directed blow, and there dispatched him. It is said that the Petchenegans fled in terror on seeing the fall of their champion: this is doubtful; but they observed the agreement into which they had entered, and abstained from aggression for the space of three years. The young victor, who followed the humble occupation of a currier, was, together with his father, raised to the rank of nobility, and a town erected as a memorial of his honourable encounter.

During the three years, the weakness of Vladimir appeared to increase; and on the expiration of that period, the Petchenegans again took to the field. They laid siege to Vassilef, a town built by the grand prince, who, in endeavouring to succour it, was defeated and wounded, and only saved his life by hiding under the arch of a bridge, over which his victorious enemies passed in pursuit of him. This was in 996; and in the following year he was subjected to fresh indignities by his untiring foes.

The latter years of the once fierce and powerful monarch were bereft of the brilliancy which attended the earlier period of his reign, and his life was extinguished in gloom and bitterness. Perplexed as to the mode in which he should provide for his numerous sons, he adopted the weak and fatal expedient of partitioning his dominions amongst them. This he did during his life; and, while parting with his provinces, retained only the title of grand prince, and a tribute from each of his sons. Yaroslaf,

the one to whom he had given Novgorod, refused the tribute, and prepared to resist the paramount authority of his father. The aged parent, though struck to the heart by this ingratitude, yet retained enough of his former energy to collect an army and march upon Novgorod, with the object of reducing his rebellious son to submission. The effort, however, was above his strength; and the contemplation of the unnatural conflict was as a sword in his heart. Unable to reach the scene of expected strife, he expired of grief on the road. His death took place in 1015, after a protracted reign of five-and-forty years.

Notwithstanding his serious defects of character, it must be granted that Vladimir was no common man. Bold, resolute, subtle, and gifted with an acute though not penetrating intelligence, the force of his mind was confined by caprice and unregulated impulsiveness. A fratricide and a despot, he might elicit our severest reprehension; but we ought not to judge his conduct in these respects by our modern estimates of morality and duty. He was tinctured with the barbarity of the age in which he dwelt, and acted in compliance with its ferocious instincts. Yet in some respects he was in advance of his time. He rejected the effete idolatry of his country, and replaced it by the purer spirit of Christianity. He established schools for the education of different classes of the community, and placed them under the direction of learned men from Greece. These efforts were regarded with repugnance by his people, who considered educational arts as identified with sorcery. So great was their dislike to the instruction introduced, that Vladimir could only obtain scholars for these institutions by the unjustifiable means of compelling the attendance of the children of his people. He also strove to improve the taste of his people by employing the architects of Greece to erect palaces, churches, and other buildings, and to redeem his dominions from the native desert by felling forests, and erecting towns on spots which previously harboured only wolves and other beasts of prey. Though many of his reforms were vehemently resisted by his people, yet they mourned his loss, and he obtained from them the title of the Great, on account of his abilities as a ruler; while the infant Christian church of Russia canonised him as a saint, and pronounced him as coequal with the apostles. Nearly eight centuries afterwards the empress Catherine instituted an order of knighthood to his honour.

CHAPTER V.

SVIATOPOLK, BY TREACHERY AND MURDER, UNITES THE PRINCIPALITIES OF RUSSIA UNDER HIS SCEPTRE; HE IS SUPPORTED BY THE DUKE OF POLAND, BUT DRIVEN FROM THE THRONE BY YAROSLAF; THE LATTER BECOMES GRAND PRINCE; HIS CODE OF LAWS; HE PARTITIONS RUSSIA AMONGST HIS SONS, AND DIES.

THE deatn of Vladimir was followed by a period of confusion and unnatural warfare. Sviatopolk, the adopted son of the late grand prince, born of the beautiful widow of Yaropolk, resolved on the immediate execution of a design he had long entertained of setting aside his half-brothers and re-establishing the divided country under his own authority. With this view he caused three of them to be assassinated; and the other sons of Vladimir, with one exception, fearing a similar fate, refrained from opposing so reckless and remorseless a man.

Yaroslaf, the Prince of Novgorod, resolved on making a stand against the ambitious projects of the usurping fratricide. So vigorous were the efforts of Yaroslaf, and so ably was he seconded by his subjects, whose affection he had won by the clemency of his rule, that he soon drove his unprincipled brother out of Kief, and compelled him to take refuge with his father-in-law, Boleslas, the Duke of Poland. The latter yielded to the solicitations of the fugitive, and advanced into Russia at the head of a powerful force, with the intention of restoring Sviatopolk to the throne. Yaroslaf was prepared, and met the invaders on the banks of the Bug. For

some days each army remained encamped within sight of the other, neither caring to commence the conflict. At length a Russian soldier stood upon the bank of the river and mimicked the corpulent size and gait of the Polish duke. Boleslas, whose intrepidity had obtained for him the surname of the Lion-hearted, was incensed beyond the bounds of prudence by this insult. Plunging into the water, he commanded his soldiers to follow him, and the Poles soon landed on the other side, and stood face to face with their foes. A protracted battle followed, but the Russians were defeated, and Sviatopolk re-seated on the throne he had won by treachery and murder.

The disheartened Yaroslaf fled to Novgorod, and was preparing to retire across the Baltic, but the loyalty of his subjects restrained him. Destroying the ships that were to take him away, they laid heavy taxes upon themselves for the sake of engaging mercenary troops to assist his cause. The prosperity of Sviatopolk was of brief duration. Influenced by a mean jealousy of the Poles who had succoured him, he conceived a design for their destruction. This treacherous scheme was discovered by Boleslas, who proceeded to take a decisive revenge. He gave Kief over to be plundered by his followers, who, infuriated at the baseness of their allies, could with difficulty be restrained from reducing the city to ashes. Loaded with spoil, they then returned to their own country. They were followed by Sviatopolk, who, maddened by wrath, sought to obtain vengeance for the desolated capital; but he was defeated in a battle on the banks of the Bug, and compelled to return to Kief in confusion. Yaroslaf seized this opportunity of hurling the usurper from his throne. Marching rapidly against the fratricide, he defeated him in a fiercely contested engagement. Sviatopolk deserted his troops before the battle was ended, and perished in a miserable condition on the road.

Yaroslaf now ascended the throne as grand prince, and it soon became apparent that the government could not be in better hands. His claim, however, was disputed by his brother Motislaf, the seventh son of Vladimir, and Prince of Tmutaracan, who had gained some distinction as an able soldier. Motislaf desired Yaroslaf to cede to him a part of the fraternal appanage he governed. The latter consented; but the territory he gave did not satisfy the expectations of his brother, who immediately resorted to arms to obtain by force that which he was unable to get by supplication. In the war which followed, Motislaf was triumphant; but he generously divided the Russian dominions between himself and his brother, with whom he continued to remain in amity until his death, which took place seven years afterwards. The Russian dominions were then again united under one ruler.

The commencement of the reign of Yaroslaf was rendered unsettled by numerous wars, in most of which he was successful. He carried hostilities into Finland, Livonia, Lithuania, and Bulgaria, and even penetrated into Greece, where he suffered a defeat. He did not, however, seek to acquire distinction by feats of arms; he seldom sought war, and usually entrusted the command of his armies to his lieutenants. Notwithstanding his ingratitude to his aged father, he behaved well to his people. He governed with wisdom, and addressed himself to the noble task of exalting the character of his subjects. Especially devoting himself to the spread of education and the promotion of religion, he caused the Scriptures to be translated into the Slavonian language, and even accomplished the laborious task of transcribing several copies with his own hand. But the great work of his life was the construction of a code of laws, which, though it may read strangely to modern ears, was doubtless adapted to the wants of the time. Hitherto, written laws were rare, and always liable to be interpreted by the strong in their own favour. Princes had been occupied rather in protecting their dominions from aggression than in administering justice to their subjects. The result was a state of society in which life and property was insecure, the arts unknown, and commerce almost stagnant.

A rapid glance at this code of laws will give some insight into the character of the Russian people at this period. It was couched in a spirit of paternal despotism. "Respect this ordinance," said the prince; "it must be the rule of your conduct. Such is my will." Its first article constituted the law the public avenger only in cases where the friends of the murdered man were unable to retaliate on the criminal themselves. This, doubtless, was but the reduction of an existing practice into a written law, and the legal permission of outrages the ruler felt it impossible to restrain. Though life was taken in retaliation, the law was not broken, and order

appeared to exist. To have made the laws widely different to all established customs, would have been to run the risk of their being laid aside altogether. If there were no relatives to revenge the death of a murdered man, the assassin was to pay a fine regulated according to the rank of his victim. In this scale, the life of a woman was estimated at only half the value of that of a man—a circumstance which showed how highly mere brute strength was regarded; while no fine was imposed on the murderer of a slave. In this case, the shedder of human blood was to pay to the owner the value of the slave, if he had been killed wantonly; but if the victim had insulted his assassin, the law required nothing at the hands of the latter. It is also significant of the scarcely disguised contempt which was cherished against the pursuit of learning, that while for the murder of the prince's cook, or other domestic, a penalty of forty grivnas was to be paid to the state, only twelve grivnas was the fine demanded in the event of the victim being a schoolmaster!

Though Yaroslaf's code of laws paid so small a respect to the lives of slaves that it would not deprive the rich of the savage gratification of slaying one on any caprice, yet it held the honour of free Russians in great estimation. For striking a blow, a fine was exacted equal in amount to that imposed for the murder of a schoolmaster or artisan. The offence of pulling a man by the beard, or knocking out one of his teeth, was visited with a similar penalty. Many regulations were framed for the security of property; but one law seemed made as if with the intention of favouring dishonest men. If a man lent money to another who denied the loan on oath, the latter was released from the debt. Such an enactment in a country where the legal interest of money was forty per cent., was calculated to create fraud, and to extinguish trading transactions.

The code divided the population into three classes: namely, the nobles, the freemen, and the slaves. Of these, the latter, chiefly prisoners of war and their descendants, were left wholly unprotected. The law did not recognise the humanity of these unhappy men, but placed them in the same category with the inferior animals. The freemen, composed of citizens, farmers, landholders, and hired servants, were fenced in from the encroachments of the nobles. They were subdivided into centuries, each of which elected its representative, or tribune, who, by virtue of his office, took equal rank with the boyards or nobles. The latter were regarded as the voyevodes, or military leaders of the state, and the direct counsellors of the prince. The hereditary rights of property were preserved unconditionally in their families alone. Thus arose a class of rich patricians, identified with the interests of property, while commerce and the popular privileges were represented in the assemblies of the elected representatives of the people. Here were the germs of a legislative system which, but for subsequent circumstances which swept over and extinguished them, might have ripened into a wise mode of government and a just social balance. It must be added, that the people paid no taxes for the support of their prince. His revenue was derived from the fines imposed for infractions of the law, from the tribute, in kind, which he received from the cultivators of his estates, and from the voluntary offerings of his subjects. The boyards did not pay taxes; their allegiance consisted in rendering military service when called upon to do so. The position of the grand prince was necessarily a difficult one, which could scarcely be filled except by a man of severe temper and of commanding will. The throne stood, as it were, in a plain surrounded by forests, from which frequently issued hordes of ruthless savages, whose violence threatened to overturn the dawning institutions of civilisation. Under such circumstances, it was a great matter to maintain any advance that had been made, and not again to recede into the darkness of barbaric life. It was, indeed, difficult to civilise barbarians surrounded by barbarians. The antipathy entertained towards the Greeks by the people was a great obstacle to their progress, as it extended itself to the arts, the sciences, and the manners introduced by these foreigners. Christianity, as being to a Russian mind essentially a Greek religion, bore some share of this dislike.

Very little is recorded of the reign of Yaroslaf; which circumstance, connected with his reputation for wisdom, leads to the inference that Russia enjoyed peace and prosperity under his sway. Towards the close of his life, he committed a serious error in abandoning the city of Novgorod to his son Vladimir. Scarcely had the latter ascended the throne of the once republican state, than, with all the ardour of a barbarian

in quest of plunder, he led an army into the Grecian empire, under pretence of obtaining satisfaction for the death of a Russian who had been killed there. The iniquity of this act elicited an appropriate but terrible retribution. Fifteen thousand of the invaders were left dead upon the plains of Greece, and the aggressor driven back with disgrace to his own dominions. Undeterred by the criminal folly of one of his sons, Yaroslaf, before his death, followed the evil example of his predecessors, and partitioned the whole of Russia amongst his sons, only ordaining that the younger ones should be subordinate to the eldest, who was authorised to reduce them to obedience by force of arms, should they exhibit a disposition to dispute his authority—of course, if he was powerful enough to do so. This arrangement, enforced by death-bed admonitions, he trusted would sufficiently secure the empire from the afflictions of civil commotion and disputes concerning the succession. Such a confidence, placed in the fleeting honour of ambitious and greedy semi-barbarous princes, shakes our faith concerning his possession of that wisdom which the ancient chroniclers attribute to him. Often, however, the wise in one direction are guilty of folly in others; the purest golden ore is frequently found mingled with baser metals and with mire. Yaroslaf died in 1054, after a prolonged reign of thirty-four years. Before he had long lain in his grave, Russia became the prey of internal dissensions and of servile war; the fatal result of that partitioning of the empire which he had not the wisdom to foresee. This tragic error almost led to the dissolution of the infant empire.

CHAPTER VI.

ISIASLAF SUCCEEDS TO THE GRAND PRINCEDOM; HE IS TWICE DRIVEN FROM THE THRONE, AND TWICE RESTORED TO IT BY THE POLES; THE LATTER RECALLED FROM KIEF BY THE INCONSTANCY OF THEIR WIVES; CONFUSION ARISING FROM THE WEAKNESS OF ISIASLAF; HIS DEATH; REVERSAL OF THE ORDER OF SUCCESSION; VSEVOLOD SUCCEEDS; IS FOLLOWED BY SVIATOPOLK; EXPULSION OF THE JEWS FROM RUSSIA VLADIMIR MONOMACHUS CALLED TO THE THRONE; HE ARRESTS THE DECLINE OF THE STATE; HIS FAREWELL ADMONITION AND DEATH.

ISIASLAF I., the eldest of the five sons of Yaroslaf, succeeded as grand prince to the regal seat of Kief, which, from its magnificence and civilisation in comparison with the other important towns, had really become, in accordance with the words of Oleg, the mother, or chief, of Russian cities.

It is one matter to have a presumed authority over other princes, and quite a different one to maintain it. The wisest and most powerful sovereigns have been perplexed in such positions, and have commonly been compelled to enforce their claims with the sword. Isiaslaf was too feeble to preserve his paramount authority, and its bequeathment to him embittered his life and distracted the country. Ucheslaf, Prince of Polotsk, was the first of the brothers of Isiaslaf who set him at defiance. Nor did he stop at defiance: advancing with a well-disciplined army against Kief, he compelled the inhabitants to submit, and drove Isiaslaf from his throne. The unfortunate prince sought the protection of Boleslas II., grand-duke of Poland, justly called the Bold, on account of his fearlessness and skill in war. Boleslas received the fugitive, to whom he was distantly connected by marriage, with sympathy, and at once adopted his cause. His ostensible motive was of the purest and most generous kind. "I am obliged to succour that prince," said he, "by the blood which unites us, and by the pity so justly due to his misfortunes. Unfortunate princes are more to be commiserated than ordinary mortals. If calamities must necessarily exist on earth, they should not be allowed to affect such as are exalted for the happiness of others."

This seeming nobility of conduct was, however, but a cover for feelings of a selfish character. His secret motive was the recovery of the possessions which his predecessors had held in Russia, and of the do-

mains he conceived he had a right to inherit through his mother and his queen, both of whom were Russian princesses.

Boleslas the Bold, therefore, entered Russia at the head of a numerous army inured to victory, and full of confidence in their leader, and advanced within a few leagues of Kief before he was opposed by Ucheslaf and his troops. Such was the martial appearance and undaunted mien of the Poles, that Ucheslaf's heart sank within him; and, quitting his tent secretly, he took to flight. He had not, however, proceeded far before he experienced the natural shame arising from the dishonourable course he was pursuing. He felt the inevitable conviction, that not only would his conduct lead to a loss of his dominions, but that it might also expose him to the vengeance of his betrayed and irritated followers. Collecting his resolution, he returned to the camp he had so shamefully abandoned, and gazed once more upon the formidable enemy arrayed against him. His dastard spirit could not bear the sight, and again he fled. His troops being without a leader and without a purpose, speedily dispersed, leaving Kief unprotected. The city was infested by the Poles, and no choice left to the inhabitants but to receive the late fugitive Isiaslaf as their prince. Polotsk followed the example of Kief, and submitted; but Ucheslaf, who had taken refuge there after his ignominious flight, contrived to escape.

Boleslas, though a brave soldier, was an abandoned sensualist. He and his troops remained some time at Kief, and gave themselves up to the pleasures of this comparatively polished city. During their stay, it was the scene of a continued round of profligacy. Fortunately for the Russians, the affairs of Boleslas demanded his presence in Hungary, whither he and his army departed, leaving Isiaslaf again in the possession of his throne and the dangerous claim to paramount authority bequeathed to him by his father.

For seven years Isiaslaf contended against his brothers and their kindred, who asserted unjust claims, or prosecuted predatory adventures. The spirits of contention, exaction, and misrule swept over the land like a triple pestilence; and the empire seemed abandoned to anarchy. At the end of the seven years, the unfortunate prince was again expelled from Kief by Vsevolod, a prince of one of the tributary fiefs. It would have been better if a sovereign so incapable of standing alone as Isiaslaf had shown himself to be, had accepted his fate, and reconciled himself to the tranquil security of private life. The annals of history do not record many instances of moral heroism of this kind; and certainly the again fugitive Prince of Kief did not possess it. He applied for aid to several European monarchs; and at length implored the interference of Pope Gregory VIII. The pope eagerly caught at an offer which he thought might ultimately lead to the transference of the faith of the Russian people from the Greek church to that of Rome; but he gave assistance in a second-hand and equivocal manner. In other words, he did nothing himself; but he instructed the Duke of Poland to support Isiaslaf to the utmost of his power. This Boleslas, actuated, as we have shown, by secret views of his own, consented to do. Necessarily, these selfish views rose in proportion to the urgency of the demand upon his services. This time, though he resolved to restore Isiaslaf to his throne, he was no less resolved to make him tributary to Poland. With this design, he speedily subjugated the whole of Volhynia, as a place of retreat in case he experienced a reverse of fortune. This done, he a second time marched against Kief. His progress was arrested by the forces of the reigning prince, Vsevolod, and a terrible battle ensued, in which the army of the latter was almost annihilated. Kief, however, was ably prepared for resistance. Well garrisoned and provisioned, it withstood his efforts; and he was obliged to subject it to the tedious process of a siege. As Boleslas was as impatient as he was valorous, he might have retired in consequence of this obstinate resistance, but that an unsought and unseen ally played into his hands. This was a contagious fever, which broke out amongst the inhabitants, and led them to open the gates in terror, that they might escape the effects of the pestilence. Just as the latter had exhausted itself, Boleslas poured in his troops; and the enfeebled citizens submitted with patience to a fate they could no longer avert. Thus was Isiaslaf restored to a throne from which he had been twice expelled. Boleslas acted with the generosity of a noble nature. Instead of incorporating the territories of Kief and its dependent provinces with his own dominions, he preferred leaving friends rather than enemies behind him; he merely exacted a tribute from these territories, and

caused himself to be acknowledged as sovereign paramount.

The generous and affable bearing of Boleslas soon rendered him a favourite with the people of Kief; and he and his companions plunged into a dissipation even exceeding their former revels in that city. His days were occupied in feasting and drinking, while his nights were devoted to the society of such of the frail ones of Kief as possessed more charms than virtue. His followers, down even to the humblest, soon imitated the conduct of their chief, and all ordinary business appeared superseded by the wild vortex of incessant sensuality, which drew both Poles and Russians into its debilitating embrace. The gratitude of Isiaslaf prompted him not to offer opposition to the desires of his restorer; but he sought to win him from the numerous debaucheries to which the Polish duke surrendered himself. Desiring, on one occasion, to obtain a visit from Boleslas, the Russian prince offered him as many marks of gold as his horse should take steps in making the journey from one residence to the other. The gift is said to have been one of a surprisingly liberal kind.

While the Poles were thus wallowing in the grossest sensuality at Kief, they received information which filled them with a violent desire to return to their homes, from which they had been absent in Russia and Hungary for the space of seven years. During this period, their wives and children had never seen them. The former, weary of their cheerless condition, which was worse than widowhood, forgot their chastity in their desolation, and submitted to the embraces of their slaves. A rage for these base amours seized the Polish women. Debauchery of this nature became the rule; and it is said that but one of the wives of the absent warriors had the virtue to refrain from it. This is probably an exaggeration; but a fashionable frenzy, in any direction, commonly overpowers every opposing feeling, and dominates alike over reason or honour. We shall not follow other writers in any cheaply virtuous indignation respecting the conduct of these unfortunate women; for men too often utter pompous rhapsodies in favour of a rigid chastity which they never observe. The Polish women, wounded by the evident indifference of their husbands, deprived of those social endearments and words of affection which enter so largely into the happiness of the fairer sex, and incensed by the licentious conduct of their partners (rumours of which must have reached them), adopted the often-erring principle of *lex talionis*, and returned like for like. The Polish warriors, however, did not reflect on the provocations of their absence and their infidelity; and on hearing of this unexpected depravity on the part of their wives, they were distracted with shame and fury, and begged permission of their sovereign to return home. Actuated by a confidence in his queen, or entranced by the libidinous pleasures into which he was plunged at Kief, Boleslas, though he promised his troops that he would return, made no preparation for doing so. Many of his irritated followers lost all patience, and departed without his permission; and Boleslas was soon compelled, by this multitudinous desertion, to follow their example. When the Poles arrived at their homes, they found their slaves presiding at their boards, and in possession of all their privileges. In some instances they were resisted to the last extremity, and in others, they were pacified by submission and entreaties for pardon. Some of the women and their paramours fled, and others were put to death by the enraged husbands.

Isiaslaf, left without his protectors, soon showed his inability to use the authority bequeathed to him. The subordinate princes refused to recognise his supremacy, and separated themselves from the grand principedom. Fierce dissensions swept over the empire, which was rapidly falling to pieces, in consequence of the suicidal fury of contending governments. Such a state of things encouraged the hostile incursions of the barbarous nations and tribes that lay upon its borders. Poles, Hungarians, and Tartars swept like a pestilence over the Russian borders, and marked their track by burning villages, the women of which they had violated; while they put the men to death, or carried them away into slavery. The wretched Isiaslaf died in 1078, after a reign of twenty-four years.

The discord that existed did not perish with him, and even the order of succession was reversed. No ancient custom was respected; and the interests of the strong towered over the rights of the weak. Isiaslaf was not succeeded by his eldest son, but by his brother Vsevolod, who ascended the throne with the consent of the children of the deceased prince. Such a case was without precedent in Russia; for although the

warrior Oleg absolutely exercised the regal power during his life, he did so with the title of regent. But Vsevolod endeavoured to perpetuate the example he had introduced, by fixing the order of succession from brother to brother as the law of the land. He wore a tottering crown during a period of fifteen years. History is almost silent concerning him. It has been well remarked, that his reign is "an agitated canvas, in which the observer can discern nothing more than the chaos of the elements, with a single star of promise glittering distinctly in the person of the prince." He is most remembered on account of the virtues and wisdom of his son Vladimir Monomachus, in whose arms he breathed his last, and to whom he bequeathed the throne of Kief, in contravention of the very rule of succession he had himself introduced as law.

Vladimir, influenced by a noble self-denial, refused to accept the regal legacy. The peace of his country was dearer to him than personal honours and interests. To the entreaties of the citizens, he replied, he would not violate the recently established order of succession, which conferred the title and position of grand prince upon his cousin Sviatopolk. "His father," reasoned Vladimir, "was my father's senior, and reigned first in the capital. I wish to preserve Russia from the horrors of civil war."

Sviatopolk was a splenetic and feeble-minded prince, who not only owed the throne of Kief to the moderation of Vladimir, but was preserved in it solely by the wise counsels of the latter, which, nevertheless, he ventured frequently to disregard. The reign of Sviatopolk is as barren in incident as that of his predecessor, and is neglected alike by ancient chroniclers and modern historians. It appears to have been chiefly passed in fierce but uninteresting contentions between the rival Russian princes, each one of whom seems to have neglected his own territories, and turned all his attention towards seizing that of his neighbours. Sviatopolk died in 1113, after a reign of twenty years, leaving Kief and the Russian empire generally in a state of apparently inextricable disorder.

The death of Sviatopolk was followed by a savage outbreak of the citizens of Kief against the Jews. These unfortunate people having excited there a feeling of enmity, probably by the exhibition of a selfishly acquisitive temper, a cruel design was formed for a general massacre of them. Some, it appears, fell victims to the popular fury; but it would seem that many of the citizens hesitated to slaughter unarmed men in cold blood; and Vladimir was appealed to to arrest the progress of the savage tumult. Order, however, was only restored by the expulsion of the Jews from the whole of the Russian territory—a banishment which endured for *six centuries*. Vladimir, though he could not save them from this doom, protected their retreat, and caused their exile to be respected.

Above all the clamour that shook the ancient city of Kief, there rose a wild demand that Vladimir Monomachus must now assume the sceptre, for that he was the only man who could restore tranquillity to the state. Again he refused. He maintained that the princedom was not elective, and that he was not the true heir to it according to the order of succession established by his dead father. As he appeared fixed in this resolution, the citizens broke into open revolt, and declared that they would not acknowledge any sovereign but the one they had elected. Vladimir now saw that further resistance would be merely irrational obstinacy, and tend to plunge the country still further into that anarchy from which he had sought so earnestly to save it.

The accession of Vladimir to the throne of Kief in 1114, gave a promise of coming peace, and a hope of again binding together, in a bond of union, the now discontented states of the empire. Such a work was, however, one both of time and difficulty, and Vladimir was in the fall of life. During the twelve years he bore the sceptre, he was occupied with those important but unobtrusive labours which, though of inestimable value, afford but a narrow theme for the historian. He appeased jealousies, satisfied conflicting claims, repressed disorderly passions, maintained justice, and restored confidence. To these labours he devoted himself with an efficiency which was not only appreciated by his subjects, but obtained for him the esteem of foreign courts. It even elicited from the Grecian emperor a compliment the most distinguished such a monarch could pay. Recognising in Vladimir a greatness of mind worthy of the noblest station, he sent him the ensigns of imperial dignity, as a sign that he considered him his equal.

Shortly before his death, Vladimir ameliorated the laws; softening the rigour of some, and rendering others more exact and

comprehensive. The last public act of his life was to leave a farewell admonition to his subjects or children, as he called them, which is interesting, as being illustrative of the habits and principles of one of the heroes of an age struggling slowly and laboriously from a barbarism which it was neither prepared to leave or to remain satisfied with. This testament appears derived from a remembrance of his own actions, and offered to his subjects as a guidance to theirs.

"My dear children," ran the document, "praise God and love men; for it is neither fasting nor solitude, nor monastic vows, that can give you eternal life; it is beneficence alone.

"Be fathers to the orphan; be yourselves judges for the widow. Put to death neither the innocent nor the guilty, for nothing is more sacred than the life and soul of a Christian.

"Keep not the priests at a distance from you; do good to them, that they may offer up prayers to God for you.

"Violate not the oath which you have sworn on the cross. My brothers said to me, 'Assist us to expel the sons of Rotislaf, and seize upon their provinces, or renounce our alliance.' But I answered, 'I cannot forget that I have kissed the cross.'

"Bear in mind that a man ought to be always employed: look carefully into your domestic concerns, and fly from drunkenness and debauchery.

"Love your wives, but do not suffer them to have any power over you.

"Endeavour constantly to obtain knowledge. Without having quitted his palace, my father spoke five languages; a thing which wins for us the admiration of foreigners.

"In war be vigilant; be an example to your boyards. Never retire to rest without having posted your guards. Never take off your arms while you are within reach of the enemy; and, to avoid ever being surprised, always be early on horseback.

"When you travel through your provinces, do not allow your attendants to do the least injury to the inhabitants. Entertain always, at your own expense, the master of the house in which you take up your abode.

"If you find yourself affected by any ailment, make three prostrations down to the ground before the Lord; and never let the sun find you in bed. At the dawn of day, my father, and the virtuous men by whom he was surrounded, did thus: They glorified the Lord. They then seated themselves to deliberate, or to administer justice to the people, or they went to the chase; and in the middle of the day they slept; which God permits to man, as well as to the beasts and birds.

"For my part, I accustomed myself to do everything that I might have ordered my servants to do. Night and day, summer and winter, I was perpetually moving about. I wished to see everything with my own eyes. Never did I abandon the poor or the widow to the oppressions of the powerful. I made it my duty to inspect the churches and the sacred ceremonies of religion, as well as the management of my property, my stables, and the vultures and hawks of my hunting establishment.

"I have made eighty-three campaigns, and many expeditions. I concluded nineteen treaties with the Polovtzy. I took captive one hundred of their princes, whom I set free again; and I put two hundred of them to death, by throwing them into rivers.

"No one has ever travelled more rapidly than I have done. Setting out in the morning from Tchernigof, I have arrived at Kief before the hour of vespers.

"In my youth, what falls from my horse did I not experience! wounding my feet and my hands, and breaking my head against trees. But the Lord watched over me.

"In hunting, amidst the thickest forests, how many times have I myself caught wild horses, and bound them together! How many times have I been thrown down by buffaloes, wounded by the antlers of stags, and trodden under the feet of elks! A furious wild boar rent my sword from my baldrick; my saddle was torn to pieces by a bear; this terrible beast rushed upon my courser, whom he threw down upon me. But the Lord protected me.

"O, my children, fear neither death nor wild beasts. Trust in Providence; it far surpasses all human precautions."

The perusal of this experience of a wise and good barbarian (for we think that is the most appropriate description of this prince), leads back the imagination to an imperfect realisation of the country and state of society in which he lived. It shows us man yet dwelling on the borders of dense forests, and contending with beasts of prey for the possession of the soil. It shows cities enjoying peace, only in consequence

of the indolence or forbearance of hordes of barbarians, with whom war was an occupation and murder a revolting pastime. What promise-breaking and treachery is recorded by the simple fact, that the truthful Vladimir had to conclude nineteen different treaties with the Polovtzy Tartars; every one of which these human wolves broke through as soon as it suited their convenience to do so. What a revelation of their cruelty, also, is contained in the circumstance that this simple-minded prince, who shrunk from taking human life, was compelled to put 200 of these Tartar chiefs to death by drowning; a doom which their treachery and depravity no doubt justly deserved. It shows us Vladimir himself as a just, merciful, active, and, indeed, indefatigable ruler. Temperate, chaste, and industrious; in the latter respect a slave to duty. Earnestly pious, yet strongly impressed with what we may designate the coarse materialism of religious formula, rather than penetrated by a spirit of devout aspiration. There is something approaching even to the low idolatry of fetish worship in the superstition which dictated three prostrations before the Deity as the means of curing the ague or a fever. But Vladimir would, indeed, have been in advance of his time if he had recognised the important truth, that spiritual evils must be cured by spiritual remedies, and material evils by material remedies. A patient suffering from consumption or paralysis, does not apply to a clergyman for aid; or a sinner, writhing under the pangs of an outraged and awakened conscience, proceed to a physician. In the first case, prayer is a secondary instrument of alleviation; in the second, the same may be said of medical attention. There is an odd simplicity, also, in the mode in which the good Vladimir connects the inspection of the churches and the management of his stables; but his evident good faith utterly exonerates him from intentional levity on a serious theme. His inoffensive vanity, too, in recording the trivial acts of his life—his fall from his horse, and his conflicts with stags, wild boars, and buffaloes—in a document addressed as a solemn admonition to his people, is amusing. Altogether, we should estimate Vladimir as a man of the purest integrity, a benevolent temper, and a mind considerably above the average of his countrymen, but not as one possessing genius for government. His well-known virtues caused men to have confidence in him; and that produced its natural results—tranquillity and a return in the direction of national prosperity. We say in the direction of national prosperity, for his rule was too brief to permit him to consolidate the noble work he had so happily began. He died in 1125, after a reign of twelve years. He had been thrice married, and left five children behind him. Motislaf, the eldest, who succeeded him as grand prince, was the son of Gyda, daughter of Harold, the last Saxon king of England.

CHAPTER VII.

PERIOD OF ANARCHY; IGOR OF SUZDAL; HIS SON ANDREW ATTEMPTS THE CONSOLIDATION OF RUSSIA; HE IS MURDERED; THE AGE OF WEAKNESS AND DARKNESS; GHENGIS KHAN AND THE TARTAR INVASION OF RUSSIA; BATOU AND HIS TARTAR HOST RAVAGE THE COUNTRY, AND PERPETRATE GREAT ATROCITIES; WHILE OCCUPIED IN MARCHING UPON NOVGOROD, THEY SUDDENLY TURN AND ABANDON RUSSIA.

On the death of Vladimir Monomachus, Kief and its dependent dominions commenced a backward motion to that state of confusion and decay from which he had partially rescued them. Motislaf, who inherited the virtues of his father, retained the broken sceptre during six years only; when his death gave the signal for a series of selfish struggles which exhausted the life-blood of the country, and prepared it for that state of miserable and prolonged servitude which ensued. A period followed which partook of the nature of an interregnum. Government and the protection of the people was at an end, and the throne of Kief was seized by an adventurer one year, who was displaced by another the next. History recoils from the wearisome task of

chronicling the contests, the murders, the treacheries, and the insane ambitions of these paltry actors in the tragedy of a country's ruin. It is sufficient to say, that in the course of thirty-two years, eleven princes mounted the tottering throne, which each forfeited directly another arose armed with sufficient power to tear it from him. A curse had fallen upon Kief; its streets ran with blood from the frequent contests between rival factions which took place in them. Its people were reduced to poverty; its soldiers became thieves and ruffians, wandering about in search of food and plunder; and its merchants trembled for the wealth which they scarcely dared employ in its natural channels. The neighbouring provinces were seized by whoever was strong or daring enough to grasp them; and the fields, once devoted to agriculture, were wasted by fire and sword. This state of things continued until the grand principality had dwindled to little more than the city of Kief. "Its paramount authority," said Ségur, "was nothing but a vain title; and yet, whether it arose from the influence of a name, or that it was still looked upon as the Capua, the Babylon of the Russians, the metropolis of their religion, the emporium of their commerce, the source of their civilisation, it is certain that all the anarchy of the princes continued to be obstinately bent against Kief; and the eye becomes bewildered in gazing upon the confusion."

One figure at length became the most prominent among the crowd of rulers whose fatal ambition had struck upon the heart of their country. This was Igor, the Prince of Suzdal, an immense territory, occupying the centre of Russia. But this vast appanage was to him only a source of discontent. His dominions, he said, were distinguished only by an inclement climate, uncultivated deserts, gloomy forests, and a people sunk in ignorance. This barbarian, therefore, longed to possess himself of the once polished but now humbled city of Kief, to which, at this gloomy period, might almost be applied the mournful language which the prophet Jeremiah uttered concerning the abject desolation of Jerusalem—"How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! how is she become as a widow! She that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary!"

Igor of Suzdal marched upon the distracted city of Kief, and the helpless citizens surrendered to the power he brought with him. Seated upon a throne he had so easily acquired, the barbarian abandoned himself to an amount of riotous sensuality that speedily ended his worthless life. Such a mere warlike libertine would neither have deserved nor received notice, but for the perilous and important part afterwards played by his son, known as Andrew of Suzdal. This prince was not disposed to follow the example of his father, but remained, at least for a time, contented with his paternal dominions. "There," he observed, with the placid spirit of a philosopher, "still abide simplicity of manners, the obedience of the people, and the devoted fidelity of the boyards; while at Kief, a city which is on the frontier of the Hungarians, the Poles, and the Polovtzy, all is pillage, murder, servile and foreign war."

Remaining at home, Andrew devoted himself to the duties of the principality which had descended to him from inheritance; and there he frequently gave himself up to reflection upon the calamities of his country. Those calamities were still prolonged at Kief, which continued the prey of men whose ambition ever exceeded their power. Chief after chief entered its gates in petty triumph, rested for a brief time on the royal seat, and was as speedily ejected. Andrew at length saw the principal cause of the misery of Kief and the disunion of Russia. That cause was the partitioning the empire into separate governments, and the establishment of feudal principalities. Satisfied of the correctness of this important political truth, he determined to avoid, within his own territory, that error of which he saw so abundantly the fatal effects elsewhere. He therefore peremptorily abolished the system of granting territorial tracts, even to his relations and favourite boyards; and pronounced an opinion condemnatory of princes dividing their dominions into appanages for their sons. The wisdom of his conduct was soon apparent: Vladimir, his chief city, became worthy of being the Russian capital; Moscow, a town created by his father, rose into distinction; and a portion of the population of the south was attracted to his dominions, where they sought refuge from the horrors of war and confusion.

Andrew at length, lured from the unambitious simplicity of his early life, felt encouraged to attempt the regeneration and consolidation of Russia. As Kief declined,

Novgorod, the earliest Russian city, rose in prosperity. It had recently been admitted into the Hanseatic league, and was become the emporium of the commerce of the East. The bravery of its people maintained its independence, while the extent of its commercial transactions was a fertile source of continually increasing wealth. We have now to record what must be regarded as a dark stain upon the character of Andrew. Influenced by a base jealousy of the prosperity of Novgorod, which he was desirous should not eclipse Vladimir, the capital of his principality, he collected a powerful army, and advanced upon the former city. The motive appears an insufficient one, but it sprung from an ambitious self-love. Vladimir, he was resolved, should be the new capital of Russia; then it would be identified with his name and reputation, and must therefore stand unrivalled. To have raised it to an isolated elevation by securing its tranquillity, extending its commerce, encouraging the arts practised within it, and adorning it with noble buildings, would have been a lofty way of accomplishing this object; to weaken and humiliate a prosperous rival, was a dastardly and vile one.

His first expedition against Novgorod terminated in disgrace; his troops were opposed by the citizens with great intrepidity, and hurled back from the gates of the proud city. Disappointed in not being able to smite the powerful, he turned his arms against the weak, and led his beaten soldiers in an attack on the forlorn city of Kief. Against a dispirited foe they fought brutally and fiercely enough, and the city was taken by storm and rendered dependent upon this prince of yesterday, who had achieved victory without honour. The following year he again led an enormous army against Novgorod, and was again defeated by its spirited and hardy citizens! What he could not win from them by force of arms, he had, however, sufficient address to acquire by policy. We are told the Novgorodians saw the advantages of the system he proposed, and consented to acknowledge the supremacy of a prince whose principles of government seemed calculated to bind together the now severed appanages of the empire. We must confess to an incredulity that any arguments he could use would be likely to produce so remarkable an effect. Perhaps his gold, judiciously administered to the chiefs of Novgorod, removed difficulties his sword could not hew down. However this may be, he was now acknowledged as occupying the throne of the grand princedom.

Andrew's success induced him to depart still further from the moderation and wisdom of his youth, and to push forward his scheme of consolidation with a dangerous rapidity. Great works, if intended for endurance, must not be suddenly or violently accomplished. That which is hastily constructed is often even more rapidly demolished. Man, the most highly organised of animals, is the slowest in arriving at maturity; while it is computed that a thousand years must elapse before the soft and comparatively worthless charcoal becomes, by the subtle chemistry of nature, transmuted into the hard and dazzling diamond. Thus, with governments and peoples, unnaturally hasty reforms are followed by an inevitable reaction, which plunges them back still further into the darkness from which an effort was made to emerge. Andrew's design embraced the subjection of every independent prince, each of whom then began to regard him with suspicion and hatred. It was his interest to destroy that which it was theirs to maintain. Each prince had boyards and troops dependent upon him, and was necessarily more or less formidable. One principality after another revolted against the authority of the grand prince; and the people so disliked the new system, that they were ever ready to take to arms at the call of their leaders.

Andrew's authority, beyond his own appanage, soon extended only where he could enforce it with his sword. Not only did he refuse districts to his own kindred, but even banished some of them for their resistance to his will. His authority declined; and the troops he once employed to reduce refractory princes, were now occupied in fencing in his own immediate dominions from attack. Kief and Novgorod, taking advantage of the weakness of the man who had humbled them, declared themselves independent of his authority. The example was followed by other cities; and the flame of insurrection at last made its appearance in Andrew's own capital of Vladimir. The result may be conjectured: in 1174, six years after his first descent upon Novgorod, the grand prince was murdered by his own subjects. He had committed the common error of ambitious princes—that of undertaking tasks beyond their strength to accomplish, and then urging them forward

with a blind, unreasoning energy. Had Andrew possessed the integrity and self-denial of the good Vladimir Monomachus, he might have been regarded as an illustrious reformer. But he lacked the patient perseverance of the true hero, and his efforts were corrupted by selfishness. When he thought he was serving his country, he was, perhaps unconsciously, bent on exalting himself. The selfish nature does not recognise its own vice, and so Andrew might not see the obstacle that lay in his path. The subordinate princes would naturally exclaim, "Who is this man, that we should surrender our rights and interests to *him?*" Necessarily, he was not identical, in their minds, with Russia. They did not esteem him as essential to binding up the wounds of the empire. His claim to the grand princedom was only a usurped one; right he had none. Any other powerful prince might exclaim, "Why not *I* as well as this man of yesterday?" If Andrew had proposed his theory for the regeneration of the country, and offered, at a convention of the princes, to support it in the person of another, that would have been the act of a hero. As it was, he resolved on beating down, with an iron hand, all opposition to a plan for the execution of which he had not obtained the consent of those whose interests were affected by it—that was the part of a despot. In the hardness of a selfish and wrong-headed will, he adopted the least noble course; and the harvest he reaped was the natural fruit of the seed he sowed. Some writers have recorded his assassination in the language of pity: we waste no emotion on any such event; but regard it as the inevitable result of natural law!

The successors of Andrew abandoned a design at once so difficult and unpopular. They even followed the old practice of subdividing their dominions, and thus promoted the impending ruin of the state. The prince who first succeeded Andrew parcelled out the dominions of Suzdal into inferior appanages; the next permitted a dependent to dispute with him his title to the sovereignty; while the third released the tributary princes from the obligation of their recognition of his power as their superior lord, and declared that they were not responsible to him, but only accountable for their trusts to God.

The Russian empire now no longer existed, and anarchy prevailed throughout the north of Europe. Government, commerce, and civilisation were alike becoming rapidly extinct. The population of the borders sought the protection of the neighbouring states; while their room was supplied by the barbarian vagabondage that swept over tracts which yielded but little to the plunderer. Russia was ripe for bondage, and its doom was at hand.

Ghengis, or Zingis Khan, whose adopted name* signified the "most great," and who boasted of a divine right to the conquest and dominion of the whole earth, having laid Asia at his feet, now turned his eyes upon the adjoining continent of Europe. This fearful barbarian, who, according to the calculation of oriental historians, had destroyed in the East no less than five millions of human beings, was the son of a Mogul chief, who reigned over thirty or forty thousand families of shepherd-warriors. Ghengis, by the aid of craft, bravery, and superstition, contrived to get himself proclaimed Great Khan, or emperor of the Moguls and Tartars. As the savage race who followed Ghengis are inseparably interwoven with the next period of Russian history, we will quote from the well-digested pages of Gibbon a sketch of these scourges of the earth. To our mind the colours employed are too favourable (the historian, disgusted with the vices of civilisation, looked with a too lenient eye upon the atrocities of barbarism); but an antidote will be supplied to this error by the subsequent and painful facts we have to relate.—"The code of laws which Zingis dictated to his subjects was adopted to the preservation of domestic peace, and the exercise of foreign hostility. The punishment of death was inflicted on the crimes of adultery, murder, perjury, and the capital thefts of a horse or ox; and the fiercest of men were mild and just in their intercourse with each other. The future election of the Great Khan was vested in the princes of his family and the heads of the tribes; and the regulations of the chase were essential to the pleasures and plenty of a Tartar camp. The victorious nation were held sacred from all servile labours, which were abandoned to slaves and strangers; and every labour was servile except the profession of arms. The service and discipline

* His real name was Temugin; but he discarded it when barbarous victories over opponents had conferred power upon him. His birth was noble; but, in the pride of triumph, he or his people declared that his seventh ancestor was born from the immaculate conception of a virgin.

of the troops, who were armed with bows, scimitars, and iron maces, and divided by hundreds, thousands, and ten thousands, were the institutions of a veteran commander. Each officer and soldier was made responsible, under pain of death, for the safety and honour of his companions; and the spirit of conquest breathed in the law, that peace should never be granted unless to a vanquished and suppliant enemy. But it is the religion of Zingis that best deserves our wonder and applause.* The catholic inquisitors of Europe might have been confounded by the example of a barbarian who anticipated the lessons of philosophy, and established by his laws a system of pure theism and perfect toleration. His first and only article of faith was the existence of one God, the author of all good; who fills by his presence the heavens and the earth, which he has created by his power. The Tartars and Moguls were addicted to the idols of their peculiar tribes; and many of them had been converted by the foreign missionaries to the religions of Moses, of Mohammed, and of Christ. These various systems, in freedom and concord, were taught and practised within the precincts of the same camp; and the Bonze, the Iman, the Rabbi, the Nestorian, and the Latin priest, enjoyed the same honourable exemption from service and tribute. In the mosque of Bochara, the insolent victor might trample the Koran under his horse's feet; but the calm legislator respected the prophets and pontiffs of the most hostile sect. The reason of Zingis was not informed by books; the khan could neither read nor write; and, except the tribe of the Ingours, the greatest part of the Moguls and Tartars were as illiterate as their sovereign. The memory of their exploits were preserved by tradition; and sixty-eight years after the death of Zingis, these traditions were collected and transcribed."

The first descent of the Tartars and Moguls upon Russia took place in 1221; but the information we possess concerning it, is both meagre and contradictory. It was conducted not by Ghengis himself, but by a son of that formidable barbarian, named Joodgee Khan. The invaders made themselves masters of the Caucasus, the rich valleys of the river Ural, and swept over and destroyed many Russian towns and villages. After this they retired, leaving the startled Russians astonished at the seemingly almost supernatural visitation. It was not until 1223 that the Tartars again made their appearance. Then, traversing the shores of the Caspian Sea, they reached the river Dnieper, and subdued the Circassians who dwelt there. The latter had united with the Polovtzy, for the sake of opposing their common enemy. But the Tartars, whose craft was nearly equal to their ferocity, separated them by bribes, and then defeated them singly. Had Russia been united under one head, it might have successfully resisted the hordes of barbarians that fell upon it; but the insane discord of its princes betrayed their country to the enemy. Still they were aroused from their apathy by alarm, and appear to have made some overtures for a union, for their common protection. The wily Tartars, who always sought rather to slaughter their victims than encounter them fairly, resorted to the arts of intrigue, to prevent the junction of those Russian princes whose forces, taken singly, would fall by their swords like ripe wheat before the sickle of the reaper. With this treacherous object, they even sent ambassadors into Russia with instructions to offer terms of alliance and friendship. These barbarian diplomatists met the fate they deserved, though its infliction was extremely impolitic. The Russian princes saw through the snare; and, feeling convinced that the enemy was not to be bound by oaths and treaties, they, in a moment of exasperation, put the Tartar ambassadors to death, and then prepared for hostilities.

The act was both a crime and a mistake. Unless the person of an ambassador is held secure from injury or insult, all communication between hostile forces must necessarily terminate. These murders were, moreover, a serious error, because they gave the Tartars and Moguls an excuse for the ravages of war and the attempt at conquest. Even in this hour of common danger, the Russian princes, though both their country and themselves stood on the verge of destruction, could not subdue their mutual

* Scarcely so, we think, if it is to be estimated by the *conduct* of the Mogul conqueror and his army of butchers. But this does not seem to have been guided by any bonds of religion or morality; and the historian alludes to his speculative opinions. Such men, or monsters, as Ghengis Khan, may be influenced by superstition, but can scarcely be said to possess a religion. We know of none—Pagan, Boodist, Jewish, Christian, Mohammedan, Deist, or Pantheist—that does not recognise *moral duties* as a sequel to religious faith; necessarily including self-denial and forbearance.

jealousies. They were still unwilling to co-operate, and their troops were for the most part disorganised and worn out by domestic contentions. The Tartars were not slow to avail themselves of this advantage, and the Russians were defeated with great slaughter on the banks of the Kalka, near the mouth of the Don. While the forces of the Prince of Galitsh were being thrown into confusion and beaten down by their adversaries, those of the Prince of Kief stood aloof, and looked with indifference, or with secret satisfaction, at the carnage which was proceeding. His malicious and idiotic gratification was of very brief duration; the enemy having destroyed his rival, soon trampled him and his forces beneath their victorious feet. After the battle, the Tartars entered the country, and ravaged the whole of its southern side; and then, leaving it a desert, withdrew their armies.

Thirteen years elapsed before these scourges of humanity reappeared. During this period the Russian princes remained inactive, and neglected to fortify the vulnerable points of approach, or to concert together means of defence against the terrible enemy who might at any time return. The princes could not abandon their dissensions; and the people in the border districts seemed passive and bewildered, like men exposed to a fate against which it was useless to struggle. Other afflictions, of a no less appalling character, also fell upon the unhappy land; and a famine, a plague, and an earthquake, added to the horrors which racked it. The measure of its woe seemed full; and yet, even in these times of terror and darkness, when the night of history seemed descending with a starless and profound blackness upon Russia, and the grave of empires seemed yawning for a yet infant though decrepid state, a greater woe was to come!

Batou, a grandson of Ghengis Khan, with a force said to consist of 500,000 Tartars and Moguls, had started on a great expedition of conquest and destruction, bent on accomplishing what the family of Ghengis affected to consider the conquest and punishment of the whole earth. In 1237 Batou fell upon the Bulgarians, the immediate neighbours of the Russians, who naturally applied to the latter for assistance. It is astonishing that it was not granted at whatever sacrifice! Such, however, was the fact; a selfish policy prevailed in the counsels of the Russian princes, and they declined to assist the Bulgarians. Yet the grand prince of Vladimir, in this time of probable national extinction, occupied himself in adorning the churches, bestowing alms on beggars, and purchasing the prayers of monks. So buried was he in the barren formularies of his religion, that he had no time for the performance of secular duties.

When Batou and his hordes had vanquished the Bulgarians, and wasted their country with fire and sword, they entered Russia. The latter appeared almost too exhausted for resistance. The principality of Riazan fell at the approach of the Tartars; and, in many places, the people came forth and surrendered themselves to the invaders, in the hope of thus obtaining a merciful treatment. In this anticipation they were fatally deceived. The brutal habits, and the almost entirely carnivorous diet of the shepherd-soldiers, had closed their hearts to the approach of compassion. The sentiment of pity is imperceptibly weakened by the sight and practice of domestic cruelty. Those horrid objects which are disguised by the arts of European refinement, were exhibited in their most naked and disgusting simplicity in the tent of a Tartar shepherd. The ox or the sheep were slaughtered by the same hand from which they were accustomed to receive their daily food, and the bleeding limbs were served, with very little preparation, on the table of the unfeeling slaughterman. As the wandering habits of these hordes did not permit of the pursuit of agricultural arts, their food consisted, therefore, almost entirely of milk and of flesh in the state to which we have alluded. Such a diet, and a life spent in war, gradually converted the natural man into a ferocious creature, more akin to the brute than to the human race.

We are, therefore, prepared to believe that much cruelty was committed by the Tartars on the submissive people who sought to win their pity. Even then, reality outstrips imagination. Mercy was an emotion unknown to the Tartars; and they committed the most revolting atrocities on men and women, age and infancy. All men capable of bearing arms were butchered in cold blood, and young girls and children were tortured before the eyes of their agonised parents. Plunder, violation, and carnage succeeded each other; and when a town or village had been rendered little more than a collection of open sepulchres, the Tartars gave the houses to the flames or razed them to the earth. They only re-

quired hunting-grounds. They dwelt in rude tents, and had no need of cities; therefore they would not spare what might become the nucleus of an armed population, and, perhaps in time, an instrument of retribution. When unable to obtain admission into a fortified town, they promised safety to the inhabitants if they would submit; and when, by this means, they had obtained an entrance, they immediately violated their promises, and put the deceived Russians to death. Indeed, the particulars of their progress is an awful catalogue of all that is wanton and revolting in crime; all that is appallingly refined in cruelty. One is tempted—we trust not irreverently—to wonder that the wrath of the Almighty was not aroused to manifest itself by some miraculous deed of retribution, in which the destroying angel should have smitten dead every one of that vast horde of treacherous assassins and torturers!

The Prince of Riazan, compelled to abandon his principality to the ravages of the foe, solicited the assistance of Yury, the grand prince of Vladimir; but this monk-like simpleton was still busy painting churches, testing the sound of bells, and buying the prayers of his retinue of priests with gold. The application was made too late; the small force that circumstances permitted him to send was totally inadequate to perform the gigantic task required at their hands. The unhappy men were massacred by the Tartars, and Riazan left in flames. Onward, like a surging torrent, went the dark tide of invasion and murder. Town after town fell before the hosts of human fiends; and in each were perpetrated many of those terrible tragedies of which we have already spoken. Soon the country was laid waste up to the very gates of the city of Vladimir. Yury, finding it necessary now to adopt some stringent measures, and being utterly unequal to the task, confided the defence of the city to one of his chieftains, and then sought his own safety by retiring to a fortified camp on the banks of the river Sit.

The inhabitants of Vladimir had lost all confidence in themselves, and were paralysed with fear in consequence of the presence of Tartars before their walls. The officer to whom the command of the city had been entrusted shared the general feeling of dread; and the inhabitants, abandoning themselves to terror, neglected all rational means of defence, and, crowding to the churches and the sanctuaries, prostrated themselves before the images of the saints, and implored assistance. Many, looking upon death as inevitable, embraced some holy order, and, entering the cells of some house devoted to the services of religion, resolved to die at least in the exercise of their faith.

The Tartars soon discovered the abject state of their victims, whom they accordingly despised for cowardice. A party of them having scaled the walls almost without resistance, opened the gates to their countrymen, who rushed in, and, with an almost incredible thirst for blood, slaughtered every person they found. It is actually said, that not one Russian survived the massacre. The wife and two sons of Yury were among the victims; the former, together with her attendant ladies, being massacred on the steps of the sacred altar, to which they had fled in the vain hope that within its shadow they would be secure from the murderers. While yet reeking with the blood of those whom they had slain so remorselessly, the Tartars set Vladimir on fire, and left it the mere blackened and crumbling skeleton of a city. This atrocity was perpetrated in the February of 1238. The phlegmatic Yury was roused at last; but it was now too late. He awaited the Tartars in his fortified position, where, early in the following month, he was attacked by overwhelming forces, and fought bravely, until he was slain in the heat of the battle. His scanty band of followers were annihilated by their ruthless foes.

After a brief rest, Batou and the Tartar host directed their steps towards Novgorod; but, when within sixty miles of the city, they suddenly halted and retraced their steps. Whether the climate was not agreeable to them, or they were wearied with long marches in a country which did not repay the toil of conquest, is unknown. Many of the Russians attributed the deliverance to the intercessions of their favourite saints. Certain, however, is it, that turning their backs upon Novgorod, they abandoned the empire. During their progress they had destroyed fourteen fortified cities, and a great number of inferior towns and scattered villages. Those whom they put to death have been so variously estimated, that no confidence can be placed in any of the statements.

CHAPTER VIII.

REAPPEARANCE OF THE TARTARS; AFTER DESOLATING A PART OF RUSSIA, THEY CARRY THEIR ARMS INTO POLAND AND HUNGARY; THEY RETURN TO RUSSIA, WHERE THEIR CHIEF, BATOU, ESTABLISHES A GOVERNMENT ON THE BANKS OF THE VOLGA, UNDER THE NAME OF THE GOLDEN HORDE; THE TARTAR POLICY; MEANNESS AND WEAKNESS OF THE RUSSIAN PRINCES; RISE OF ALEXANDER NEVSKY; RESISTANCE TO THE TARTAR TAX-GATHERERS; DEATH OF ALEXANDER; EXECUTION OF THE GRAND PRINCE.

The respite of the unhappy people of Russia was but a brief one. Early in 1240, Batou and his Tartar hordes again made their appearance. Such was the terror with which they were regarded, that the inhabitants fled at their approach, and sought for safety in hiding-places and remote retreats. Batou passed through a solitude of deserted towns and villages; and his fierce barbarians, disappointed in their thirst for blood, gave the silent habitations to the flames. The fortress of Kief, which was strongly built and well garrisoned, resisted the invaders for a time. It was defended by a fearless and experienced officer, who repelled the first assaults of the Tartars with great intrepidity. But the contest was too unequal for continuance, and their number too great to be long withstood. With one tremendous assault they broke through the defences; and, having obtained an entrance into the city, commenced their usual work of slaughter and destruction. Having reduced Kief to heaps of blackened and smouldering ruins, between which stood the charred walls of palaces and churches, they deliberated upon some more than usually cruel way of putting to death the Russian officer who had resisted them. Yet such was the dignified and fearless bearing of this man, that it won respect even from the barbarian Batou; who spared his life, and even admitted him to his confidence. The Russian represented to the Tartar chieftain, that the country was so impoverished that scarcely anything was to be gained by a prosecution of the war. With a view of getting rid of the aggressor, he also pointed out Poland and Hungary, which had been accumulating wealth during a long interval of comparative repose, as fields where far more abundant spoil could be obtained.

Batou was convinced; and, abandoning Kief, he and his vast army forced a passage into Poland. Its king, Boleslas V., struck with terror, fled into Hungary; and, when danger approached that country, retreated to a monastery in the heart of Moravia. Poland, rent by domestic factions, became an easy prey to the invaders. Its towns were taken and destroyed; its rivers stained with the blood of its people; and its fields desolated. Some of the Polish nobles made a resolute stand, but they were crushed by the overwhelming numbers of their foes. After the battle of Lignitz, in which the dukes of Silesia, the Polish palatines, and the Teutonic knights were defeated, the Tartars filled nine sacks with the right ears of the slain. Thence the mighty tide of barbarism rolled forward into Hungary, which fell before their fury; cities and towns were given to the flames, and the soil whitened by the bones of its inhabitants. Such was the savage insolence of the Tartars, that they assigned but eighteen years for the conquest of Europe! The Roman pontiff made an attempt to soften and convert these barbarians by a mission of Franciscan and Dominican friars; but Batou fiercely replied, that the sons of God and of Ghengis were invested with a divine power to subdue or extirpate the nations, and that the pope would be involved in the universal destruction, unless he visited in person, and as a suppliant, the royal Horde.

On his return from Poland and Hungary, Batou settled on the banks of the river Volga. Having declared himself independent of the parent authority, he here established the empire of the khans of Kaptschak, or the Golden Horde; a name derived from the gorgeous tapestry and sumptuous appearance of the tent of the Tartar prince. Russia, as an independent state, no longer existed; all its principalities were subjected to the iron supremacy of the Tartar khan. The Russian princes could only purchase peace by a humble attendance, with tribute, at the Golden Horde, where they were also compelled to submit to ceremonies of the most humiliating kind. The Horde, forming but one of five divisions of the empire of the Mogul Tartars, derived its subsistence

from the revenues it extorted from the Russians. Its power, as will be seen, was preserved by a mixture of craft and cruelty.

It was part of the Tartar policy to weaken and humiliate the Russian princes, probably that no patriot should arise from among them and succeed in throwing off the oppressive yoke they were made to bear. The Russian people had been reduced to such a state of national prostration, that they were no longer able to drive back the border nations, who at intervals poured in upon their desolated districts; and, in their misery, they were compelled to look even to the khan for protection from the Lithuanians, the Swedes, the Livonians, the Poles, and the Hungarians. The Tartars, also, encouraged that tendency to religious observances which despair had engendered in the Russian people. This they did with the subtle intention of gradually weaning the latter from warlike habits, and making them submit passively to the exactions of a grinding and insulting tyranny. With this view they conferred honours on the church, and increased its revenues, while they used it as an instrument for effeminating the people. So far did they carry this assumed respect, that they condescended to listen to the petitions of metropolitans and bishops; while similar applications, on the part of princes, were disdainfully rejected. Sacrilege they punished with death; and they released the ecclesiastical domains from the payment of taxes, either to themselves or to the native princes. The influence of the church thus became very great; the disheartened Russian nobles retired to its cloisters to spend the close of their lives, and enriched its revenues with their property. A pious resignation to calamity became general: Russians acquired a habit of leaving their property to the church; while numbers of the wealthy devoted their means to the erection of religious houses; so that, eventually, it came to be observed, that more churches and monasteries were built during the sway of the Tartars than at any other period of Russian history. In no other point of domestic government did the Tartars think it worth their while to interfere. They were satisfied with having degraded the princes by an inordinate patronage of the church, and of reducing the former to puppets; while the latter, seemingly honoured as it was, only existed by their forbearance.

Russia had still a grand prince, although his dignity was but a name, and his authority a delusion. This was Yaroslaf, who, on the death of his brother Yury, had resigned Novgorod to his son, and taken possession of the principality and ruined city of Vladimir. Though the empty title of grand prince attached to this locality, yet Yaroslaf could not obtain permission to assume it, without first paying a large sum to the avaricious Batou. By the means of lavish bribes he obtained the indulgence he sought, and was nominated grand prince, on condition that he acknowledged the khan of Kaptschak as his feudal lord, and the supreme or head khan of all the Tartar hordes as his sovereign in chief. His hollow dignity only provoked the jealousy of his fellow-princes, who, irritated at his selfishness, refused to acknowledge his sovereignty. They would even have made war upon him, but that they feared he would be supported by the power of the khan. Sooner than acknowledge the paramount authority of Yaroslaf, the princes voluntarily tendered their obedience to the Tartars! The word of the khan settled all disputes as to territory and other matters, and from his decision there was no appeal. Each prince strove to win the favour of the Tartar chief by bribes; and all of them earned his contempt, by their base endeavours to induce him to place them in the seat of the grand princedom instead of Yaroslaf. It is impossible to bestow even a passing thought of pity upon these unprincipled men, whose insolent despotism and cruelty in prosperity, was only to be equalled by their abject humility and greediness in adversity. Not one of them seems to have been actuated by an active sense of patriotism; country to them was but as the quivering carcase whose scarcely lifeless limbs are torn asunder by a horde of wolves. National spirit seemed for a time extinct in the Russian princes and nobles; the highest dignity of manhood appeared crushed beneath the starless darkness of a stifling tyranny; and, for a while, nothing remained but the meanness of abject minds and the weakness of helpless ones.

The terrible desolation inflicted by the Tartars had caused the little land that had been placed under cultivation to remain a desert; and now a series of famines added to the calamities of the people. Border nations also proceeded to appropriate to themselves portions of the territory of a people who seemed incapable of defending themselves. Amongst these ungenerous foes who warred

upon misery, were the Swedes, Danes, and Livonians, who made preparations for a descent upon Novgorod. This ancient city had not been reached by the Tartars, and had suffered comparatively little from the calamities that had fallen on the rest of Russia. Something of the ancient spirit yet remained among its people; and at the call of their prince, Alexander, they prepared to resist the march of the intruders. All difficult emergencies require men of decision and strength of character to grapple with them. Alexander was a man of this kind. Without waiting for an assistance which the grand prince was unable to afford, he collected an army, and, marching out of the city, met his advancing foes on the banks of the Neva, where, after a fierce contest, he gained a decisive victory. Erecting strong forts on the spot to check future aggression, he returned in triumph to Novgorod, where his delighted people bestowed upon him the name of Nevsky, in commemoration of his victory on the banks of the Neva.

Alexander Nevsky was but in the early summer of life, and consequently easily accessible to the dangerous promptings of ambition. The attachment evinced towards him by his army, and the honours offered by his people, made him desirous of extending his dominions. Novgorod, though governed by a prince, still retained much of its original republican character and mode of administration. Its citizens enjoyed a proud exclusiveness. They had a strong antipathy to be mixed with the people of neighbouring principalities, and being also apprehensive that their prince might abuse his advantages, they vehemently opposed his design of territorial extension. Finding their remonstrances disregarded, they at length broke into open rebellion, and Alexander retired in disgust from the city, and proceeded to Novgorod, where he begged from his father a sufficient force to enable him to chastise his refractory subjects. Yaroslaf wisely refused the mad request, and appointing another of his sons to rule over Novgorod, conferred upon Alexander the inferior principality of Pereislaf.

This state of things did not last long. The new prince soon demonstrated his incapability of defending Novgorod from those attacks which were encouraged by the absence of Alexander. The citizens implored the latter to return to them and resume the reins of government. At first he refused indignantly; but he yielded to the entreaties of a second deputation. Taking up arms, he was again victorious against the invaders of his country, whom he assailed in their turn, and defeated them so decisively that his reputation spread throughout Russia, and even elicited the real or assumed approbation of the Golden Horde.

Yaroslaf, the titular grand prince of Russia, went to an inglorious tomb in 1246, on which occasion the Tartar khan summoned Alexander to make his appearance at the Golden Horde. The young soldier obeyed; and there he met many of the Russian princes, contending against each other with valuable offerings for the favour of the khan, and each hoping to obtain from him the empty dignity of grand prince. Alexander would not solicit a title to which he felt he had a right not possessed by any of the selfish triflers by whom he was surrounded. His frank and fearless manner elicited the admiration of the khan, who treated him with unusual respect. But the Tartar chief was anxious to show his power, and to keep the order of succession to the grand princedom in a state of uncertainty; therefore it was not until Alexander made a second journey to the Golden Horde, in 1252, that that dignity was conferred upon him.

On attaining this new title, Alexander led an expedition into Sweden, chiefly with the object of inflicting chastisement upon a foe who seemed ever ready to harass his frontier districts. Success attended his arms, and he returned home laden with prisoners, spoil, and trophies. Such was his military talent that, added to the favourable impression he had made upon the khan, it raised the grand princedom to an actual dignity. When dissensions arose amongst the princes, and they sought the adjudication of the khan, he either referred the adjustment of their differences to Alexander, or confiscated their dominions and annexed them to the grand princedom. The princes of Kief and Vladimir, probably influenced by some agents of the pope, signified their submission to that potentate, and their adoption of the Roman religion. This fickleness was offensive to the khan, who patronised the Greek church; and, in his anger, immediately deprived them of their territories, which, also, he bestowed upon the favoured grand prince.

Hitherto the khan had been satisfied by receiving from each of the princes a large

sum as tribute money, which he left them to collect from their subjects in the way most in consonance with their feelings. Now, however, he adopted a more stringent method, and appointed Tartar officers to collect a tax imposed upon every Russian according to his means, with the exception of the clergy. This burden, in the shape of direct taxation by a foreign power, was heavily felt, and produced great discontent among the people. The Tartar tax-gatherers were regarded with aversion, and, in some places, even received with execration. Resistance produced increased severity on their part. A spirit of opposition led to one of insurrection, in which the citizens of Novgorod took the lead by refusing to pay the tax, and threatened with death those who were appointed to collect it. The city was now governed by one of Alexander's sons, who sanctioned this outbreak of popular feeling. The grand prince, knowing that neither the people of Novgorod, nor those of any other part of the Russian dominions, were able to resist the power of the khan, hurried to Novgorod to appease the tumult. Rebuking the citizens for having perilled the safety of the country, he punished the advisers of his son, and arranged the payment of the tax, to the satisfaction of the Tartar collectors. Still the people were discontented, on account of the inequality of the tax; nor could Alexander pacify them, until he personally undertook the responsibility of the payment.

Novgorod was no sooner tranquillised than the spirit of resistance broke out elsewhere. The despotic insolence of the Tartar tax-gatherers provoked retaliation from the Russians, who sometimes drove them from their cities, and at others put them to death. Such events necessarily came to the ears of the khan, who resolved on at once crushing the insubordination by a terrible example. To accomplish his vengeance, he craftily summoned all the Russian princes to appear before him at the head of their troops, saying that he required their aid for a distant campaign he was about to undertake. His real object was to sweep over the land with his barbarians, during the absence of its armed population. Alexander detected the treachery, and he resolved to go alone to the Horde, and, at the risk of exciting the anger of the khan, endeavour to avert his vengeance. On arriving there, he was treated with great contumely by the Tartar chieftains. Persevering in his patriotic endeavours, he remained a whole year at the Horde, before he was able to appease the wrath of the khan. Then he was allowed to return home, with a promise that the Tartar prince would forgive the insubordination of the Russians, and abandon his designs of vengeance. He set out on his return to his dominions in the year 1264; but he had not proceeded far before he expired suddenly upon the road. His death is attributed to poison, administered by the Tartars, who had become jealous of the great influence he had acquired over his countrymen. The Tartars, in dealing with their enemies, recognised no obligations either of honour, religion, or humanity. They were butchers in practice, Jesuits in principle, and resorted to the profoundest dissimulation in cases where they deemed open violence to be injudicious or dangerous. On subsequent occasions, also, they administered poison to some of the Russian princes whom they wished to remove. A modern writer has acutely observed of these Tartar oppressors, that "the system of open outrage had been gradually abandoned as the sphere of their settled possessions became determined. The excuse for putting the vassal princes to death, which a war of extermination yielded, no longer existed; and they could not hope to maintain their authority in Russia without an enormous expenditure of blood, and an incessant appeal to arms, unless they observed some external respect for the forms of justice. Other causes, too, had imperceptibly diminished the passion for slaughter which marked their predatory mode of life. A love of luxury was springing up amongst them. The change from a roving, marauding, and wild state, to that of permanent location, brought with it a corresponding desire for ease, and a cultivation of luxurious habits. Public breaches of good faith would have been attended with vexatious consequences and endless disturbance; and it is likely that, in such a frame of mind, the Tartars preferred the secret assassination, which entailed no results, to the open murder of the Russian princes, which must have produced an attempt at retaliation."

To the memory of Alexander Nevsky must be accorded the painful honour, that he was the only distinguished Russian patriot of his time. Amongst a crowd of worthless princes he stands alone, as a man who often risked, and finally lost his life, in an endeavour to raise the depressed energies

of his country. A wise statesman, and a gifted soldier, his rule was distinguished alike by victories abroad and improvements at home. Had the jealousy of the Russian princes permitted them to acknowledge him as their superior sovereign, and to serve under his command with all the forces they could raise, the oppressive sway of the Tartars might have been broken, and the independence of Russia restored. But the petty dissensions of a class which had brought upon the country the curse of a foreign yoke, now prevented it from rising from the dust, and again taking its place among the nations. Alexander, however, was deeply mourned by the people, who felt that a great one had departed from them. So impressed were men's minds with his death, that supernatural events were believed to have accompanied it. It was said, that the approaching decease of the grand prince was announced to the metropolitan by a voice from heaven; and that, while the body lay in the coffin, the dead man opened one of his hands as the prayer of absolution was spoken over him. Such narrations, false and puerile as they may seem to us, are not to be regarded as idle inventions. In times of national calamity, marvellous tales arise from the mind-mists of popular superstition and ignorance, as new and strange births are supposed to have done from the reeking slime of an infant world. The circumstances attending Alexander's death, necessarily caused him to be canonised as a saint. Centuries later, when Tartar oppression had faded into a dim tradition among the masses of the Russian people—when the empire was born anew under the gifted Peter the Great, that monarch erected a monastery to the memory of Alexander, and caused his relics to be removed, with much devotional ceremony, to St. Petersburg. His name was further honoured by being connected with a new order of knighthood, which comprehended some of the monarchs of Europe among its members.

Once again Russia, during the period of its darkness, was without a single star which might serve for guidance and for hope. We have no glimpses of the people; who, perhaps, despised and disregarded, may still have been, for the most part, exempt from those terrors and sufferings which fell upon them in the advent of the Tartar bondage. But the princes presented the same paltry spectacle as ever. Each neglectful of his own subjects, and perfectly oblivious of the duties attaching to his station, was fighting or intriguing for the shadowy honour of the grand princedom. This internal confusion was increased by a division which arose among the Tartars. Nogay, a powerful chieftain, declared himself independent of the khan of Kaptschak, or the Golden Horde; and setting up his sovereignty in the southern provinces, contended with his rival for the tribute, or rather taxes, of the Russians. Here was a great opportunity for the princes of the latter people; for, by united action, they might have aided one division of the Tartars to exterminate the other, and then have turned their arms unexpectedly against those who remained. Instead of this, the princes paid court to whichsoever obtained an ascendancy for the time, and thus incurred the anger of the other when his day of power came.

Constant dissensions so enfeebled the Russian princes, that at length most of them fell into obscurity, and the struggle for the grand princedom lay between two of them only—the princes Michael of Twer and Yury of Moscow; the latter city having been rebuilt, and erected into a separate appanage, since it had been destroyed by the Tartars. Yury, as the weakest, must probably have submitted, but that he had the address so to insinuate himself into the favour of the reigning khan, Usbek, as to gain the hand of the sister of the Tartar in marriage. This connection—a closer one than had hitherto existed between the Russians and their masters—encouraged Yury to make war upon Michael, who had assumed the title of grand prince. A battle followed, in which Yury was defeated, and his new-made wife, the Tartar princess, taken prisoner. The unfortunate lady soon after expired at Twer, under circumstances that led to the suspicion that her death was the result of violence. Yury accused Michael of having poisoned the princess, and Usbek-Khan summoned the victor to the Golden Horde, to answer to the crime laid to his charge.

It is generally assumed that the accusation was a calumny, or, at least, that if the Tartar princess did come unfairly by her death, yet that Michael was innocent of the crime. Distrustful of the intentions of the khan towards him, the prince sent one of his sons to the latter to assure him of his devotion, and to explain the malignant motives of the Prince of Twer. The khan was not to be appeased, and insisted on the

personal appearance of the grand prince to meet the charge. After some hesitation, Michael departed, conscious of his inability to resist the will of the oppressor of his country. With a presentiment of coming evil, he made his will before he started on his journey to the Horde, and carried with him rich presents, by which to modify the anger of his self-constituted judge. The implacable Yury had been there before, and striven to prejudice the Tartar chieftains against his own countryman. A court was formed—the Tartar general who had been defeated by Michael was at its head, and Yury was the accuser. Under such circumstances, the trial which followed was a judicial mockery; and a grand prince of Russia was sentenced to death by a foreign court! Such a proceeding was a startling one; and even Usbek-Khan hesitated before carrying it to extremities. Either to satisfy some scruples that might have arisen in his seared mind, or to make an idle parade of pretended justice, he ordered the case to be again tried before a new court. The same spirit pervaded both, and the same result followed. Michael was kept in chains for five-and-twenty days, during which his sons and friends were permitted to visit him; and he then suffered death at the hands of the headsman. This insulting exercise, or rather abuse, of Tartar authority occurred in the year 1320. A deeper humiliation could scarcely have been inflicted on either prince or people.

The implacable Yury of Moscow succeeded to the throne of the grand prince; but he had only enjoyed his dignity a few years when he was assassinated by the eldest son of Michael, who, at the command of the khan, shared the fate of his father, and was put to death for the deed.

Michael's second son, Alexander, succeeded, in 1326, to the grand princedom. Scarcely a year had elapsed since his accession, when a report reached him that the Tartars living in Twer had formed a conspiracy to murder him. It is supposed that no such design was entertained by them; but that the calumnious report was spread by Ivan, the Prince of Moscow, who had succeeded to all his brother Yury's implacable hatred to the family of the unfortunate Michael. But even on the assumption that the Tartars were guilty of the treacherous design attributed to them, justice and prudence both demanded a calm investigation into their conduct, that only those who were really involved in the guilty intention should suffer the punishment due to them. Instead of this, the grand prince acted like a despot and a madman, and caused every Tartar resident within his principality, who would not adopt Christianity, to be put to death. Such a wanton atrocity naturally aroused the anger of Usbek-Khan, whose power, fortunately for the subjects of the grand prince, was on the decline, or he would probably have executed an appalling vengeance. Still he drove Alexander from his throne; gave his dominions to his rival, Ivan of Moscow, whom he bound to pursue the outlawed prince wherever he went, and to deliver him a prisoner to the Tartars. He was eventually captured, together with his son; and both of them being sent to the Golden Horde, perished by the weapon of the headsman.

We now approach a period when Russia, still feeble and humbled, and threatened with another terrible Tartar visitation, was yet slowly and insensibly collecting its energies, prior to its resurrection to a national life more promising than any it had yet enjoyed.

CHAPTER IX.

IVAN I.; HIS WEALTH AND CUNNING; SIMEON THE PROUD, AND IVAN II.; THE MOSCOW LINE OF SUCCESSION SUSPENDED; RESTORED IN THE PERSON OF DMITRY DONSKOI; HIS CONFLICTS WITH THE PRINCE OF TWER; DMITRY DEFEATS THE TARTARS AT THE GREAT BATTLE OF THE DON; THE TARTARS BURN MOSCOW AND RECOVER THEIR ASCENDANCY; DEATH OF DMITRY; HE IS SUCCEEDED BY VASSILY; INVASION OF RUSSIA BY TAMERLANE; VASSILY THE BLIND; HIS WILFULNESS, TROUBLES, AND DEATH.

THE grand princedom now fell to Ivan I., who obtained the surname of Kalita, or the Purse; partly, perhaps, on account of his having a purse carried before him, to relieve the wants of the poor; but chiefly because of the immense wealth he eventually acquired. He was a covetous, crafty, and unprincipled man, who still, however, had the wisdom to perceive that his interests were identical with those of his country; and that, in promoting the one, he was extending the other.

The wealth of Ivan enabled him to purchase entire domains and appanages, the protection of Usbek-Khan, and the preference of the primate of the Russian church, who, by removing his residence from Vladimir to Moscow, made the latter the capital of the empire. It is important to show how Ivan became possessed of so much wealth, as his mode of acquiring it reveals a trait in his character. He paid such assiduous and flattering attention to the khan, as to become appointed the representative in Russia of the Tartar chief, and collector of the taxes imposed by that foreign potentate. From the people he extorted, through the terror of the Tartar name, far more than he was authorised to do; and even subjected to the tax the inhabitants of parts of Russia who had not hitherto paid it at all. As it may well be supposed, the latter sums never reached the Tartar exchequer; and the careful Ivan went on increasing his wealth, and extending his dominions every year. Such was his extortion, that he sometimes exacted a double tribute, under the pretence that it was the command of the khan. He soon became far more powerful than his rival, the Prince of Twer; while the distance between him and the ordinary princes of Russia was constantly increasing. The Prince of Twer sometimes courted the Tartar power, and at others treated it with insulting neglect. Ivan hated the Tartars quite as much as his rival did; but he saw that it was only by the aid of the khan that he could ever hope to consolidate Russia under his own sway, and therefore he made frequent journeys to the Horde, and ever sought to propitiate the favour of the khan by flatteries and costly presents. The Tartar power was useful to Ivan, because he had cunning enough to direct it in such a way as promoted his interest; and he was too skilful an actor on the wide and varied theatre of actual life, to betray any emotion he deemed it prudent to conceal. It is not surprising that a man so subtle and unprincipled, should succeed in procuring the ruin of his rival, the Prince of Twer. He brought about a union of most of the Russian princes, who now acknowledged the authority of a ruler whose wealth, dominions, and administrative abilities so far exceeded their own. Directing their power against the Prince of Twer, Ivan drove him as an outcast from Russia, and finally hunted him to death.

The crafty Ivan Kalita beheld with a profound satisfaction the almost daily increase of his power. In his hands the grand princedom was becoming what it had never been before in Russia, and its paramount authority was indisputable. Petty princes regarded him with a deep respect; the people looked upon him with awe; and his name was a terror in the ears of his enemies. He settled all disputes between the inferior princes; and, as he had the power to enforce his decisions, they were respected. Success attended his footsteps; the clergy favoured his designs; the boyards submitted placidly to his authority; and he might be said, in effect, to rule over the whole of Russia.

Despotism is preferable to anarchy; and under the tortuous rule of Ivan—who pursued even kinsmen who offended him with as much ferocity as he would have displayed towards external enemies—the country became tranquil, and, to some extent, prosperous. He held his iron sceptre with firmness, and awed down the host of petty tyrants who were ever ready to prey upon the people. Though with one hand he extorted heavy imposts, with the other he conferred protection on what he left. The depredations to which the country had been a prey were repressed; commerce rose from the dust; and markets and fairs appeared in many parts of the country; even in some where they had been hitherto unknown. At these fairs the produce of the East, of Greece, and of Italy, were bought or bartered for by the Russians, whose comforts were thus enhanced, while the revenues of the grand prince were promoted by the tax arising from these commercial gatherings. Kamenevitch, an old Russian chronicler, in describing the great mart of Mologa, on the Volga, where the commerce of Asia and Europe met in the seventy inns of its Slavonian suburbs, says, that at that place alone, 7,200 pounds' weight of silver were collected for the regal treasury. Ivan dimly perceived that the commercial prosperity of a people promoted the power of their sovereign, and he encouraged fairs and markets, on account of their golden results. As increasing wealth to some extent emancipated

him from the declining power of the khan, he laid heavy taxes—or what were then so regarded—upon all saleable articles.

The Russian chronicles relating to this period are extremely meagre. Notwithstanding the power acquired by Ivan, his reign was but a brief one, and he expired in or about 1341. He left two sons—Simeon (surnamed the Proud) and Ivan. These princes vowed, on the grave of their father, to agree to a peaceable division of his dominions; and, strange to say, they kept their oath. Simeon took the dignity of grand prince, and one-half the revenues; Ivan contented himself with the other half, and became Prince of Moscow. Simeon had to purchase his paramount title from the khan, who guaranteed him in the possession of it for an enormous pecuniary consideration. Simeon pursued the policy of his father; but his reign of thirteen years remains a blank on the scroll of history. This silence may at least be received as indirect evidence that no great war or calamity fell upon Russia while he bore the chief sway in it.

Simeon died childless in the year 1353, and Ivan purchased the grand princedom of the khan, and became paramount ruler, under the title of Ivan II. Neither his brother nor he possessed the subtle talents of their father; but the influence of the latter was felt long after he had been in his grave. His shadow yet rested upon the land, and tranquillity was preserved. Some of the minor princes attempted to promote their ambition at the sacrifice of their country's peace; but the paramount power was strong enough to punish their unprincipled presumption.

Ivan reigned during six eventless years; and then the design of his father, to preserve the sovereign authority in the line of the princes of Moscow, was for a time interrupted. Naurus-Khan, the Tartar chieftain, then gave the grand princedom to Prince Dmitry, of the Nevsky branch of the descendants of Ruric. So brief and feeble was his reign, that it had neither influence nor result. For a few years he sat in the regal seat rather than governed, and listlessly held a sceptre he could not wield. In 1362 he was put down by one khan just as he had been set up by another, and Dmitry Donskoi, the son of Ivan II., made grand prince in his stead.

The new sovereign was a man well adapted to the exalted but dangerous position he was called to occupy. With an ambitious temper he united a calm and strong judgment. Convinced that the restoration of Russian independence depended upon the unity of the empire, and the rigid maintenance of the natural order of succession from father to son, he convened a meeting of the subsidiary princes, and obtained their consent to this important measure. Won for once to an act of reason and self-denial, they signed a treaty renouncing the disastrous mode of succession from brother to brother, and engaging themselves to recognise the authority of the grand prince, and that of his son and grandson after him. Vladimir the Brave, uncle to Dmitry Donskoi, and one of the most influential of Russian princes, first placed his name to the treaty, and his example was readily followed. This self-denial produced an abundant reward. By such attention to general, in preference to individual interests, a power was rising which was eventually to break the galling yoke of the Tartars, and to raise the seeming corpse of Russian independence to a second and a better life.

"Such," says a modern writer, "were the circumstances under which Dmitry ascended the throne. He clearly perceived the extraordinary progress towards a concentration of the resources of the empire that had been made in the two previous reigns, and his earliest care was to carry it still farther, by securing the right of succession in a direct line, so that the same course of policy might, with the more certainty, be transmitted without deviation. This wise measure was useful in every way. It had the effect of consolidating the common interests, which had hitherto been sacrificed to unseemly contentions; while it gave to the reigning prince a greater stake in tranquillity and conservation, since he felt that the labours of government were directed to the maintenance of the rights of his children, which, of course, were dearer to him than the rights of nephews, or brothers, or strangers. The heir, too, had the example of his father to emulate, and a similar motive actuated him on behalf of his successor. The establishment of the hereditary principle was also more acceptable to the nobles, who, dwelling about the court, were solicitous to cultivate the favour of the acknowledged heir, in order that the personal attachments which grew out of habitual intercourse, should descend to their children, who might thus, in turn, succeed

to the dignities enjoyed by their fathers. In fact, the old order of succession, from brother to brother, was hateful to the boyards of the grand principality, as the new prince was always attended by the boyards of his own appanage, for whom he was forced to provide by displacing all those whom he already found stationed at the capital."

Such was the liberal policy observed by Dmitry towards the boyards of the empire, that they became more attached to him than to their own immediate princes. In the last address he made to them, he observed, "Under my reign, you were not boyards, but really Russian princes." By raising the power of the boyards he depressed that of the princes, until both were verging into an order of nobility in which there were but small degrees of distinction. Dmitry saw that if unity was to exist, the grand prince must hold an unshared sceptre; that all appanaged princes must be actually subordinate to him as well as in theory; and that he must have no powerful and half-independent subject near the throne. Dmitry pursued his plans with a cautious wisdom; and so successful was he, that, in 1392, the boyards of Roris, the last Prince of Suzdal, surrendered him and his dominions to the grand prince.

It must not be supposed that Dmitry was enthroned on roses, and permitted to carry out his plans of family advancement and national regeneration without opposition. He had to contend with foes both at home and abroad. The Prince of Twer, the old rival of his family, could not quietly abandon the struggle for supremacy. Michael, or Mikhail, of Twer, assisted by his son-in-law the fierce Olguerd, Prince of Lithuania, rose in arms four times against him. During this suicidal conflict, Moscow itself was twice subjected to siege, and would have been taken but for the great strength of the stone walls which had been recently erected around it. For a time, victory seemed to favour the insurgent prince; but, at last, Olguerd died; and Dmitry, leading a confederation of his kinsmen against Michael, defeated him, and finally induced him to submit to a power he could no longer hope successfully to resist.

The most distinguishing event of Dmitry's reign was a war of a more dangerous and important kind. The decline of the Tartar power in Russia was still further accelerated by the breaking up of the Golden Horde into rival factions. Several of the chiefs set themselves up as khans, and the vast forces of the Tartars were broken into detached bodies, following their own immediate chief, and as likely to make war on each other as to unite against a common foe. A dissatisfied prince who was disposed to seek the aid of the Tartars against his sovereign, knew not to which khan to apply. The Tartars were unable to conceal their constantly increasing weakness, and the princes were driven by necessity to seek assistance from Dmitry, when their possessions were invaded by bodies of vagrant Tartars, or other foes. The grand prince yielded aid, on condition of the return of implicit submission; and thus eventually all, or nearly all, the princes of the empire became his vassals.

Though the Tartars were broken up into several hordes, each distinguished by the name of the chief whose standard they followed, yet the paramount authority was claimed by Mamai, the khan of the Tartars of the Don, who exacted tribute from Dmitry. Mamai, with the quick perception of his race, saw that the Russians were making rapid strides towards independence. Aware that this would lead to the final expulsion or submission of the Tartars, he resolved to re-establish his despotic sway by the same ferocious means by which it was at first imposed. Dmitry had many spies at the Horde, who revealed to him the intentions of the khan, and he prepared for the coming struggle, by collecting around him the dependent princes and their armed followers. Mamai also appears to have had his informants, and each side became conscious of the designs of the other. The khan sought to gain time for the concentration of his strength by sending an embassy to the grand prince, with complaints about the insufficiency of the tribute money. Dmitry did not object to a delay, which he, also, could devote to increasing his strength, and drawing around him all those princes of Russia who could be convinced of their common danger. He therefore sent a counter-embassy to the khan, the members of which referred to a treaty, by which it was arranged that the tribute should be reduced. Mamai, baffled in diplomacy, resorted to intimidation, and commanded the grand prince to appear before him in person. Had the latter obeyed this despotic injunction, he would doubtless have fallen a victim to the fury of his oppressor, and have

been openly put to death, after a judicial mockery, on some concocted charge, or have been murdered secretly by the subtle arts of the poisoner. Dmitry had proceeded with prudence, and was in a condition to resort to the only alternative which a refusal to obey the command of the khan left open to him. The princes of Russia were at length resolved to make a great effort in vindication of the liberties of their country; the people were possessed of a painful remembrance of the atrocities of the Tartars, and inspired by a bitter hatred of them; and the clergy feared that if Tartar violence was again let loose upon the land, Christianity would be overthrown, for the sake of seizing the large possessions of the church. They consequently proclaimed the coming struggle to be a holy war—a war for the honour of God and the safety of man—a war alike for the church of Christ and the nationality of the empire—a war to preserve the altars of God from desecration, and the homes of the people from outrage and destruction. Such was the natural and becoming ardour of the priesthood for the war, that they declared the crown of martyrdom would be placed by angels on the head of every Russian who perished in the conflict, and that the gates of heaven would open of themselves to receive his soul.

Such was the spirit pervading both princes and people, that Dmitry was enabled to take the field with a power said to amount to 200,000 men; a force which, fighting on its own territory for its religion and nationality, ought to be invincible. Dmitry did not permit the Tartars to ravage the country between them and Moscow; but he led his troops at once to the river Don, to the point where, at no great distance, the Tartars were encamped on the opposite side. After addressing his soldiers, he gave them the choice of awaiting the assault of the enemy, or of crossing the river and themselves commencing the attack. Animated by patriotic ardour, they unanimously decided for the latter; and seemed to long impatiently for the hour which should decide the fate of their country. Having transported his battalions across the river, the grand prince set the vessels adrift, so as to cut off all hopes of retreat, and excite that ferocity of valour which is the result of desperation. The measure appears to have been a necessary one: not only were the Russians opposed to a race whom they had been accustomed to regard as conquerors and masters, but the Tartars far exceeded them in numbers. The old chroniclers assert that the Tartars were thrice the number of the Russians; but this statement bears an air of incredibility, and is, we suspect, merely a flourish of pardonable triumph. The Russians, who had generations of oppression to avenge, commenced the assault with ungovernable fury. Such was their impetuosity, that numbers even of their own troops were thrown down and trampled to death in the mighty shock. The astonished Tartars reeled for a moment, and then dashing onward, met the assault with equal fury. Terrible was the slaughter on each side; but the superior numbers of the Tartars enabling them to fill up every gap that was made in their ranks, and continually to pour down fresh supplies of men upon the field, seemed to promise them the victory. Apparently overwhelmed, the Russians seemed to waver, and would probably have fled, but that the river was at their backs, their ships were gone, and flight was impossible. Nothing remained for them but to conquer or to perish nobly after having avenged their fall by the slaughter of many of their foes. Wrought to an excitement scarcely short of madness, it is related that they fought rather with the ferocity and strength attributed to demons than as if animated with the common passions of men. The slaughter of the Tartars was enormous; but their great numbers and stolid bravery might yet have won them the victory, but for one of those incidents which, occurring in the moment of exhaustion, so often decide the result of battles. Dmitry, with the wisdom of an able soldier, had kept back a considerable detachment from his army, to be called into action only if their presence was urgently required. At a critical time this reserve fell unexpectedly upon the rear of the Tartars, whom their attack threw into confusion and dismay. The apprehensions of the Tartars magnified the number of these fresh foes, and they fell into that disorder which precedes panic. The Russians perceived their advantage, and renewed the assault with a fury at once led by hope and pricked forward by despair. Mamai and the Tartars fled headlong from the well-contested and bloody field, and the Russians had obtained a great victory over their oppressors. Terrible was the loss of life at which it was achieved; but no price could be too great for the

glorious result that had been obtained. The spell of Tartar invincibility had been broken, and the infant liberty of Russia baptized in blood; while the same red stream had wiped away the shame of generations of national slavery. Eight days were passed in bestowing the rites of sepulture upon the Russian dead; but the bodies of the Tartars were regarded with such aversion, that they were left unburied, to become the prey of birds and beasts. Those heaps of Tartar bones, which long whitened the banks of the river, were an eloquent though silent warning against aggression, and an insolent scorn of the claims of the helpless. It was in honour of this victory, that the grand prince, Dmitry, received from his applauding people the surname of Donskoi, by which he stands distinguished in the records of his country.

Great was the joy of the Russians, but their national independence was not established. The work was begun, and well begun, but it remained to be completed; and calamitous reverses were yet to be experienced. Russia, exhausted by the great effort it had made, was unable to follow up the blow; and the defeated Tartars had time to recover themselves. Bent on vengeance, they cautiously prepared for a renewal of the struggle, but they did not dare again to provoke hostilities until the hordes of the Don and the Volga had effected a union. The battle of the Don was fought in 1380, and it took the Tartars two years to recover from the effects of it. But in 1382 they swept with a mighty power over the frontier provinces, and, ravaging the country as they went, penetrated to the strong walls of Moscow. The fortifications of the city had lately been strengthened; the ramparts were powerful; and the ponderous gates were of iron. Dmitry looked upon them with pride and hopefulness, and anticipated another victory over his despotic and barbarous foes. Such was his confidence, that he left the charge of the city to one of his generals, while he went further into the interior to recruit his army. The act was an unfortunate one; for the people had more confidence in their sovereign than in themselves. Yet all might have been well but for the meanness and cowardice of the priesthood. Had they placed a vital trust in the Deity whose providence they preached, they would have cheered the fainting hearts of the timid, have roused the fearful from their apathy, and have strengthened the feeble to the heroism of endurance. The calm and inspiring bearing of a brave priest might, at such a time, do more than the brawny arm of the soldier. Heroes impart their spirit to all around them; and, in like manner, the craven temper of the coward corrupts and depresses even the brave. The metropolitan and priests of Moscow, accompanied by a number of base and wealthy citizens, taking advantage of the absence of Dmitry, abandoned the city on the approach of the Tartar host. The act was contagious; those who should have remained in the city to the last, offering the consolations of religion to the dying, and the incitements of patriotism to those who yet lived to wreak the fury of an injured people on the foe, had slunk silently away, preferring to secure the safety of their worthless lives to the discharge of their duties on earth, and the attainment of that bliss which awaits the just in heaven!

The priesthood fled, and a sense of terror sunk deep into the hearts of the people. The garrison made a feeble show of resistance upon the walls; and the Tartars, beholding the strength of the defences, treacherously held out promises of pardon to the inhabitants if they would submit without further hostilities. Experience must have taught the Russians that their foes were as false as they were cruel; that their words were as unstable as water, and as deceitful as the sultry air oppressed by the coming storm. Many a terrible tradition must have told as to what had been the fate of those who had trusted to Tartar mercy! They must have known that it was better to die with weapons in their hands, dripping with the blood of an implacable and unprincipled foe, than have trusted to a horde of robbers who never forgave, and who actually experienced a satanic delight in slaughter. But fear dulls the senses and blinds the perception. The people of Moscow trusted to the promises of their foes, and threw open their gates to them. The result might have been anticipated. The Tartars rushed in, massacred every person they met in the streets, and then set the city on fire. Having accomplished the revenge they meditated for their defeat on the banks of the Don, the barbarians returned to their haunts, flattering themselves that they had effectually trodden down the rising spirit of independence and recovered their tottering power over the Russians. For a time they had so; but no mortal means could stay the

decline that was consuming their power, and the time of their own doom was approaching. "All they that take the sword, shall perish with the sword," is a divine truth, even more applicable to nations than to individuals. Injustice and violence provoke the spirit of retaliation; and, if not in one age, yet in another, the day of vengeance will inevitably come.

When Dmitry returned to his smitten capital, nothing was left him but to purchase safety by an ignoble submission to the foe over whom he had so recently triumphed as a victor. His great heart must have swelled with intense and suffocating emotion when he had to propitiate the forbearance of the khan, and once again perform the bitter humiliation of begging his dignity at the hands of the Tartar potentate. The empire that had been within his grasp was shattered into fragments; the glorious dream of national independence had melted like the early frosts of autumn before a yet powerful sun; the hopes of a life—a life of wisdom, toil, and heroism—were gone like the memory of a chaotic and uneasy dream, which has left behind it only a sense of gloom and impending evil.

Russian independence, though checked, was not destroyed; the wounds on its infant liberty began to heal even with the restoration of Moscow. Princes, boyards, and people were alike roused to the necessity of unity, and all hoped for the time which, though deferred, they yet expected. The grand princedom was still acknowledged, and the consolidation of the empire remained unbroken. The recent outrage of the Tartars had excited still more bitterly against them the hatred of those whom they oppressed. During his reign of seven-and-twenty years, Dmitry was unable again to make head against the Tartar power; yet he silently pursued his plans of raising the power of the grand princedom, and of consolidating the empire. He died in 1389, leaving a solemn injunction to his son to persevere in his policy, and to direct all his efforts to the eventual expulsion of the Tartars from Russia. Dmitry was a wise prince; and, but for the sad mistake of once depending upon others where he should have relied only upon himself, would have been regarded as a great one. The recreant priests who fled from Moscow trampled the glory of their sovereign beneath their feet; and his fame was sullied by the flames which enveloped the city. Yet is the name of Dmitry Donskoi honoured in the scroll of history; as, indeed, it truly deserves to be. The successful are the most applauded by posterity; but those who aim highly, and labour worthily, even in failure scarcely deserve less.

Vassily, the son of Dmitry, succeeded to the throne of the grand princedom without opposition. Of a haughty character and unbending turn of mind, Vassily was fitted to wield a sceptre in barbarous times. Stern, even to ferocity, to his princes and people, he was patient and pliant to his Asiatic and European neighbours. He was resolved not to waste his strength in contentions with them, but to reserve it in case of another collision with the Tartars. Though of a remarkably aristocratic and imperious nature, he felt it necessary to humble his pride so far as to proceed to the Golden Horde, and purchase of the Tartar khan the right to his dignity. At the same time he acquired permission to assume the sovereignty over seven appanages, which he had wrung from as many of his kinsmen, whom he reduced to the necessity of mingling in the ranks of his courtiers, or of dying in exile. The Lithuanians, who had for some time harassed his western frontier, he opposed rather by policy than by force of arms; and he contrived to obtain from their prince, who was his father-in-law, a forbearance it would have been inconvenient to extort.

A few years were passed in comparative tranquillity, when Russia was threatened by two fierce and powerful foes in opposite directions. These were Vitovt, the prince of the Lithuanians, in the west, and the barbarous conqueror Tamerlane, and his hordes of Tartars, in the east. Timour, or Tamerlane, was one of those romantic barbarians who, though of humble birth, yet cherished the ambitious and brutal dream of universal conquest. Though reported to have been merely an Asiatic shepherd, yet he came of a tribe regarded as noble. Born in unsettled and revolutionary times, bred to the use of arms from his infancy, at the age of five-and-twenty he stood forth as the most distinguished man of his country. Reverses, however, came upon him: he experienced vicissitude of a romantic kind; and, for some time, led the life of a vagrant and an outlaw. Again did he become the favourite of fortune. At the age of thirty-four, he was invested with that imperial command supposed to reside only in the

descendants of Ghengis Khan. Zagatai, the kingdom of the usurper, was a fertile territory, five hundred miles in length and in breadth; but this was so far from satisfying his ambition, that it was but one of seven-and-twenty crowns which he seized and wore before his death. After the conquest of Persia, Tamerlane resolved to reduce to submission those of the Tartars who had proclaimed their independence of the parent authority. In the execution of this project, he marched, in 1398, at the head of 400,000 soldiers, upon the Golden Horde, or that branch of the Tartars who had so long settled on the banks of the Volga. He fell upon the combined Tartars there, and inflicted upon them a severe chastisement. To use the language of his own chronicler, he gave them to the wind of desolation. Some of the Tartars who fled, lured the victor on in the direction of Moscow. His course was marked by ruin almost to the walls of the city, which, at the same time, was threatened in another direction by Vitovt, and an enormous army of Lithuanians. The Russians were in despair; the capital of their empire was threatened with destruction from opposite quarters, and stood between two fires; while the people themselves, enervated by bondage and frequent defeat, placed all their trust in an image of the Virgin, to which miraculous powers were attributed. The despoñding Vassily beheld approaching destruction on every hand; and it seemed as if the extinction of the empire was at hand. Under these circumstances, their impending doom was averted by an unforeseen event, of a kind which gave an apparently rational colour to the statements of the Russians—that it was the result of the merciful interference of the Virgin in their favour. Tamerlane, recalled by his ambition to the south, suddenly retraced his steps; while Vitovt and his Lithuanians pushed forward towards the Golden Horde. The invading armies met, and fell upon each other. Russia was thus relieved from the presence of two terrible foes, neither of whom she had the power or spirit to encounter. When Tamerlane had subdued the Lithuanians, he turned towards the vast peninsula of India, where a period of conquest and plunder was followed by his assumption of the title of emperor.

Happily, Tamerlane was too much occupied elsewhere to permit him to return; and, in this invasion, the Russians suffered far less than the Tartars of the Golden Horde. Their wealth had been pillaged, their forces scattered, and their military reputation humbled. Notwithstanding the tenacity with which they clung to the despotic power they had acquired by the sword, it was evident that this blow must rapidly accelerate their decline. The ascendancy of the princes of the Moscow line continued to increase; but yet Vassily was not able to set the Tartars at defiance. Some years afterwards, he made an experiment in that direction; but it only led to his own humiliation. Without consulting the khan, he caused himself to be crowned at Moscow, with all the splendour of imperial dignity. Not only was the act a breach of treaty, but it was regarded by the Tartars as an insult to their supremacy. The anger of the khan was aroused; and his power, broken as it had been, was yet such that the Russians feared to brave it. Vassily acknowledged that he had committed an error, and sued to the khan for pardon. The Tartars had no desire to appeal to arms, and the Russian prince was permitted to retain his dignity as grand prince, on condition that he again tendered fealty to the khan as his superior lord.

Vassily died in 1425, after a reign of six-and-thirty years, which he had devoted chiefly to the promotion of the interests of the grand princedom. Though destitute of the great talents of his father, he had carried out his principles with much perseverance. At the close of life, he compelled the Russian princes and boyards to acknowledge his infant son as the indisputable heir to the throne. He also exacted from them a vow that they would have no communication whatever with the Tartars or Lithuanians, but preserve against them a spirit of implacable resentment. With the temper of a despot, he banished all those who refused to comply with these demands. It was during the reign of Vassily that money was first coined in Russia. Prior to this time, mention had been made of grivnas; but the term did not refer to a coin, but to a certain weight of silver. Foreign commerce was carried on either by barter, or by gold and silver weighed in exchange for the corresponding articles. Pieces of marten skins, or other scraps of fur, were the current money in petty transactions. At length, a Tartar coin came into circulation at Moscow and at Twer. Polish and German coins also found their way into use among

the Russian people; and, in 1420, a mint was established at Novgorod.

Vassily Vassilievitch, the infant son of the late sovereign, succeeded to the throne; but not without difficulty. Yury, Prince of Galitsch, relying upon his own power, endeavoured to restore the old and disastrous order of succession from brother to brother. Claiming the throne, he appealed to his followers for support. The time for a successful opposition of this kind had passed, and the principle of succession from father to son had taken a firm root in the nation. The clergy took the alarm; and the primate, who had proclaimed the young sovereign, summoned the princes to support his authority, and pronounced an excommunication against the rebellious Yury. It is probable that the feeble thunder of the church might have been disregarded, but that it happened to be followed by a pestilence, which alarmed the malcontents, and checked their hostile preparations. The effect, however, was but transitory; and when the contagious sickness passed away, Yury returned to his demand. An appeal to the Golden Horde was considered requisite, and both the infant prince and his turbulent uncle proceeded with their dependents to the banks of the Volga, and laid their claims before the khan. So strong was the assemblage of boyards on the side of the legitimate sovereign, and so powerful were their arguments, or bribes, that the khan rejected the pretensions of Yury, and confirmed the succession of the infant Vassily. The Tartar chief even went so far as to release the latter from the payment of tribute to the Horde, and to decree that Yury should hold the bridle of his nephew's horse, on the entrance of the latter into his capital.

The decisions of the Tartar khans were no longer regarded as inevitable, and exempt from all appeal. Yury put on a semblance of submission; but he resolved speedily to seize by force what he had been unable to obtain by his representations. Collecting his forces, he appeared suddenly before Moscow, took the city by surprise, and compelled it to surrender. This done, he banished Vassily, and seized the throne which was the cause of his conspiracy. But a public opinion had now grown up in Moscow; and the moral influence of public opinion is more powerful than the sword. It soon neutralised the triumph of the usurper; and that, too, without shedding one drop of blood. Every one declared for the rights of the deposed prince; the authority of Yury was disavowed by the nobles, priests, and people; and the whole population of the capital, in solemn procession, followed their legitimate sovereign into banishment. An appalling silence reigned in the streets of Moscow, which seemed as if it had been smitten and depopulated by the plague. Yury found himself deserted; and even his own son had left him. This painful isolation struck terror to his heart, and he felt how dependent a prince was upon the submission of his people. Of what value was a sceptre that could be held only in a desert, or a throne that stood amidst a silent wilderness of dwellings? Yury was vanquished by this passive opposition; and in a few days he descended from his solitary throne, and restored it to the legitimate heir.

The devotion of the boyards and citizens of Moscow was not personal to the infant grand prince; it was merely an attachment to the principle of legitimacy. Vassily was imprudent, perverse, and obstinate. Unable to direct his own steps with wisdom, he yet impatiently rejected the advice of those who had proved their attachment to his interests, and their ability to proffer valuable counsels. A calamity of after-life procured for him the melancholy title of Vassily the Blind, which was applied to him in a double sense. Then sightless in body and dark in mind, this wilful prince was indebted to the compassion of his people for that support which he could not have obtained from their respect. His caprice led him into such errors as excited alike the suspicion both of Russians and Tartars. He is described as seeming to vacillate from choice, or in obedience to some infatuation that was always leading him into crooked paths of policy, and perplexing and perverting his views. Once the Tartars hurled him from the throne; but they permitted him to resume his regal dignity. Another time the son of Yury, encouraged by the discontent which prevailed, unfurled the banner of insurrection. Vassily was a second time deposed; and his brutal cousin put out the eyes of the unfortunate prince. Hence his surname—the Blind. The barbarity of the deed produced a reaction of popular feeling in favour of the down-trodden monarch. Some emotion of pity was mingled with an almost idolatrous respect for the principle of hereditary succession. Tradition had much to say of do-



mestic conflicts waged by rival claimants of the grand princedom; of Russian blood, shed in torrents by Russian hands, to settle questions in which the people had no interest, and no part. Thus the principle of succession from father to son had become dear to the people; for they regarded it as a source of peace. True, by this means the crown might descend upon the head of a perverse prince like Vassily; or, indeed, upon one hopelessly devoid of intellect: yet it was not the blindly obstinate man, or the drivelling idiot, the people reverenced, but the *principles* of order, peace, and justice. It mattered little by what machinery they were obtained, so that the nation really enjoyed them. Idiotic prince, if it must be so; yet even that painful alternative, rather than servile war.

Thus the usurpation of the son of Yury was as hateful to the people as that of his father. Even in Russia, rude as its society yet was, the time had passed when any powerful chieftain could seize with impunity that which he desired to possess. Neither nobles nor people would tolerate the would-be sovereign. All fell from his side, and declared for their blind monarch. Trembling for his unworthy life, the usurper fled to Novgorod, where he was poisoned by his own attendants; a fate which, sombre as it was, he well deserved. The city that had sheltered him was compelled to pay a heavy fine for having done so. No other incident of importance diversified the long reign of Vassily the Blind, who went unregretted to his grave in the year 1462. But the principle of hereditary succession was now established; and his son, Ivan III., ascended without opposition a throne the power of which he was to consolidate, and the dignity of which he was to exalt in the eyes of Europe. One hundred and thirty years had elapsed since Ivan Kalita commenced his reign; and the people, during that period, had come to regard the right of the princes of the Moscow line to the sovereignty of Russia as something unimpeachable, if not divine.

CHAPTER X.

IVAN III., KNOWN AS THE GREAT; HIS CRAFTY POLICY; HE TAKES THE TARTAR CITY OF KASAN; SUBDUES NOVGOROD, AND ANNEXES IT TO HIS DOMINIONS; TARTAR INVASION AND COWARDICE OF THE GRAND PRINCE; BREAKING UP OF THE GOLDEN HORDE AND ANNIHILATION OF THE TARTAR POWER; IVAN SUBDUES VIATKA AND PSKOF, AND THE INDEPENDENT PRINCES OF RUSSIA; CAUSES THE DEATH OF HIS BROTHER; WRESTS A LARGE TERRITORY FROM THE LITHUANIANS; ASSUMES THE TITLE OF CZAR; HIS POLICY TO THE COURTS OF EUROPE; DISCONTENT OF THE BOYARDS; IVAN CAUSES HIS GRANDSON DMITRI TO BE CROWNED AS HIS SUCCESSOR, BUT AFTERWARDS EXCLUDES HIM; JEWISH HERESY IN THE RUSSIAN CHURCH; IVAN'S REFORMS AND DESPOTISM; HIS DEATH AND CHARACTER.

THE time we are now approaching has been justly termed the period of despotism. As the principle of strengthening the power of the grand prince met with fewer obstacles, it went beyond the point at which it should have been restrained, and eventually produced a government in which unmitigated despotism was supported by frightful cruelty.

Ivan III., known as Ivan the Great (a surname he can scarcely be said to have deserved), ascended the throne of Moscow at the early age of twenty-two. At this time of life, the fresh mind of youth is seldom contaminated by the sinister principles of statecraft; but the new grand prince was one of those passionless natures who may be said never to have been influenced by the feelings of youth. Before the bounding elasticities of boyhood had ceased in other men, he was an adept in casuistry, and gifted with the power of mental concealment. A worshipper of the autocratic principle, the labours of his long reign of forty-three years were devoted to the establishment of Russian independence and of an unmitigated despotism; and the principles established by Ivan still cast their heavy shadows over the broad territories of the Russian empire. He was prepared to sacrifice everything to his interests; and no lofty emotions appear to have ever animated his bosom. So intensely selfish was he,

that the contemplation of much of his conduct excites emotions of disgust. Profoundly crafty, he obtained all his objects in some indirect and frequently ignoble manner. His perseverance bordered upon greatness; but his prudence degenerated into abject cowardice. Such was the caution with which he proceeded, that the early acts of his reign are described as more resembling the subterfuges of a coward than the crafty artifices of a despot.

He was placed in trying circumstances, which required all the exercise of his subtle talents; of which, as yet, he knew not the extent. Enemies abroad were to be met, while independence at home was to be created. On one hand were the Tartars, and on the other the Lithuanians; while within the Russian frontiers were the independent states of Novgorod, Viatka, and Pskof, besides other unsettled appanages, the princes of which did not yet recognise his authority. Truly there was work enough both for diplomacy and the sword; but the subtle and sometimes seemingly perplexed Ivan was equal to the position it was his lot to fill. Those evils he had most resolved to check, he pretended at first to entirely acquiesce in. His cold smile fell oftenest upon the man he meant at some future time to crush. Thus he betrayed his enemies into carelessness, and patiently awaited for a favourable hour in which he could exterminate them. He first practised upon the khan by withholding the customary tribute, but without any appearance of hostility or opposition. He merely evaded the payment, while he acknowledged the right of the khan, who was induced to believe that the grand prince was still his vassal. Such was the seeming humility of Ivan, that he even induced the khan to withdraw the Tartar residents and their retinues, together with the Tartar merchants, from Moscow. A little bribery contributed to this result; and the haughty strangers, who insulted even the precincts of the palace with the insolent bearing of masters, were, in effect, banished from the city. Such was the seeming humility of this designing man, that his wife, a high-spirited lady, had much difficulty in persuading him to abandon the humiliating and even disgusting ceremonials with which Russian princes had been compelled to receive the Tartar envoys. Hitherto they had advanced to meet the barbarian ambassadors—spread a carpet of fur beneath the feet of his horse—gone upon their knees while the khan's letter was read to them—presented to the envoy a cup of koumiss, and licked from the mane of the horse any drops of the beverage that might have fallen upon it!

Kasan, the first and most important of Tartar cities, was a standing insult and a perpetual source of irritation to the Russians. Its inhabitants, rather thieves than citizens, subsisted chiefly by predatory excursions. So general and indiscriminate were their licentious proceedings, that even neighbouring hordes of Tartars were not unwilling to witness their humiliation. Here, then, was an opportunity which invited even the cautious Ivan to action. Collecting all his available forces, he marched, about the year 1468, against Kasan, with the intention of driving out those restless men who had brought the habits of robbers within the walls of a city. At the time Ivan conducted this movement, the armies of the Golden Horde were advancing into Russia, doubtless with the hope of restoring that power which the khan must have seen was crumbling into nothingness. Ivan's army was not only numerous, but it consisted of the flower of the Russian population. So imposing was its appearance, that the army of the khan retired at its approach. Thus Ivan had all the honour of having won a victory without the hazard of striking a single blow; a kind of triumph quite in harmony with his timid and fox-like nature.

Instead of being encouraged to decisive action by this fortuitous success, Ivan deferred his attempt on Kasan until the following year. Even then he held back his impatient soldiery, and acted in a strangely hesitating and equivocal way. Resolved not to return without plunder, the Russians attacked the city, even against the orders of Ivan to the contrary. Electing a leader of their own, they fell upon Kasan, and utterly defeated its defenders. The spiritless grand prince, perceiving that the enemy was no longer capable of resistance, poured his enormous forces upon the fallen city, and once again obtained the semblance of a victory. Yet even in this proceeding, where the Russian force was so overwhelming that danger was almost an impossibility, Ivan kept far from the scene of action, and issued his orders from Moscow.

The attention of the grand prince was now called to the three independent states of Novgorod, Viatka, and Pskof. Novgorod, as the most wealthy and powerful,

openly exhibited its distrust of his intentions. Its citizens solicited the assistance of the inhabitants of Pskof, and expressed their intention to march at once against the grand prince, as a measure of anticipation. They had detected his cowardice, and believed they could inspire him with a sense of terror. Still, to protect themselves against his power, they submitted to Casimir, Prince of Lithuania, and became his subjects. The politic Ivan sought by every means to win over Pskof to his interests, that he might deal with Novgorod alone. So artfully did he proceed, that he succeeded in this design, and even contrived to neutralise all the opposition he had reason to fear. When fully prepared, he demanded that the citizens of Novgorod should acknowledge his authority. As he anticipated, the reply was conveyed in the language of scorn and defiance. He had obtained the pretext he desired, and his next messengers to Novgorod were three powerful armies, who entered the territories of the state in different directions. Such was their overwhelming superiority to the forces of Novgorod, that resistance was hopeless. The more so, as the troops of Ivan possessed firearms and cannon—a recent acquisition, the use of which he had learned from Aristotle of Bologna, an Italian, whom he had taken into his service as an architect, mint-master, and founder. After a brief and gallant struggle, the opposition of the Novgorodians was trampled into the dust. Swarms of peasantry, following in the rear of the army of the grand prince, succeeded the soldiers in the work of plunder and license. Ivan had really encouraged these outrages; but with an affectation of compassion, he pretended to repress them. He said he grieved for the people, and wished to protect them from unnecessary violence; but, in secret, he gloated over the severity of the wound he had caused to be inflicted. Weakened as Novgorod was, the victor did not at once attach it to his dominions. That would have involved its partition among those princes by whose aid he had subdued it. He had made promises to that effect; but without the least intention of fulfilling them. He therefore affected a generous and magnanimous tone, and merely exacted a rich ransom and an act of submission from the conquered city. Enfeebled as it had been, he knew that it must fall into his hands whenever, at some future time, he extended them to receive it. Still he seized upon some of its tributaries, under the transparent pretext of relieving an exhausted state from some of the toilsome duties of government. By this means he transferred much of the commerce of Novgorod to his own city of Moscow.

Availing himself of that feeling of discontent and jealousy ever felt, to some extent, by the poor towards the rich, Ivan succeeded in sowing dissension between the nobles and the people of Novgorod. That done, he induced the latter to appeal to him for justice—an application which he at once answered by proceeding to their city with great magnificence. The people were dazzled by the almost oriental splendour of his numerous retinue, and captivated by the generous interest he appeared to take in their affairs. The nobles and wealthy citizens of Novgorod whom they accused, he loaded with chains, and sent as prisoners to Moscow. Thus the crafty despot got rid of those who alone could efficiently oppose his selfish designs upon the city. The blind animosity of the people induced them to overlook, that, in this proceeding of the grand prince, one of those laws which had for centuries been the basis of their liberty, was violated. The ancient law of the state was, "that none of its citizens should ever be tried or punished out of the limits of its own territory." Yet Ivan, in trampling down this safeguard of the freedom of the citizens of Novgorod, acted with such profound duplicity, that he even won the popular favour by his violation of the charter of their independence.

Gradually the inhabitants of Novgorod referred all their disputes to the decision of the grand prince. Profiting by this disposition, he at length summoned offenders to appear before him at Moscow. The Novgorodians hesitated; submission seemed a surrender of their national independence; and yet they were won to submission by the artful representations of Ivan. His penetrating gaze was always bent deep into the future. For seven years did this persevering despot labour to lure them from those distinctive habits, and that original character, which separated them from the rest of the empire.

At length he deemed events ripe for the disclosure of the design he had so long veiled. An envoy from Novgorod, in an interview with the grand prince, either inadvertently or in consequence of having been bribed to do so, addressed him by the title of liege lord, instead of by that of

master, which had hitherto been the custom. Ivan grasped eagerly at the mistake, or treachery, and at once claimed all the privileges of an absolute master. He demanded that the republican city should take an oath to him as a legislator and its judge; that it should receive his boyards with full authority to exercise their almost irresponsible control; that it should yield to them the revered palace of Yaroslaf, esteemed as the sacred temple of Novgorodian liberty, and where, for more than five centuries, their public assemblies had been held; and, finally, that each citizen should abdicate his share of the sovereignty for the sake of the general good.

The people of Novgorod were filled with astonishment and rage; for hitherto they appear not to have entertained any suspicion that the extinction of their independence was aimed at. The great bell of the city summoned the people to the market-place. Thither they rushed in furious crowds; and, having seized on their imprudent envoy, they placed him on his trial for treason against the state; and on his being condemned, tore him limb from limb on the spot. Some of the nobles, whom they also suspected of being accessory to the surrender of their freedom, they murdered in the streets, and they then again solicited the aid of the Prince of Lithuania, and acknowledged him as their sovereign. The crafty Ivan was quite prepared for this storm of passionate excitement; but when the intelligence reached his ears, he pretended to be overcome with surprise at what he called the treachery and ingratitude of the people. This man, who was impenetrable to any other feeling than that of the most concentrated selfishness, affected much emotion, and groaned repeatedly. It was not they, he declared, but he who had been deceived. With well-assumed vehemence, he broke out into lamentations, which blinded even those who knew his habitual hypocrisy. He accused the people of Novgorod of having spread a snare for him. It was they, he said, who sought him for their sovereign; and when, yielding to their wishes, he had assumed that title, they disavowed him—they had the impudence to give him the lie formally in the face of all Russia—they had dared to shed the blood of their compatriots who remained faithful, and to betray heaven and the holy land of the Russians, by calling within its limits a foreign religion and domination.

These crafty lamentations were addressed by Ivan to his priests, nobles, and people, and to all his subordinate princes, whom he sought to unite in a crusade against Novgorod. Many entered warmly into the scheme, which was supported strongly by the clergy. The republic of Pskof and the principality of Twer alone stood aloof; but the crafty tyrant withdrew their military power, under the form of a contingent, and left them helpless. The citizens of Novgorod were alarmed at the cloud which hung over them, and endeavoured to obtain conditions. These were refused by Ivan, who demanded a surrender of everything. "I will reign at Novgorod," he exclaimed, "as I do at Moscow!" At the same time, as if to temper his despotic bearing, he promised to respect the liberties of the citizens; though he carefully took away every means of defending them.

The Novgorodians were in despair. Several times they armed themselves, and appeared resolved to risk a conflict which the overwhelming number of their foes rendered hopeless. Then, terrified by the desperate nature of their affairs, they sunk into a hopeless despondency. For a month the armies of Ivan remained stationary, but yet, as it were, with swords uplifted, as if in the act to strike. He cared nothing for military glory, but merely wanted the accomplishment of his purpose. To him the mode was nothing; his mind regarded only the end. He sought to domineer by terror rather than by arms, and shrunk even from encountering that loss which might attend upon victory. He was patient; and he had collected so powerful a military force only that he might avoid war. His calculations were correctly made; Novgorod, weakened, oppressed, and distracted, at length submitted without a blow. The liberty of Novgorod, held in his murderous embrace, suffered the agonies of protracted suffocation, and at length died in despair. On the 15th of January, 1478, the national assemblies ceased, and the people took the oath of servitude. Three days later the boyards, and the most influential of the inhabitants, passively entered into the service of the grand prince, who showed his now unimpeachable power by confiscating the vast revenues of the clergy, and bestowing them upon the boyards and their followers, by whose assistance he had smitten the prostrate and abject city. Nor did he go without his own share of the spoil; for, in such

a distribution, he was not the man to forget himself. He desired to bleed Novgorod of its treasure, until the once prosperous city should be so exhausted as never to be able again to make head against his power. With this view, quickened by the inordinate selfishness which possessed him like an evil spirit, he seized upon everything valuable to which he could establish the faintest shadow of a claim. An estimate may be formed of the rapacity of this regal vulture, from the fact, that he is said to have conveyed to Moscow 300 cart-loads of gold, silver, and precious stones, besides an enormous quantity of furs, cloths, and other valuable merchandise!

Ivan had not long enjoyed his insidious triumph before he himself was assailed by terrors similar to those which he had so remorselessly inflicted. News reached him that the Tartars of the Golden Horde were preparing for another invasion of Russia, with the hope of recovering their expiring power over it. Russia, concentrated and prepared with a powerful army, was undaunted; and Ivan had no cause for fear. Two hundred thousand soldiers awaited his command, and felt themselves fully equal to encounter the weakened Tartars. His troops panted for distinction, and longed to avenge themselves on their ancient oppressors; while the princes of the empire were warmly devoted to his cause. Even civilians and women spoke with an anger, mingled with contempt, of the barbarous foe. A prince of a martial and enthusiastic nature might have enlisted in his cause every able man among his subjects, and by one merciless and well-directed blow, have extinguished the Tartar army in a sea of blood. Yet, under these circumstances, there was but one man in Russia who trembled at the danger, and that man was the sovereign. When his vast power, full of spirit and confident of victory, marched forward to meet the enemy, this miserable recreant deemed himself conquered. Overcome by his shadowy terrors, he sent his princess to find an asylum in a remote district of the north; and then, deserting the army, shut himself up within the walls of Moscow. He even recalled his son to the capital; but the prince, humiliated at beholding the abject fears of his father, properly refused to leave his post with the army. Even the people became indignant; and, amidst portentous murmurs, demanded, "Why he had overburdened them with taxes, without paying the khan his tribute? And why, when he had brought the enemy into the heart of the country, did he refuse to fight them?"

The grand prince knew not how to answer these reproaches, which he could not altogether avoid hearing. The murmurs of an indignant people added to his terrors, even in his remote and well-guarded chambers. Casting vainly about for excuses, he convoked a meeting of the bishops and boyards, for the purpose, he said, of asking their advice. Their counsel was conclusive: even the successors of those timid and selfish priests who had betrayed Moscow to destruction in the time of the brave Dmitry Donskoi, were decided now. "Does it," said they, "become mortals to dread death? It is in vain to fly from fear. March boldly against the enemy; such is our advice!"

The reluctant autocrat was compelled by a sense of shame to rejoin his army; but his unconcealed fears diminished the ardour of his troops. He remained behind the river Lugra, and secretly opened a disgraceful communication with the Tartars, in which he treated for pardon. The baseness of fear could not be carried further: the soldiery and the people of Moscow, on hearing of his conduct, grew turbulent. The primate of Moscow, animated by despair, sought his presence, and endeavoured to rouse him to a sense of manliness. "Moved by our tears," said the head of the church, "you set out once more to combat the enemy of the Christians; and now you implore peace from that infidel who scorns your prayer! Ah, prince, to what counsels have you lent your ear! Is it not to throw away your shield, and shamefully take to flight? From what a height of grandeur are you not descending! Would you give up Russia to the sword, and the churches to plunder? And whither would you fly? Can you soar like the eagle? Will you fix your nest amidst the stars? The Lord will cast you down even from that asylum! No! you will not desert us; you will blush at the name of fugitive, and traitor to your country!"

Even these forcible expostulations produced no effect. Surrounded by an enormous army swelled by constant reinforcements, nothing could inspire him with confidence. So paralysed was he with cowardice, that when the ice of a premature winter had frozen over the river between

him and the enemy, he took to a disgraceful and disorderly flight. Fortunately for him, his motives were not transparent to the multitude, who were removed too far from their prince to be able to judge critically of his conduct. Even had they beheld the abject despot trembling with fear while victory was within his grasp, yet their reverence for autocracy was so great, that they could not have felt anger or bitterness towards the throned representative of the race of Ruric.

Fortune conferred upon the dastard that success which brave and deserving men have too often failed to obtain. When his disgraceful flight threatened to bind faster upon the Russians those Tartar chains they had nearly cast aside, an unexpected incident turned the scale of victory. His lieutenant of Svenigorod, and his ally, the khan of the Crimea, advanced suddenly upon the Golden Horde, and carried their victorious arms into the very den of the Tartars. News of this movement soon reached the invading army, which made a precipitate retreat, with the object of averting the destruction which threatened the seat of its power. The khan and his forces were too late; the Russians had fallen like avengers upon the Golden Horde, slaughtering the Tartars they found there, and carrying off the treasures. No sooner had they retired than a band of marauding Tartars entered, and completed the work of devastation. They carried away the women, together with what wealth yet remained; and then retired, leaving the palace and other dwellings of the Golden Horde in flames. Yet another and still greater disaster fell upon the discomfited khan. His army was attacked, during its retreat, by a hetman of the Cossacks and the Murza of the Nogays, who fell upon its disorderly ranks with such fury, and used the sword with so merciless a severity, that scarcely a remnant of the invaders escaped. As an army they were destroyed; nothing was left of them but a disorganised and starving rabble. The Golden Horde was annihilated; the Tartar yoke was trampled into the dust; and the scourge of Russia was no more.

It might be supposed, that though Russia was jubilant, yet that the people regarded their sovereign with the scorn his cowardice merited. The very reverse was the case. Though his pusillanimity had almost brought ruin upon the empire, to him was given all the honours of the unexpected success. It was even attributed to his wisdom and foresight. His credulous people believed that he had devised it all; and that even his flight was merely a snare to delude the foe. With a blind stupidity which excites astonishment, they now regarded Ivan as a man of profound genius; gifted alike in the field or the council-chamber. In the joy they felt at their deliverance from two centuries and a-half of national slavery, they were disposed almost to worship the grand prince as an incarnation of their new-born liberty!

The crafty Ivan resolved to profit by this error of his people. It enabled him to draw the bands of government tighter, and to increase his wealth and power. His fears vanished with the danger that caused them, and his ambitious acquisitiveness returned. He now directed his efforts to the subjugation of the republics of Viatka and Pskof, both of which he accomplished with little bloodshed, and rather by stratagem than power. Novgorod, enfeebled as it had been, was still occasionally agitated by recollections of its former liberty. Its citizens could not wear their chains patiently; and sometimes the crushed republic smouldered with the suppressed fires of revolution. Ivan resolved to tranquillise it after his own fashion. To do this, he seized every pretext for removing Novgorodian families to other parts of the empire, and supplying their places with parasites of his own. The city was at length exhausted of its original inhabitants, and filled by men penetrated with feelings of abject submission to the grand prince. Novgorod was quite transformed by this process. The city stood as before; but the proud freemen who once trod its streets had departed, and the groups who now traded and chaffered in them were slaves. Amidst all this craft and cruelty the interests of Russia were advancing; its consolidation was being promoted. It was necessary that the petty tyrants of the different principalities should fall before one great tyrant, that union might take the place of discord, and a great empire arise out of a number of small and ever-jarring states. It has been truly observed, that unless Ivan had broken all the ties of honour and humanity, and sacrificed the best feelings of his nature, he could not have subdued the insurgent population so effectually as to have bound up the whole in one sentiment of common national interest. Mean, unprincipled, and worthless as was

the man, the monarch accomplished an important labour, of a kind that better men would probably have failed to effect.

Some powerful and independent princes yet existed in Russia, and Ivan now resolved to weave his snares around them. He would have no independent appanages; he must reign supreme: Russia he desired to see one and undivided, and yet merely his footstool. Ivan had long foreseen and prepared for the contest on which he was about to enter; but his habitual cunning and deceptive bearing had prevented his intended victims from entertaining a suspicion of his purpose. This cold-hearted man ever smiled on those he meant to ruin; and disarmed them by a well-simulated bearing of gentleness, and even humility. For three-and-twenty years his Machiavelian patience recognised the right and independence of those princes whom he meant to despoil, and, if necessary, to crush. He would not encumber himself with quarrels at home while the Tartar power remained unbroken. When two of his brothers revolted, and withdrew with what forces they could collect into Lithuania, he implored their return with the most humble supplications. The motives for hypocrisy in this direction were now at an end, and he resolved to adopt a very different course. He did not wear a lion's robe, and patch it, when necessary, with the skin of the fox; but he wore a mantle of the skins of foxes, to which he added, when it was perfectly prudent to do so, some portions of the hide of the lion.

Throwing aside the mask he had worn so many years, Ivan commenced his designs upon the Prince of Twer, the most formidable of those who yet assumed a vain rivalry with the power and splendour of the grand princedom. In early life he had married a princess of the house of Twer, and a son was the result of the union. The tie had done much to restrain him in this direction; but his wife and son were both dead, and the thread of connection was severed. He had since married a Greek princess; and there was nothing now to excite emotions of kindliness or forbearance. The principality of Twer was surrounded by his possessions, and he could threaten and strike at it from all sides. Having by some injustice goaded the Prince of Twer into the desperate resort of seeking assistance from the now enfeebled state of Lithuania, he charged its prince with treason, and terrified him with the exhibition of an armed confederacy against him. Appalled by the armies that surrounded them on all sides, the inhabitants appealed to Ivan for forgiveness; which he consented to grant only on the payment of a tribute that enfeebled the whole territory. Thus, though he held the sword aloft and did not strike, yet he drained away the wealth and strength of his intended victim. He then excited disputes between the Muscovites and the Twerians; and made the latter feel their helplessness and insecurity to such an extent, that they were at length glad to purchase the protection of Ivan at the price of their independence. Their prince, robbed of his heritage and driven to despair, fled to Lithuania, where he died in exile, and, fortunately for the prosperous Ivan, without children to claim his dominions.

Ruler of Twer, the appanage of the powerful rivals of his house, the grand prince became an unapproachable autocrat. Those princes who yet retained their independence, saw that resistance was unavailing and submission unavoidable. Ivan no longer wore a mask of humility, but spoke in a voice of thunder. He knew his power, and he was inflexible. The terror of his name procured the immediate submission of the rulers of Rostof and Yaroslaf. Ivan extended his sceptre over their principalities, but permitted them still to retain their authority as governors appointed by him. The Prince of Vereia, in a vain attempt to avoid this confiscation, fled into Lithuania; but the autocrat punished his flight, by compelling the dying father of the fugitive to disinherit him of several cities, which Ivan appropriated to himself. Among the independent princes, were two brothers of the tyrant, on the annexation of whose dominions he was as much resolved as though the owners had been strangers to his blood. One of them surrendered his appanage sooner than expose himself to the dark machinations of so treacherous and remorseless a despot. The other, a man of an active nature and less disposed to submission, was invited by the grand prince to his court. There the unsuspicious guest, though received with smiles, was suddenly arrested and loaded with chains. In this painful position, he sunk under a too acute sense of impatience and the ignominy of the insult that had been offered to him, and expired. Ivan was seized with remorse when this intelligence was conveyed to him, and

he is said even to have wept over his murdered brother. It is with shame and anger we add, that the awakened voice of conscience was stifled by his bishops, who readily pacified his religious fears, and granted him a plenary absolution.

Ivan now sat upon an absolute throne. Those princes who, at the commencement of his reign, were almost as much sovereigns as himself, were either dead or banished, or had become transformed into obsequious servants. They mingled with the boyards —became in effect boyards themselves, and did not dare even to refer to that descent from Ruric which had once placed them on an equality with Ivan himself.

The life of the grand prince was one of ceaseless activity, and another opponent remained for him to subdue. This was Casimir, Duke of Poland, who, though a man of feeble character, had been the constant, though often indirect, adversary of Ivan for many years. While the hands of the latter were full of other business, he had let Casimir proceed; but he only delayed retribution that he might effect it with the greater certainty. Casimir had encouraged both Livonians and Tartars in their efforts against Russia, and had promoted rebellion in many of the Russian principalities, whose prince or people disliked the supremacy of Ivan. Indeed, the Polish duke pursued the same indirect policy as that followed by the Russian grand prince, and with a considerable amount of success. Ivan now commenced a war of artifices on the Duke of Poland, against whom he contrived alternately to excite many neighbouring potentates. His superior ability in the work of artifice was soon apparent. Casimir, however, died before he felt the full weight of his adversary's hand. On his demise, the duchy of Lithuania was divorced from the parent state, and separately organised under Prince Alexander; while the rest of the Polish territories were re-formed into a distinct government. Ivan saw that the time had now arrived for more decisive action. Poland weakened by division; Russia strengthened by concentration;—this was the time to recover those possessions which, in former times, the Lithuanians had wrested from his ancestors.

Having collected an enormous army, Ivan advanced towards Lithuania. As usual, he avoided fighting; but attempted to terrify his foes by the display of an overwhelming military superiority. At the same time, his allies, Menghli-Ghirei, the khan of the Crimea, and the hospodar of Moldavia, assailed Lithuania in other directions. The device succeeded, and the unfortunate Prince of Lithuania was terrified into submission. A treaty was entered into, and Ivan bestowed the hand of his daughter upon his fallen adversary. This apparent generosity was only for the purpose of weaving a closer snare around his intended victim, and with the object of extirpating the Roman Catholic religion from Lithuania, and planting the Greek form of Christianity in its place. The lady was a zealous member of the Greek church, and she effectually executed the intention of her father; which was, by seeking all occasions to introduce her own faith, to produce religious dissensions between her husband, his people, and the Russians. As Prince Alexander was an ardent catholic and a man of narrow understanding, the result may be readily divined. He entered into some violent measures to defeat the designs of his wife, and thus gave the insidious Ivan a pretext for waging against him a war in the name of religion. This time the sword was not only drawn, but used. Ivan obtained a decisive victory, and then wrested from the defeated bigot the country as far as Kief and Smolensk, which had been taken from his ancestors by the then prosperous and powerful Lithuanians.

It was now that Ivan, naturally elated by his many triumphs, adopted a title which was regarded as more august and important than that of grand prince. It was that of Tzar, or, as custom now almost universally renders it in other European countries, Czar. Some obscurity rests upon the origin and precise meaning of this Asiatic and semi-barbarous sounding title. It was generally presumed to have been a corruption of the word Cæsar; but this supposition is laid aside. Philological critics have now pronounced that it is an old oriental word, which the Russians acquired through the Slavonic translation of the Bible, and which they at first bestowed upon the Greek emperors, and afterwards upon the Tartar khans. In Persia, it signifies a throne, or supreme authority; and it is to be found in the termination of the names of the kings of Assyria and Babylon; such as Phalossar, Nabonassar, Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar. To the Russian subjects of Ivan's time, as of ours, supreme authority, or power derived

from God, and only controllable by him, was the signification of the term. It is strange that this pusillanimous monarch should not only have raised the power of the Russian sovereignty to a height that his predecessors seem scarcely to have contemplated, but should have established a religiously guarded despotism on the part of the prince, and a sense of the religious duty of passive obedience on that of the people, which have existed to this hour. How true is it, that institutions are but the lengthened shadow of one man. A crafty despot prepares his people for passive slavery; while a liberal monarch inspires them with a love of rational freedom, and a desire for advancement in those arts which, on the one hand, create magnificence and abundance, and on the other, tend to the amelioration both of poverty and disease.

"On looking back," said a modern historian, "at the progress of Ivan's career towards this unexampled elevation, while we discover much that is referable to that combination of favourable accidents which usually occurs to those who least stand in need of extraneous help, we also find much that was produced by *a calm and persevering spirit* incessantly engaged in the calculation of the chances of every movement, and which took advantage of the most trifling circumstance that could be turned to the credit of the great account. Pusillanimous by nature, Ivan had the larger leisure for maturing his intrigues; and, by the exercise of a system of stratagems in an age when physical force was the common appeal of nations, he vanquished his antagonists by bearing down on those points where they were the least prepared for resistance. Nor did he lose sight of the leading features of national superstition. He carefully sounded the depths of the Russian character; and, availing himself of the weaknesses of the people, did not suffer a solitary occasion to pass away without reaping from it some personal benefit under the mask of the public good. Thus, when he hung back on the banks of the Lugra, and fled from an inferior force, he converted his disgrace to a glory, and was rewarded by the admiration and idolatry of his countrymen, who conferred upon him all the applause of a signal triumph, in which he not only had no share, but from which he turned in dismay. There was less, too, of cruelty than of artifice in his nature; for although he never scrupled to execute summary and sanguinary vengeance where other means failed, yet he always deferred the adoption of such an alternative to the last extremity. This exhibition of placidity, which really sprang from a secret misgiving as to results, contributed in a great measure to check any ebullitions of popular distrust, if not to establish his empire more firmly in the goodwill of the people. Even the violation of his promises, usually justified by some plausible pretext of a patriotic description, and his reckless conduct towards the enemies of his throne and his religion, were easily excused by a population that began to be accustomed to the apparent interpositions of Divine Providence on behalf of their sovereign. They were induced, without much trouble, to believe that the prince who was so highly favoured by heaven, could not receive too much confidence and gratitude from man."

We have alluded to the marriage of Ivan with a Greek princess. This union was the result of his subtle policy and farseeing views. When, in 1453, Constantinople had fallen before the power of the sultan, Mahommed II., and the last of the Greek emperors, after exhibiting a nobility of conduct which contrasted painfully with the miserable cowardice of his people,* fell

* In the pages of Gibbon, the historic reader will find a gorgeous word-picture of the fall of Constantinople, and abundant accounts of the selfishness, timidity, and superstition of its people We quote a brief but remarkable passage:—"On the assurance of the public calamity, the houses and convents were instantly deserted; and the trembling inhabitants flocked together in the streets, like a herd of timid animals, as if accumulated weakness could be productive of strength, or in the vain hope that, amid the crowd, each individual might be safe and invisible. From every part of the capital they flowed into the church of St. Sophia; in the space of an hour the sanctuary, the choir, the nave, the upper and lower galleries were filled with the multitude of fathers and husbands, of women and children. of priests, monks, and religious virgins: the doors were barred on the inside, and they sought protection from the sacred dome, which they had so lately abhorred as a profane and polluted edifice. Their confidence was founded on the prophecy of an enthusiast or impostor—that one day the Turks should enter Constantinople, and pursue the people as far as the column of Constantine, in the square before St. Sophia; but that this would be the term of their calamities: that an angel would descend from heaven, with a sword in his hand, and would deliver the empire, with that celestial weapon, to a poor man seated at the foot of the column. 'Take this sword,' would he say, 'and avenge the people of the Lord.' At these animating words the Turks would instantly fly, and the victorious Greeks would drive

beneath the swords of the Janizaries, the last princess of the imperial family had fled for shelter to what were regarded as the sacred walls of Rome. Ivan sought the hand of the lady, and entreated the pope's consent to their union. He was not unaware of the possible, though remote, advantages of the connection. The example of Vladimir I. was not lost upon him: though Constantinople had passed from the possession of the effeminate Greeks into the hands of a fierce and warlike race, who should say what the future might bring forth? It would be, at least, well that his descendants should be capable of putting forward a claim to be the representatives of the family of the last Greek emperor of Constantinople. So Ivan sought and gained the hand of the Greek princess, content though her only dowry was the imperial effigy of the two-headed eagle—the symbol of autocratic power. Such a thing might seem trifling and worthless, but it was not so in the estimation of the self-created czar. He designed that the Grecian princess should introduce into the regal palace at Moscow the haughty hierarchy of the sumptuous court of Constantine, and its pompous ceremonies; in a word, that despotism of divine right by which the slavish devotedness to the prince who then reigned in Russia should be strengthened and sanctified. The Russian priesthood, delighted to receive a royal fugitive from the now broken fountain whence they had derived their religion, welcomed her with a chorus of adulation, and declared that she was sent by the Deity. "God sends him," said they of Ivan, "this illustrious spouse, an offset of that imperial tree, the shadow of which was formerly spread over all orthodox Christian brothers. Fortunate alliance! which brings to mind that of the great Vladimir, and which will make another Byzantium of Moscow, and give to its grand princes all the rights of the Greek emperors!"

The craft of Ivan, and the flatteries of his priests and courtiers, tended to inspire their descendants with dreams of conquest and aggrandisement, which it had been better, both for them and for Europe, had never risen in the cradles of their souls. Yet the presence of the Greek princess gradually exerted a favourable, and probably almost unsuspected, influence upon Russia. The triumph of the Turks over Constantinople had destroyed the commerce of that mighty city, and of the empire of which it was the head. The polished Greeks who fled from their native city, now sought protection in the capital whose sovereign had received to his couch the daughter of their fallen emperor. With them they brought those arts and sciences, for the exercise of which their nation was so distinguished. Russia thus received an impetus in civilisation, in elegance of taste, and in commercial prosperity. She was drawn closer to her European neighbours, who had hitherto disregarded her as a chaotic power, utterly sunk in barbarism. Ivan had been altogether occupied in snaring or crushing enemies abroad and at home. At length he had leisure for a task probably more in accordance with his unwarlike nature. He dreaded bloodshed, and used his sword rather as statesmen do the pen. He used it less as a weapon to smite with, than as an instrument to terrify and circumvent his foes. Now, this necessary labour accomplished, he turned his attention to the study of the policy of European courts, and to pondering on the mode by which he should elevate his throne to an equality with the proudest and most powerful among them.

To forward this design, he employed great numbers of architects and artists to erect the magnificent regal residence called the Kremlin—a city of palaces and churches, which still stands the glory and pride of the people of Moscow, and the admiration of all strangers. The Kremlin has necessarily been much enlarged and added to since its first erection; but the original design had much of grandeur in its gigantic massiveness. "If," says a modern traveller, "the giant whom we call the Russian empire had a heart, I should say that the Kremlin was the heart of this monster." Men gifted in the arts and sciences were invited from Germany and Italy. Amongst them were miners and engineers, architects, founders, and minters. The mines of Petchora were worked for the first time, and new money, in silver and copper, coined

them from the west, and from all Anatolia, as far as the frontiers of Persia. It is on this occasion that Ducas, with some fancy and much truth, upbraids the discord and obstinacy of the Greeks. 'Had that angel appeared,' exclaims the historian—'had he offered to exterminate your foes if you would consent to the union of the church (*i.e.*, the Greek and Roman forms of Christianity), even then, in that fatal moment, you would have rejected your safety, or have deceived your God.'"



at Moscow. The arts and sciences, though not destined to flourish for centuries in the cold regions of Russia, yet took a shallow and feeble root there.* A new idea of life was opened to the rude minds of the people by gorgeous public entertainments, pageants, and processions.

In his communications with the polished courts of the great powers of Europe, Ivan was extremely anxious to convey an idea of his power and dignity. He carried this feeling so far, as sometimes to offend where he wished to conciliate. For a slight omission of formalities he refused to receive the envoy of Austria, and even drove him from his presence. He eventually compelled the emperor to treat him as his equal; and when that monarch offered to confer on him the title of king, he replied haughtily, "that he would not degrade himself by receiving titles from any prince on earth, and that he held his crown from God alone!" His powerful neighbours, the Turks, then a source of dread to nearly all Europe, he would not suffer to commit wrong in any way towards him or his subjects without reproof. Some Russian merchants having been injured by the Turks of Kaffa, he demanded redress from the Sultan Bajazet, to whom he sent this message:—"Whence do these acts of violence arise? Are you aware of them, or are you not? One word more. Mahommed, your father, was a great prince; he intended to have sent ambassadors to me to pay me a compliment, but God prevented the execution of his project. Why should it not now be accomplished?" At a later period, he commanded his ambassador at the court of the sultan carefully to avoid compromising the dignity of his master; to address the sultan standing, and not upon his knees, as had been the custom; and never to yield precedence to the representative of any other nation.

Although Ivan had degraded the boyards by employing them in servile offices about his person, yet he sometimes found it necessary to make them feel the extent of his power, and of their weakness in comparison with it. When they contended together for offices and for precedence, he checked their restless vanity with the remark, that "they ought to submit without a murmur to the will of their sovereign, and that when the question related to his service, every office was good." But the discontents of the boyards were not confined to trifles of this nature. The privileges they had enjoyed through the dissensions of the princes had been enormous; and they became aware that much of their power was melting away beneath the firm rule of Ivan. This feeling was cautiously shown on many occasions; and on one, it burst out into something more than a violent remonstrance against the continuance of a state of things which was slowly changing the form of government in Russia. On the death of the czar's eldest son, the result of his first marriage, they addressed Ivan in what he deemed a tone of unseemly vehemence, and implored him to confer the succession upon his grandson

* Sir Archibald Alison appears to think that literature, the arts and sciences, will never flourish in Russia, but that that empire will for ages, if not for ever, remain a nursery of military strength, ready to be used as "the scourge of vicious civilisation." His opinion, from which we entirely dissent, is thus expressed:—"What, then, is the destiny of Russia?—for a destiny, and that a great one, she evidently has. Her rapid growth and ceaseless progress, through all the mutations of fortune, in the adjoining states, clearly bespeak not only consummate wisdom of general internal direction, but the evolutions of a mighty design. She is probably not intended to shine in the career of civilisation. Her sons will not, at least for long, rival the arts of Italy or the chivalry of France, the intellect of England, or the imagination of Germany There will be no Shakespeares or Miltons, no Racines or Corneilles, no Tassos or Raphaels, no Schillers or Goëthes, amidst the countless millions of her boundless territory [*this is bold and baseless prophecy, merely the idle declamation of an accomplished mind*]; but there may be—there will be—an Alexander, an Attila, a Timour. Literature, science, the arts, are the efflorescence of civilisation; but in the moral, not less than in the physical world, efflorescence is succeeded by decline, the riches of the harvest border on the decay of autumn. There is a winter in nations as well as in seasons."—*History of Europe* (Continuation, vol. ii.) In the same passage in which Sir A. Alison so confidently predicts that Russia will reverse the action of natural laws which govern the progress of nations, and go backward into the past, instead of forward into the future, he speaks of that great empire as saved from the corruption of that civilisation to which it has not attained, and the vices of which it is from time to time to correct by means of brute power. Russia the teacher of political virtue! Russia spared from the corruption of civilisation! Why, political and judicial corruption, in their meanest and most abject forms, are the curse of the Russian empire; while its history, from the time of Catherine to the present hour, shows its social life blasted by sensuality and dishonesty. Russia has yet much to learn from civilisation before she need fear being corrupted by it; and she must study to restrain and govern herself, before she assumes the task which properly belongs to Deity alone—that of scourging the vices of surrounding nations.

Dmitri, whom they doubtless hoped to be able to mould according to their desires. The czar angrily refused, and even threw his grandson into prison. The boyards then resorted to stratagem and calumny, and spread many evil reports concerning the Greek czarina, the mother of the second son. So craftily were they framed, that even the far-seeing Ivan was for a while led to believe them. Acting upon this conviction, he publicly disgraced his wife, and releasing his grandson Dmitri from prison, caused him to be solemnly crowned as his successor. The czar, however, soon discovered the designs of the boyards, and the innocence of the Greek princess, and he at once restored her to liberty and his favour. He also excluded the grandson who had so recently been crowned as his successor, and proclaimed his son to be his heir. There was a whimsical rapidity about these proceedings that was not calculated to allay disaffection. The boyards were not inclined to abandon the struggle; and they succeeded in stirring up the inhabitants of Pskof to expostulate with the czar in behalf of the elder branch, against the heir whom he had chosen. Ivan inquired haughtily, "Am I not then at liberty to act as I please?" Then he added, in the spirit of that unreasoning despotism which regards itself as above the judgment of men, "I will give Russia to whom I think proper, and I command you to obey."

The boyards who had been most actively concerned in the conspiracy against the czarina, were seized by command of Ivan, and several of them were beheaded. The high rank of their order had hitherto protected its members from such summary violence, and the people beheld with astonishment acts which showed the vast power of the czar, and the apparently inevitable fate of those who had the temerity to oppose it. The rest who had incurred his displeasure he degraded in their rank, and reduced to a situation of court servitude. Amongst other means of limiting their consequence, he took away their ancient privilege of transferring their service to any other prince possessed of an appanage, and rigidly forbade their removal from such offices about his own court, or elsewhere, as he thought proper to select for them.

One of his latest acts of public interest was a collision with the Russian priesthood. Few sovereigns have been able to overcome clerical opposition, and many have fallen before it; but the wise autocrat proved himself equal to this emergency also. It has been well said, that "if in the field he betrayed a lack of nerve, in the cabinet he showed a degree of imperturbability which invested him with impunity. The waive of his hand, and the sound of his voice, were decisive. No impediments retarded, no resistance repelled him." He effected some reforms in the manners of the Russian priesthood; but the particular occasion which brought him into opposition with them, was the appearance of a startling Jewish heresy amongst them. Its tenets were remarkable, and, to the dispassionate critics of our time, have an air of grotesque absurdity. But it is wise to judge charitably in these matters; for all history shows us, that religious fanaticism and its attendant extravagancies, frequently enter even into the highest order of intellects, and leave their votaries, on this point, the victims of a gloomy and immovable monomania. The Mosaic novelties which had stolen into the Russian church were indeed of a serious nature, and altogether incompatible with the profession of the Christian faith. They consisted in a denial of the divinity of Jesus, and of the Virgin Mary; in the unseemly acts of spitting on the images of saints, and tearing them with the teeth; in a disbelief of paradise and a resurrection of the dead; and in placing an implicit faith in a certain book, which it was audaciously said had been given, by the Deity himself, to Adam. From that book the credulous advocates of the new principles maintained that Solomon had derived all his wisdom; and Moses, Joseph, Elias, and Daniel, their power over the elements and monsters, their skill in the interpretation of dreams, and their faculty of looking into futurity. The Messiah, it was declared, was yet to come, as the Hebrew prophecies concerning him remained unfulfilled. Zosimus, the primate, was understood to be the chief professor of these heresies, in which he was followed by the great bulk of the Russian priesthood.

Some of those who yet remained true to the Christian faith as it had hitherto been generally received in the country, proclaimed their horror and indignation. A pious fanatic of some distinction, known as St. Joseph of Volok, thus vehemently demanded the punishment of the misbelievers:—"We see," he exclaimed, "a son of Satan seated on the throne of the holy

prelates; we see a devouring wolf under the garb of a simple shepherd! They are no more; they have flown to the bosom of Christ, those daring eagles of religion, those godly bishops, who would have pitilessly torn out with their talons every eye that was bold enough to look askance on the divinity of the Saviour. Now, in the garden of the church, we hear nothing but the hiss of a horrible reptile, which vomits forth blasphemy against the Lord, and against his blessed Mother."

The czar had far too much prudence to permit him to go to any of the extremities indicated in this theological denunciation. Had he persecuted the new doctrines with any great degree of severity, they would infallibly have taken root, and endured for at least many generations. He probably cared but little for the purity of the church; but he had certain political reasons for wishing to extirpate the strange heresies which had appeared within it. If the most vital doctrines of religion were disregarded, he knew that the throne could not easily retain its alleged sanctity. Novelties were the nurse of restlessness and change, alike in religion or politics; and Ivan desired no changes except such as he himself had brought about. These were all of an autocratic character, in which the person of the sovereign was invested with something akin to divine power, and the church was converted into a sort of pious outwork around the throne. Ivan therefore caused the heresy to be anathematised; appointed a new primate, whose inauguration he himself somewhat significantly performed;* and banished the heretics from the empire, after confiscating their property, and adroitly converting it to his own use. Such measures, severe though calm, no doubt created great excitement; but the clergy were awed, and submitted. The Eastern doctrine of fatalism permeated through their religious tenets; and of what use would it be to resist a man whose supremacy, they reasoned, was preordained by Him "who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters; who maketh the clouds his chariot; who walketh upon the wings of the wind!"

Ivan did not neglect the internal condition of the empire. A system of order and classification was made to extend to everything. A more equitable system of taxation relieved the people of those burdens to which they had been frequently subjected by the caprice of their immediate lord. The roads were repaired, and the police and army more regularly organised. The right of the peasantry to change their servitude from one lord or fief to another, on payment of a certain tax, was clearly defined. This was an important matter; for it was the subsequent abolition of this privilege by Boris Godunof that led to the conversion of the Russian peasantry into serfs—an act pregnant with mischief, which at the time remained unseen. The power of the boyards over their followers was limited, by associating with them in their judicial rights the elders of the districts and the established civil functionary. Thus, though Russia was far behind the rest of Europe, yet some faint colouring of civilisation began to appear in it. In 1497, Ivan collected the existing ordinances and customs of the country into a code, of which, though it was probably suited to the age, it has been observed, everything partook of the keenness of the sword, which was brought into action in every part of it. The majority of criminal offences were decided by the ancient and unreasonable practice of single combat, and torture was used for the extortion of evidence. Other punishments chiefly consisted in the knout, confiscation of the criminal's property, condemnation to slavery in the mines, and death. So little hesitation was there to proceed to the latter extremity, that when a thief was detected in a second offence, he was executed at once without any formality.

Ivan's reign was prolonged for three-and-forty years, a length of time which enabled him to accomplish all the reforms and changes he effected in the state. He died in 1505, at the age of sixty-seven. Though a contemplation of his character may make us recoil with disgust as we would from some venomous reptile, yet it must be conceded that this heartless, unprincipled, and monstrously selfish man had, in some indirect way, a claim upon the title of Great, which was conferred upon him by his people, and even admitted by foreigners. Yet, perhaps, paradox as the assertion may seem, there never existed a man whose mind was more deficient in the elements of true greatness. Insincere, indeed false to everything but himself and the one great idea which he laboured all his life to pro-

* Implying thereby that the church derived its power and dignity from him, not he his power and dignity from the church. Ivan professed to receive his authority directly from the hands of God, or, as he said at another time, from the Holy Trinity.

mote—actually loving falsehood rather than truth—the man was a living, aggregate, incarnate lie. A coward in adversity, a despot in prosperity, a shuffler at all times. Yet this strange man went patiently forward, and laboured incessantly at the exaltation of his country!—did it also, not only with craft, but with wisdom! Yet all his work was contaminated by his vices, and, most of all, by his cold, unmovable selfishness. He created order in Russia; but it was the order resulting from a sense of fear, and a habit of abject submission. He had no thought of bringing into being a great *people;* for them he had no feeling, save that they were to be ruled for his advantage and that of his successors. A great *empire* was what he had laboured for—one of such extent and resources, that its sovereigns should not stand second to any of the potentates of the civilised world. His plans were often promoted by a favourable combination of circumstances; but he had the faculty of pursuing them with an unwearied tenacity. Russia owed him much; but she also owed to him that servile, broken spirit, which to this hour is prevalent among the lower orders of the people. Two centuries and a-half of Tartar tyranny had doubtless done much to debase the character of the masses, and extinguish their spirit; but the policy of Ivan finished what the hand of an enemy had begun. He wanted subjects, but not a people; and he obtained his wish at the price of the extinction of popular spirit. He wanted empire, and he obtained it: during his reign 19,000 square miles and 4,000,000 subjects were added to the already immense territories of Russia. He strove also to promote the arts and to forward civilisation, and his character was not tainted by cruelty. He was despotically severe at times, but he generally seemed to shrink from shedding blood. The sword and the axe, if it must be; but they were his last alternatives. That was a negative virtue, certainly; and it may also be said that, in some measure, the time had need of the man. Evil, oppressive, and even mean work was to be done for the good of Russia; and he did it with a will. For the rest, he was a wise sovereign—much in the same way that a crowned Iago would have been one: he pursued the interest of Russia just so far as it was identical with his own.

CHAPTER XI.

THE REIGN OF VASSILI IVANOVITCH; CONTESTS WITH THE TARTARS; DEATH OF VASSILI, AND REGENCY OF HELENA; HER EXCESSES AND ASSASSINATION; ILL-TREATMENT OF THE YOUNG CZAR IVAN, AFTERWARDS SURNAMED "THE TERRIBLE;" HIS YOUTHFUL CRUELTIES PROMOTE INSURRECTION AT MOSCOW; REFORMATION OF IVAN; HE ADVANCES AGAINST KASAN, AND CONVERTS THE MOSQUES INTO CHRISTIAN CHURCHES; ANNEXATION OF ASTRACAN; DISCOVERY AND CONQUEST OF SIBERIA; PRINTING INTRODUCED INTO RUSSIA; RETURN OF THE FEROCITY OF IVAN; HE PUTS HIS VIRTUOUS ADVISERS TO DEATH; HE RETIRES TO THE FORTRESS OF ALEXANDROVSKY; DENOUNCES THE CLERGY AND THE BOYARDS; AWFUL MASSACRES AT NOVGOROD; FRIGHTFUL EXECUTIONS AT MOSCOW; IVAN IS DEPRIVED OF TERRITORIES BY FOREIGN FOES; HE SEEKS THE HAND OF QUEEN ELIZABETH OF ENGLAND; HE MURDERS HIS ELDEST SON; HIS DEATH AND CHARACTER.

No opposition was offered to the succession of the son of the late monarch, nor was any effort made on behalf of his grandson Dmitri. Vassili Ivanovitch, the son of Ivan, by the czarina Sophia, of Byzantium, ascended the throne of the grand principedom in 1505, and occupied it for eight-and-twenty comparatively uneventful years. His character appears to have borne some resemblance to that of his father, whose principles of government he addressed himself to carrying out. It may, however, be inferred, that he did not possess the profound craft, restless energy, and political wisdom of his predecessor; for history is almost silent concerning him. No great act, or remarkable saying, is recorded of him; and he either possessed a mind which, except in the exhibition of a serpent-like and venomous cunning, scarcely rose above the almost stagnant level of mediocrity, or the chroniclers of his nation have been unjust

to his memory. Still, whatever were his deficiencies, he has drawn from the historian Ségur the flattering comment, "That he maintained the dignity of the empire bequeathed to him by his father, and enlarged its extent." Perhaps it would be more correct to say, that the fabric of Ivan's government stood and worked well for a time by virtue of its own strength.

For some years before Ivan the Crafty (a far more appropriate surname for him than that of Great) went to his grave, he was disturbed by the turbulence of the Tartars of Kasan. These people submitted with an ill-will to his authority, which they resolved to cast off on the first opportunity. Not caring to conceal their rebellious temper, they proceeded so far as to set up a new khan, in defiance of the authority of the czar. Ever averse to a resort to the sword, and probably influenced by unpleasant reminiscences of Tartar strength and ferocity, Ivan pretended to acquiesce pleasantly in this disregard of his power; but, with his customary duplicity, appointed a Russian boyard with the nominal duty of assisting the khan in the administration, but with the real one of neutralising his authority. The Tartars understood this well enough; but, awed by the increasing power of Ivan, they sullenly submitted to what they could not readily avoid. The calm produced by such a state of things, however, resembles the oppressive tranquillity which precedes the eruption of a volcanic mountain; and the rule of the prince who holds his authority by so uncertain a bond, is about as secure as the peasant who, on the eve of the fiery outburst, sleeps in apathy in his cot at the mountain's base. The death of Ivan gave the Tartars of Kasan the opportunity they desired, and the repressed feelings of animosity burst forth. This turbulent people rose in insurrection, and murdered the representative of Russian authority.

Vassili had no alternative but to resort to arms: his father might plot and equivocate with safety; but it was necessary for a prince who had yet to acquire distinction, to act. Accordingly, in 1508, he sent a great army, under the command of his brother, to reduce the Tartars of Kasan to obedience. At first the Russians gained a doubtful victory over their foes; but a second battle was fought, in which they sustained an unequivocal defeat. The Tartars, inflated with the consciousness of victory, were encouraged to attempt some more daring exploit. Having induced the Tartars of the Crimea to join them, they invaded Russia in great strength, and even penetrated as far as the gates of Moscow. During this marauding expedition, it is said they made prisoners of the unarmed population to the almost incredible number of 300,000, whom they afterwards disposed of as slaves to the Turks. We are inclined to suspect exaggeration in this statement; but there can be no doubt that this horde of semi-savages, whose chief object was plunder, inflicted an enormous amount of misery upon the unhappy Russians, whom Vassili left without protection. The czar, whose cowardice and meanness on this occasion almost went beyond that of his father in early life, purchased the forbearance and departure of the Tartars by costly bribes and dishonourable promises of submission! Yes, incredible as it may seem in an independent sovereign, he had the abject baseness to promise that he would take a new oath of allegiance to them. We scarcely think it lessens his offence against common manliness, and his treason against the prostrate dignity of his people, that he never intended to keep his word. Vile and worthless as were the Tartars—a race whom it would have been a mercy to mankind to exterminate, as the pioneers of civilisation do droves of famished wolves—yet it is almost a matter of regret that this man eventually neutralised his own submission, and, by falsehood and cunning, triumphed over his foes. More by stratagems than force of arms, he eventually recaptured Kasan, and made severe examples of the most distinguished insurgents. This event did not take place for many years, during which time the regal coward patiently nursed his anger. In 1523 he attempted to wreak his vengeance upon the Tartars, but his army was repulsed with disgrace. Seven years later he was more fortunate: Kasan was taken by his troops; the fortress destroyed by fire; and, it is affirmed, no less than 60,000 of the Tartars massacred.

During the continuance of this struggle, the city of Pskof exhibited expiring signs of independence, and made some efforts to separate itself from the empire. It was in vain; the time of petty princedoms and small republican states was past in Russia. The tendency of events had set in towards consolidation and despotism; and resistance on the part of small states was useless. It

showed no statesmanlike skill on the part of Vassili, that he was able to reduce the feeble city which strove vainly to rear itself against him. Even this poor exploit was done by stratagem. He drained away the flower of the population by exhausting military levies; he absorbed the wealth of the citizens by burdensome taxes, and crushed their commerce by heavy restrictions. Pskof, utterly debilitated, sunk still deeper beneath that Muscovite rule from which she had thoughtlessly, and without calculation, attempted to emancipate herself. The only other event of importance during this reign was the annexation of Severia, the last principality which maintained an independent existence. Having sat for eight-and-twenty years in the seat of the czar, and sullied the title during that period by the meanness of his nature, Vassili died in 1533. Insignificant as he appears to have been, his reign tended to the consolidation of the empire; for the machinery of government set in action by his father, was permitted silently to take its course. For himself he would have been one of those who come and go upon the earth unhonoured and unheeded—mere living bubbles, floating for a brief space in the sunlight—but for the accident of his having been born to wear a crown.

Vassili was succeeded by his son Ivan Vasilovitch, an infant of only three years old. The early years of this young prince were rendered miserable by those who little deemed that he would extort a merciless revenge for the indignities and sufferings they then heaped upon him. Who, in a handsome child, could have recognised the future Nero of Russia—the monster whose atrocious cruelties appalled his people, and astonished those of surrounding states? But, unhappily, Ivan is far from being the only instance in which an oppressed infancy has ripened into a depraved manhood.

The tender age of the czar rendered a regency imperative; and Helena, his mother, assumed the actual responsibility of government. She was an unprincipled and worthless woman, who offended the boyards by her insolence, and disgusted the nation by her licentiousness. Her dignity she shared with a paramour, whose injudicious elevation to such a rank was naturally regarded as an insult by the princes and nobles of the empire. To the education and future interests of her son this sensual woman was altogether indifferent: she lived but for the pleasures or the passions of the passing hour, and he was but a gilded property by which she obtained their gratification.

A feeling of discontent was general among the princes and boyards. They were not reconciled to the loss of that inordinate authority which had been wrung from them by Ivan the Crafty, and kept from them by his less able son. What was the consolidation and peace of the empire to them, who, regardless of the claims of country, or the feelings of patriotism, sought only for individual distinction and aggrandisement? "Formerly," says Ségur, "the whole empire was the theatre of their ambition; its partition into appanages, their end; civil war, their means: but now that was all concentrated in the prince, their sole arena was his court; their end, the precarious power derived from favouritism; their means, intrigue." They longed for a pretext to take advantage of the infancy of the czar, so that they might seize upon the empire, and divide it amongst themselves. Such a pretext was furnished by the dissolute conduct of the regent, and a conspiracy was formed amongst many of the princes and boyards. Favourable as the time seemed for a movement of this nature, no opportunity offered for a general outbreak. The overbearing conduct of the conspirators led to a betrayal of their designs, and the regent was enabled to strike the first blow. Three uncles of the infant czar were the principal plotters against his interests, and these Helena seized, on the ground that they entertained designs upon the throne. Once in her power, they were thrown into loathsome prisons, in which they soon breathed their last, whether in the course of nature, or in consequence of secret outrage, is known but to God. They died; and the most active of their followers were punished by torture, death, or imprisonment. The other conspirators, alarmed at a degree of energy they did not anticipate, fled for safety to Lithuania or the Crimea.

For five years of anarchy the regent maintained her position by the exercise of a ferocious cruelty. During this time she showed herself a fitting mother of the child whom her neglect was assisting to mature into a monster. It has often been said, that those men whom the world regards as its great ones, have usually been born of gifted women. The same rule, doubtless, holds good in cases of most abandoned depravity or gigantic crime. In this instance, the wretch whose diabolic cruelty earned for him the repulsive title of "The Terrible,"

was the son of a woman who was not only a libel upon her sex, but a disgrace to humanity. It was her delight to appal and agonise her enemies by torture before she extinguished them in death. But her five years of power ended, and the hour of retribution came. She died suddenly! Yes, indeed, suddenly; but her death was anticipated and designed. The boyards, whom the high-placed wanton had terrified by her cruelty, had poisoned her. If by some superhuman power we could learn aught of the dark secrets of the buried past, it would be an instructive thing to know something of the last hours and words of such a woman as this: a wild sermon that, we think; which might cause a shudder in the guilty whom hitherto no precept could reach, no warning touch.

The czar was still in his infancy, and it was necessary to appoint some person or party to conduct the affairs of the empire. It was confided to, or rather seized upon by, a member of the factious boyards, who dignified themselves with the title of the "supreme council." The president of this body was Prince Schuisky, a coarse-minded, brutal noble, in whom vulgar audacity struggled for pre-eminence with dangerous ambition. The turbulent disposition of the family of this man had long made them disliked and shunned by the czar as enemies of the state; and Schuisky now resolved to resent, upon a mere child, the supposed injuries his relatives had received from former sovereigns. He brought up the young Ivan altogether without education; subjected him to numerous insults; even lolled upon his bed; and, on one occasion, insolently placed his feet in the lap of the boy sovereign. Child as the latter was, he felt these slights bitterly, and resolved to repay them when time should really place the power of the sceptre in his hands.

The supreme council of the boyards speedily showed themselves unequal to the successful conduct of the affairs of state. The feeling of patriotism was a stranger to the bosoms of these rude and selfish men. Each pursued his own interest, and confusion and mutual distrust was the result of their deliberations. Everywhere the people became a prey to petty tyrants; and it seemed as if Russia would recede to that barbarism from which she had been so slowly emerging. The treasury of the young czar was plundered, his dominions encroached upon, and himself only tolerated in his own palace, where not he, but the boyards were masters. In this state of things the country was infested by large bodies of wandering Tartars, who robbed and murdered the unprotected people. These unchecked excesses encouraged the Tartars to attempt an invasion on a scale of actual warfare; but the council, startled at the danger, united for once; and the Tartars, who were but the shadow of their ancient power, were repulsed. Prince Belsky and the Russian primate, who both appear to have been actuated by honourable motives, endeavoured after this to restore order, and for a time they were successful—for a brief time only: their patriotic exertions elicited the hatred of their compeers; for even the presence of virtue is a reproof to those who are devoid of it. A cabal was formed against the primate and the prince. The former was ill-treated and deposed; and the latter thrown into prison and murdered there.

The turbulent Prince Schuisky and his companions had been displaced from their power on the invasion of the Tartars; but shortly before the overthrow of the primate and the murder of Belsky, they reappeared and recovered their influence by force of arms. In the month of January, 1542, they surprised Moscow in the dead of night, made themselves masters of the city, and entering the palace, penetrated even to the bedside of the young czar, and rousing him suddenly from sleep with alarming shouts, endeavoured to overthrow his intellect through the influence of sudden terror.

Such was the early life of one born to the eventual possession of absolute power! The young czar, neglected, insulted, and treated with brutality, was an object of pity. When he exhibited, for a short time, some natural and genial feeling of early life, his persecutors scoffed at the generous emotion. Grief for his dead mother was for Schuisky and his satellites a theme for laughter. When, on one occasion, he formed an attachment to a young boyard, they fell upon the latter in the presence of Ivan, and beat him with a malignant fury. These cruelties were producing their natural result. The young Ivan became at first morose, then savage and vindictive. All that was evil in the boy ripened with a diseased rapidity: his wholesome feelings seemed to freeze up and perish within him; while a natural tendency to brutal actions was encouraged by his abandoned misleaders. He soon began to love mischief and brutality for the

excitement they afforded him. The development of such a mind must be a curious psychological study for the philosopher; but the pursuit of so speculative a theme would be out of place here. His childhood had been cheerless enough; and the earliest amusements in which he indulged were disgusting. They consisted in riding furiously over old men and women, and trampling even children beneath the feet of his horses; in throwing stones at the passers-by; in tormenting wild animals, and in hurling cats and dogs from the summit of his palace. These barbarities were applauded by the brutal Prince Schuisky, who trusted, by encouraging such debasing deeds, to bring up the czar to be an idiotic tool in his hands. The wretch was mistaken: he was but sharpening a weapon of which he was to be the earliest victim; and digging a pit for another, which was destined to become his own grave!

The uneducated Ivan possessed far more intellect than the dull Prince Schuisky imagined. The latter appears to have been a man not distinguished in any way for ability, and who procured his transient supremacy merely by audacity and the exercise of brutal force. Ivan had carefully treasured up a remembrance of the insults he had received at the hands of this man; and at length the hour of repayment arrived. Schuisky had not the intellect to appreciate the force of that fierce yet boyish *will* which, now rapidly developing itself, was soon to crush him. He was blind to the meaning of the ferocious glare which sometimes lighted up the eyes of the young czar when engaged in his diabolical sports. Ivan was only in his thirteenth year; but royal children are usually almost unnaturally precocious. One day he was engaged at a hunting party, which comprised amongst its members Schuisky (the president of the council) and a Prince Gluisky, who regarded him with emotions of jealousy and hatred. Gluisky was anxiously on the watch for some incident which might be used to promote the ruin of his rival. During the chase he prompted the young czar to address Schuisky in words of command and insult. The astonished president, who thought he had effectually intimidated his sovereign, replied in an angry manner. Backed by his new friend, Ivan exhibited the native fury of his disposition. He gave the command to his followers, who, rushing upon Schuisky, hurled him amongst the dogs. The fierce brutes, encouraged by the hunters, tore the guilty wretch limb from limb, and speedily devoured him. Thus the ruffian who depraved the mind of a youthful sovereign, and exposed his infancy to constant insults and terrors, met with a fate which, despite its appalling nature, we are compelled to say he deserved.

Though rid of an oppressor and master, the boy-czar fell beneath the ascendancy of another too powerful subject. This was Prince Gluisky, who now became the leader of the administration. This man and his associates were as worthless as their predecessors. They sought to confirm their influence over Ivan by the encouragement of his excesses; and even seduced him into the commission of the most extravagant atrocities. They constantly impressed upon his mind, that the only way to make his authority respected was by the exercise of severity, and that power consisted in oppression. He was an apt pupil in such pernicious lessons; and the ferocity he exhibited elicited the applause of his barbarous advisers. These abandoned men actually pandered to the love of cruelty of their young master, by murdering, in his presence, any unfortunate person who was so unhappy as to offend him.

Things went on thus for three or four years, when, in his seventeenth year, Ivan was crowned Czar of Russia. His minority had been disfigured by such acts of bloodshed as converted the latter part of it into a reign of terror. His conduct produced that reaction which frequently, though we regret not always, attends upon tyranny. The citizens of Moscow, maddened by the bloodthirsty caprices of their sovereign, resorted to one of those material protests against his conduct, with which the oppressed commonly warn their despots. One night they set the city on fire in several places; and with the early dawn the young tyrant was aroused from his slumbers by the roaring of flames, the hurried trampling of excited crowds, and the curses of the multitude. The sudden terrors to which he had been subjected in his infancy had made him the slave of fear. A sensation of horror seized him, which was much increased when he learned that the infamous Prince Gluisky had been torn in pieces by the furious mob. Struck to the heart, the young tyrant feared that he himself might fall a victim to the just anger of his incensed people. In this state of mental disorder,

and while the fierce outcries of the excited crowds who thronged the streets, and the stifling smell of fire penetrated to his chamber, he was approached by a wandering monk, named Sylvester, whose piety, boldness, and rude eloquence had obtained for him, among the people, the reputation of being a prophet. Carrying the Bible in one hand, and extending the other in an attitude of warning, while his eyes flashed with that excitement which hovers on the verge of insanity, the monk arrested the attention of the czar; as he predicted, from certain appearances of the stars, his speedy ruin, if his courses of cruelty and tyranny were not abandoned. He succeeded in making a deep impression on the scared mind of the czar; whose crimes, he assured him, had aroused the vengeance of heaven. The efforts of the monk were seconded by the entreaties and exhortations of the virtuous Alexis Adascheff, and by the persuasions of the young and beautiful Anastatia, to whom Ivan had been but recently united. A change was thus effected in the mind of the juvenile despot; and for a time he became human in his conduct.

Ivan appeared to delight in astonishing his counsellors and his people; and the seeming change in his nature created as much surprise as his recent atrocities. Under the influence of his new advisers, he sanctioned an entire change in the system of government. His evil companions were dismissed from all posts of authority, and their places supplied by able and upright men. Everything was reduced to order, and tranquillity re-established throughout the country. The army was reorganised, the pay of the soldiery increased; the proprietors of estates compelled to contribute, according to their means, to the military strength of the empire, which rose to a height it had never reached before. Amongst the new military arrangements was the institution of the afterwards turbulent and infamous Strelitz, a permanent militia of fusileers, who were eventually regarded as the Janizaries of Russia. Such was the extent and population of the empire, that its available military power was estimated at 300,000 men! The possession of so much power roused the military ardour of the czar, and stimulated him to action. In the year 1552, he marched, at the head of a powerful army, against the turbulent Tartars of Kasan, who never remained in tranquillity except when the sword was suspended over their heads. Ivan commenced his campaign in the depth of winter, to the disgust of his soldiers; whose complaints, however, he soon extinguished by the severity of his punishments. He took Kasan in consequence of his engineers springing a mine before it; a mode of warfare with which both his troops and that of the enemy were unacquainted, and which accordingly gained him much reputation. Having entered the city in triumph, he caused the Tartar mosques to be converted into Christian churches; and compelled the khan to submit to the rite of baptism. Notwithstanding the questionable source from which these acts of religious ardour proceeded, they won for the czar some popularity among the people, who were not given to the analysis of motives. One wise measure of Ivan's was the erection of fortresses to keep the Tartars in check. He was further successful in reducing the kingdom of Astracan, then much esteemed for its vines and other valuable productions, and annexing it to the Russian empire. Indeed, during this period of grace, everything seemed to prosper with him, and he basked in the sunshine of fortune. The sultan, Selim II., apparently surprised at the approach of the Russians to the shores of the Caspian, sent an army of 80,000 Turks against Astracan. The Turks were then almost in the zenith of that dazzling power which astonished and awed all Europe. Their troops were flushed with repeated victories, and their statesmen and generals accustomed to regard with disdain the most distinguished of European soldiers. Had they encountered the Russians, just shaking off the enervating effects of two centuries and a-half of bondage to the Tartars, there can be but little doubt they would have been the victors. But the prolonged contests between these antagonistic races were not yet to commence; they were unborn events, slowly germinating in the mystic body of the future. Turkey was to be weaker, and Russia stronger, before these great powers crossed each other's path. The formidable army which Selim II. sent against Astracan, perished miserably in the desolate steppes by which it is surrounded.

Some writers attribute to this period the accidental discovery of Siberia, and its annexation to Russia. Much uncertainty, however, reigns over the actual date of this circumstance; and if Siberia was discovered

at this time, it was disregarded—a probable circumstance, as the czar had already more territory than he could govern efficiently, or his subjects use advantageously. Russia was already too extended; her power would have been greater had her subjects been confined within a smaller arena. The discovery of Siberia is attributed to a wandering Cossack chief of the Don, called Yermák Timoféyew; but though some accounts represent him as penetrating into these desolate regions during the early part of the reign of Ivan, others state that that event took place in 1581, only three years before Ivan's death. The entire subjugation of Siberia, which was accomplished by private adventurers, and without expense to the government, occupied a period of about eighty years. Those warlike people, the Don Cossacks, to whom we have just alluded, gave in their voluntary adhesion to the Russian government in the year 1549.

During this early period of his reign, when the ferocious nature of Ivan appeared to be softened and subdued by the amiability of his beautiful consort Anastatia, the young czar seems earnestly to have desired to promote the prosperity of the empire. In 1547 he dispatched an embassy to the eccentric Charles V., emperor of Germany, to obtain his permission for the engagement of artisans and engineers for the instruction of the Russians. The request was refused; but as we are told that a number of German artists were shortly afterwards imported into Russia, it must be assumed that the decision of the emperor was evaded. Certain it is that Ivan has the honour of having introduced the art of printing into the empire. Russia was at this time beginning, in some measure, to hold out her hands in amity to distant countries. During the reign of our boy-king, Edward VI., whose unripe buds of promise were so prematurely withered, Russia opened a trade with England through the inhospitable port of Archangel. Some English navigators having, while attempting to find a north-east passage to China and India, penetrated into the White Sea, and been compelled to put in at Archangel, were so kindly received by the Russian people, and by the czar himself, into whose presence they were graciously admitted, that they brought home a report which led to the immediate formation of a company of merchant traders with that nation.

This period of tranquillity for Russia was about to terminate. The virtuous czarina died in the year 1560, after having successfully restrained the furious passions of her husband during a period of thirteen years. With her died the moderation and calmness of the czar; and the ferocity which she had charmed into inaction, burst forth with an increased force and an appalling rapidity. Some years before, Ivan had consulted an old bishop, who had been banished from court on account of his crimes. In reply, the worldly prelate observed—"If you would become truly an absolute monarch, never seek a counsellor wiser than yourself; never receive advice from any man. Command, and never obey; then you will be a real sovereign, and a terror to the boyards. Bear in mind, that the counsellor of the wisest prince always ends by being his ruler." The czar at once recognised the subtle policy expressed in these words, and kissing the hand of the prelate, exclaimed—"My own father could not have given me more wholesome advice." These precepts, though they probably slept in the mind of the czar, never altogether faded from it. During the life of Anastatia he had patiently received the advice of Adascheff and Sylvester, who acted with virtue and wisdom; but their ascendancy was doomed, and the czar resolved henceforth only to take council of his own mind and passions.

From this period to the fortunate hour which saw the death of Ivan, he rioted in every excess of cruelty which a morbid imagination could suggest, or a monster put into execution. His life was but one prolonged gigantic crime. Lord Bacon truly observed—"Nature is often hidden; sometimes overcome; seldom extinguished." The atrocities of Nero or Caligula were exceeded by this northern tyrant; while those of our eighth Henry seem actually mild in comparison. It has been well observed, that "if the narrative of his crimes could be spared from the page of history, it would rescue us from a series of details, the very relation of which must sicken the least susceptible mind. But there was a passion so unearthly in this paragon of monsters—he was so elevated in atrocity, and reached so sublime a height in the perpetration of cruelties—that his life, incredible and disgusting as it is, fills too great a space in the annals of despotism to be passed over lightly."

Shortly after the death of Anastatia, Ivan banished his prudent advisers, and then encouraged the vilest calumnies against them. Some worthless court parasites charged them with having brought about the death of the czarina by violent means—a transparent falsehood which Ivan pretended to believe. Nothing could save them from his fury, and they soon fell victims to his thirst for blood. Even those who had been associated with them were either put to the torture or to death; or, when a milder temper influenced the despot for the hour, imprisoned or banished. While these indiscriminate severities were going on, the court was the scene of the wildest excesses. A boyard, who presumed to remonstrate with one of the new favourites, was murdered on the spot by the hand of Ivan himself; while another, who refused to join in the lascivious pleasures of his sovereign, was stabbed to the heart while on his knees in church at prayer.

The prince Andrew Kurbsky, who had rendered important services to the country, learnt that he was one of the intended victims of the czar. Knowing that integrity would avail him nothing against false accusations, or the furious whims of his sovereign, he fled to Poland for safety, and placed himself under the protection of Sigismund II., the king of that country, and most inveterate enemy of Russia. From this asylum he wrote an accusatory letter to the czar, in which he charged him with being the cause of all the miseries which their common country then endured; with having shed the blood of Israel's elders in the temples of the Lord; and threatened him with eternal vengeance for his crimes. When this epistle was presented to Ivan, he, on learning from whence it came, struck the messenger across the legs with an iron-bound staff which he usually carried; and then, while the blood flowed rapidly from the man's wounds, composedly perused the document. The czar was not destitute of abilities: neglected as his education had been, he could write with freedom, and was proud of his literary attainments. He himself replied to Kurbsky, in a vein of mingled anger and sarcasm. The letter is still preserved. In it the czar thus addresses the fugitive prince—"Why, thou wretch, dost thou destroy thy traitor soul in saving by flight thy worthless body? If thou art really honest and virtuous, why not die by the hand of thy master, and thereby obtain the crown of the martyrs? What is life? What are earthly pomps and riches? Vanity! a shadow!—What thou assertest of my assumed cruelties is an impudent lie. I do *not* destroy the elders of Israel, nor do I stain with their blood the Lord's temples: the peaceful and religious live happily in my service. Against traitors alone I am severe; but who ever spared them? Did not Constantine the Great sacrifice his only son?—Thou tellest me that I shall never again see thy Ethiop face. Heavens! what a misfortune!" Finally, the letter says—"But I am silent, for Solomon forbids us to waste words with fools like thee."

Scornfully as the czar treated the accusations and enmity of Prince Kurbsky, the result of the flight of the latter soon made itself apparent. Sigismund gathered an army for the invasion of Russia, and instigated the Tartars to make a descent upon its southern provinces. On finding the fugitive not so helpless as he expected, Ivan was seized with fits of passion and paroxysms of cruelty. He regarded every one with distrust, and treated all around him as if they were the accomplices of Kurbsky. Many he put to the rack, or to death, merely from motives of suspicion. He constantly charged the boyards with entertaining evil designs against him and the state, and then confiscated their property. Racked by an unsatisfied vengeance, he frequently lamented that he could not find victims enough to allay his wrath. Haunted by a real impression that a conspiracy against him was in progress, or influenced by a cunning desire to extend his power over his people, he next performed a trick of so whimsical a nature, that it gives some slight colouring to the charitable suggestion that he was insane. Early one winter morning, in the year 1568, he left the Kremlin in his travelling sledge, and, together with his family, his attendants, and a regiment of cavalry, abandoned Moscow. Prior to his departure, he ordered the metropolitan to celebrate mass in the church of the Assumption, where, having prayed with great apparent devotion, he solemnly left the city. Why he had departed, or where he was going to, was kept a profound secret.

It might be supposed that the inhabitants of Moscow were glad to be rid of his presence, even though but for a short time. The reverse was the case: they were seized with astonishment and despondency at his inexplicable absence. Cruel as he was, he had acquired something of popularity amongst the people. His severities had been exercised rather against the nobles

and the clergy than against them; and as they had frequently been the victims of the tyranny of their masters, they often secretly rejoiced at the calamities which fell upon the latter. They had also gradually come—in consequence of the pretensions of the czar, and the servile if not blasphemous teachings of the priesthood—to regard their sovereign as the representative of God; as indeed standing between them and Deity; and even, in some inexplicable way, performing some of the beneficent functions of the Supreme! Strange as it may seem, these unreasoning barbarians had ever looked to the czar for that protection which cultivated and devout minds expect only from the Almighty Power which creates and sustains all things. So far was this perverted feeling carried, that the people began to believe, that in being deserted by Ivan, they were deserted by Omnipotence.

It was a month before the inhabitants of Moscow learned what had become of their sovereign. It is probable that, by that time, he had no intention either to abandon his authority or to prolong his absence. Two letters arrived from him—one addressed to the metropolitan, and the other to the people. From these letters it appeared that he had taken up his abode at Alexandrovsky, a distant fortress, surrounded by a gloomy forest. The letter to the metropolitan denounced the clergy and the boyards, but especially the former, as the cause of all the disorders which had afflicted the country during his minority; and he asserted that they were even then promoting similar sources of evil. So great, he added, was the evil influence of the primate and the priesthood, that he had abandoned the management of the affairs of state, and left Moscow to wander a fugitive upon the earth. Ivan's epistle to the people was in a different style, and showed the art with which the despot influenced their childish minds. He concluded a strain of mingled flattery and melancholy by an assurance that he had no cause of complaint against them, and by bidding them farewell for ever.

On hearing these letters, the spiritless people broke out into senseless lamentations. Closing their shops, they assembled in groups in the streets. Everywhere business was suspended; and the burden of every conversation was, "The czar has forsaken us, and we are lost. Who will now defend us against the enemy? What are sheep without the shepherd?" So great was their blind attachment to the regal power, and the legitimate possessor of it, that they proceeded in crowds to the metropolitan, and urged him to solicit Ivan to return to his faithful people. "Let him," they exclaimed, "punish all those who deserve it; has he not the power of life and death? The state cannot remain without a head, and we will not acknowledge any other than the one God has given us." They added, "Who, without him, could preserve the purity of religion? who could save millions of souls from eternal perdition?" The opinion of the people was too general, and too vehemently expressed, to be disregarded. After much consultation, it was decided that a body of prelates and boyards should proceed to the retreat of the czar, and, humbling themselves before him, implore him to return to Moscow.

Ivan beheld the abasement of the deputation with a secret emotion of pleasure, and affected to accede to their prayers with reluctance. Before doing so, he extorted from the clergy a condition, that they would never interfere to avert those punishments which he considered it necessary to inflict on such of his subjects who entered into conspiracies either against the state or him and his family. On his return to Moscow, the czar was received with enthusiastic acclamations; but the slavish population were welcoming a scourge which was to fall like a curse upon their abject servility. The appearance of Ivan, on his entrance into the city, struck the beholders with surprise and pity. The Russian chroniclers observe—"Only a month had elapsed since his absence, yet they hardly knew him again. His large and robust body, his ample chest, his broad shoulders, had shrunk; his head, which had been shaded by thick locks, was become bald; the thin and scattered remains of a beard, which was lately the ornament of his face, now disfigured it. His eyes were dull, and his features, marked with a ravenous ferocity, were deformed." This appearance—whether the result of a debilitated state of body, proceeding from mental anguish; or, which is far more probable, intentionally brought about for the sake of producing an effect—elicited a strong feeling of sympathy from the people.

Addressing the assembled multitude, he dwelt upon the crimes of the boyards, and insisted on the necessity there existed for

his possession of the absolute power to punish where he thought fit to do so. He concluded with an exhortation, couched in the language of piety, on the vanity of the world, and the worthlessness of life; the object of which was to reconcile the people to the wholesale sacrifice of it, which he contemplated. He then desired and obtained from the populace permission to institute a new body-guard, to be composed of a thousand men of noble birth, who were to bear the title of the Opritshnina, or Select Legion. This body of men, when actually formed, instead of being composed of the nobly born, was a collection of persons of the lowest class and most degraded character, whose real business soon consisted of acting as spies, informers, and assassins. They were commissioned to find out and denounce disaffected persons, of whom they afterwards became the executioners. As the property of the victims fell to these ruffians, it may be supposed that they were diligent in their infamous vocation; and that, where a crime could not always be discovered, one was sometimes invented.

The next act of the despot was to erect for himself a new palace, or rather fortress, outside the walls of the Kremlin; for a fear of assassination seems to have made a deep impression upon his mind. To obtain a site for this building, he desolated the streets, and instructed his ruffian guard to drive to a distance those who had been thus shamefully despoiled of their property. No less than 12,000 of the citizens are said to have been dispossessed of their habitations, for the sake of erecting his regal prison. Though the new palace was regarded as impregnable, yet the terrors of the czar did not permit him to reside in it in tranquillity. Haunted by a constant sense of that retribution which he knew he had provoked, he left this building, and retired again to the gloomy fortress of Alexandrovsky, around which a considerable town was in course of erection. This no one was permitted to enter or leave without his express permission, and a guard was stationed to enforce the regulation. In this seclusion an extraordinary whim entered into the mind of the despot. With a theatrical burlesque of the formularies of religion, he assumed the habit and title of an abbot, and bestowed upon his depraved body-guard the vestments and name of monks. They wore black robes over their military dress, and were compelled to adopt a mode of life resembling that practised in the cloisters. This did not consist of any light duties, but was remarkably rigid. A religious service commenced at the early hour of three in the morning, and was prolonged until seven. An hour later mass was performed; and at ten the military brotherhood, with the exception of the czar, sat down to a bountiful repast. During this the eccentric Ivan stood and read aloud from some book on a religious topic. Ever influenced by a desire to conciliate even the lowest of the people, he caused the remnants of the meal to be distributed to the neighbouring poor. After dinner the tyrant descended to the dungeons of the fortress, to superintend the infliction of the torture upon some of his victims; and at night, after the reading of prayers, he retired to rest, and was lulled to sleep by three blind men. Such was his disregard of the spirit of the Christian religion, while intent upon the letter, that his most sanguinary orders were frequently given during prayers.

Always terrified by the dread of insurrection or assassination, the tyrant increased his recent body-guard from one to six thousand men. Those who were added to it consisted of the most infamous and bloodthirsty wretches that could be procured. They paraded the streets, armed with daggers and hatchets; and the victims of their suspicion or ferocious wantonness are said to have averaged a score daily. As types of their office, these wretches bore a dog's-head and a broom suspended from their saddle-bow; the former, to signify that they worried the enemies of the czar; the latter, to indicate that they swept them from off the face of the earth.

No rank preserved its possessors against the fury of the tyrant. Prince Schuisky and his son, relatives of the worthless man who fell a victim to the first-awakened wrath of the czar while in his boyhood, were seized and beheaded. The same day four other princes shared the same fate, and a fifth was impaled. Subsequently a great number of victims perished by the axe, impalement, or poisoning, while their wives and children expired under the scourge, or were driven naked into the forests, where they perished from cold and hunger. The passion of the tyrant for blood increased with its gratification, and the horrors of each new day exceeded that of its predecessor. The mangled bodies of the dead lay in the public streets and squares; and such a terror fell upon the

survivors, that few dared to give the rites of burial to these terrible evidences of a diabolical tyranny.

Executions, even though numbers were put to death together, soon failed to supply the bloodthirsty excitement which this awful man longed for. The axe, the scourge, and the instrument of impalement, were too slow to meet his fearful wishes. His constant demand was for blood!—more blood! and his chief pleasure appeared to consist in dwelling, with a horrible malignity, upon the agonies of his fellow-men. He soon sought for excuses to give up whole towns to the operations of his army of ruffians and executioners. One day, a few of the inhabitants of Torjek had the misfortune to quarrel with some of his legionaries. The czar seized upon the incident with avidity, declared all the inhabitants to be rebels, and caused them to be tortured to death, or drowned in crowds. The inhabitants of another town were exposed to a similarly dreadful fate, because they were the dependents of a nobleman to whom he had contracted a dislike. Infancy, womanhood, and old age were no protection from the hellish wrath of the czar. He delighted in compelling ladies of rank to stand in indelicate positions in the public streets, while others, after being exposed in a state of nakedness, were shot in the presence of the horrified spectators.

Frightful as were these atrocities, they were exceeded by the subsequent deeds of the tyrant. His proceedings at Novgorod are perfectly frightful to relate. A criminal of that city, wishing to take revenge upon the authorities who had punished him, informed the czar that the archbishop and inhabitants of the city designed to break their allegiance to Ivan, and to place Novgorod under the protection of the King of Poland. The villain further informed the czar that a letter to the Polish monarch, of a nature to prove the guilt of the accused, would be found concealed behind an image of the Virgin, in the church of St. Sophia. This was true; as the scoundrel had written such a letter, and placed it there himself, where it was subsequently found by Ivan's messengers. A proper investigation would have exposed the treachery of the fellow, who pretended to discover a plot which had no real existence; and, indeed, the accusation bore an air of improbability upon the face of it. But the czar cared little for its truth. He longed for an opportunity to indulge, on a gigantic scale, his morbid appetite for slaughter, and this circumstance afforded one. His march of devastation to Novgorod, and his awful massacres there, are regarded as the most appalling acts of his career of blood.

Accompanied by his son, and followed by his legion of monsters, Ivan left the dismal fortress of Alexandrovsky in the December of 1569, and marched towards Novgorod. At the town of Klin, where he paused for a while, his army of executioners exterminated the whole of the population. On arriving at the ancient city of Twer, he sent his soldiers into the streets with permission to murder and plunder as they pleased. The wretches availed themselves of this diabolical license to such a dreadful extent, that the horrors enacted were compared by the miserable people to the terrible cruelties inflicted upon their ancestors by the Tartar, Usbek-Khan. The czar himself assisted in the work of slaughter; and his confidential minister, Skaratof, entering the cell where the deposed metropolitan was confined, strangled him with his own hands.

The czar continued his march, and depopulated all the towns and villages that lay in his way to Novgorod, which miserable city was entered by his advanced guard on the 2nd of January, 1570. In conformity with the commands of Ivan, the dog's-head legion closed all the convents, and demanded from each of the monks the sum of twenty roubles. The unfortunate creatures who could not comply with this extortion, were mercilessly scourged, from daybreak until evening. Guards were placed at the entrances of the city, to prevent any one from escaping, and the principal inhabitants were placed in fetters, to await their doom.

Four days elapsed in this state of uncertainty and terror, and then all the wretched monks who could not pay the sum demanded of them were beaten to death with clubs, and the disfigured corpses returned to their respective monasteries for burial. On the fifth day, Ivan solemnly entered the city, at the head of a large body of troops. The terrified archbishop and the clergy, carrying all the worthless images and relics, in which they placed so much faith, met him in a body, and the primate endeavoured to pronounce the customary benediction. The despot interrupted him with a fierce address, in which expressions of affected piety were mingled with furious

execrations against the primate and his order. Then entering the church of St. Sophia, Ivan commanded mass to be performed, during which he prayed with great apparent fervour. This ceremony over, he entered the episcopal palace, and sat down to dinner, surrounded by his boyards. Perhaps the agitated primate thought afterwards, by pathetic and pious appeals to the czar, to allay that furious and maniacal excitement which seemed rapidly transforming him into a demon. If so, the unhappy prelate was painfully deceived. During the meal, the tyrant started up, and, with eyes flashing with an excitement that trembled upon the brink of insanity, uttered a wild and piercing cry. It was a preconcerted signal; and, in a moment, the chamber was filled with his military executioners, who seized the archbishop, priests, and servants. No crime was urged against them; not even a faint mockery of the forms of justice were observed; and the doomed archbishop was cast into confinement, until the crowned demon had leisure to gloat over his dying agonies. The episcopal palace, and the neighbouring cathedral, were then abandoned to plunder; and everything valuable and regarded as sacred—rich vestments, plate, images—were carried away by ruffians. The churches and monasteries of the city were also given up to spoliation, and soon cleared of everything valuable, by the impious hands of these abandoned depredators.

A darker tragedy followed; for plunder was but the ominous prologue to the work of blood. By the commands of Ivan, an unsparing and even systematic massacre of the inhabitants of the city took place. The wretch sat in judgment with his son by his side, who, it would seem, was averse to the atrocities which he was powerless to check. Every day, from five hundred to a thousand of the miserable inhabitants of the city were hurried from the presence of the tyrant, and put to death by torture or fire. A reign of terror prevailed; and almost every mode of butchery and torture were resorted to. A number of the inhabitants were huddled together in a large enclosure, where the czar put many of them to death himself. When, however, his fury had exhausted him, he gave up the remainder to be murdered by his guard, or torn to pieces by his dogs. Immense numbers of the people (including women with their infants) were thrown into the river Volkhof, and drowned. Those who strove in their mortal agony to escape by swimming, were dispatched by soldiers, who sailed about on the water, armed with long spears for that purpose. For more than a month, hundreds of unhappy creatures perished daily in the freezing waters of the Volkhof; and then the work of murder was checked by the scarcity of victims. But the fury of Ivan was not yet satiated; and he and his troops of monsters desolated the surrounding country and monasteries, where, in addition to the work of indiscriminate murder and plunder, they wantonly gave houses to the flames, destroyed the cattle, and devastated the springing corn.

Returning to Novgorod, he feasted his eyes on the terrible spectacle the smitten city presented. All the valuable goods that remained, such as silks and furs, he caused to be divided among his soldiers; while such as they could not carry away with them, were either burnt or thrown into the river. Wearied at length with bloodshed and rapine, the czar prepared to depart. Before he did so, he issued a general pardon to the surviving population, and summoned them to appear before him. A mournful assembly of spirit-broken and despairing wretches obeyed the command, and stood—the mere shadows of men and women—in the presence of the slayer of their fellow-countrymen. It was a painful sight to see these wretched creatures, whose passive dullness bordered upon idiotcy, and whose lank forms were emaciated by famine and the incessant apprehensions of death and of tortures, to which a speedy death would have been mercy. Such a mournful spectacle might have touched the hardest heart; and perhaps it did make a momentary impression on the Satanic incarnation who had gathered them together. Whether in a transient spirit of compassion, or from a diabolical irony, he spoke to them in the mildest language, and bidding them farewell, desired them to pray to God that his reign might be a long and happy one. The monster then abandoned the city he had converted into a slaughter-house, a grave-yard, and a place of wailing. It was, indeed, almost depopulated; for 60,000 of the inhabitants had fallen victims to his capricious fury. To complete the misery of the survivors, the rotting remains of the unburied dead produced a pestilence, which, in consequence of the destruction of the crops and cattle, was followed by famine.

The czar having visited the city of Pskof,

where he contented himself with terrifying and plundering the inhabitants, directed his steps towards Moscow. He carried in his train the Archbishop of Novgorod, and other distinguished prisoners whom he had resolved to put to death with a solemn parade of horror. To increase the number of the victims to be offered up at this bloody carnival, he caused many of the boyards of Moscow to be arrested; even including among them a number of his personal favourites, or those who were deemed so. Some suspicion of treason was assigned as the cause of these arrests; but it was known to be a mere pretence. A day was appointed for the execution of the whole number; and when the light dawned upon it, spectators were horrified at the sight of eighteen gibbets, erected in the market-place, while, in the centre of them, a huge copper cauldron was suspended over a blazing fire. In addition to these frightful preparations, instruments of torture lay about in every direction. When the news spread, a panic seized the people, and they fled from the city, or hid themselves in terror. In a few hours Moscow was deserted, and no one was to be seen but a troop of the select legion arranged around the gibbets and the cauldron. At length the oppressive silence was broken by the roll of drums. It heralded the approach of the czar, who came on horseback, attended by his son, and followed by a regiment of his torturers. After them, the executioners brought along a troop of about 300 wretched-looking men, pale and haggard, and many of them stained with blood from recent injuries, and scarcely able to walk. These were the destined victims.

The tyrant was disappointed on finding that there was not any audience to witness the awful pageantry he had provided. He therefore commanded his soldiers to compel the attendance of the people. Finding that the latter assembled very slowly, he went on the same errand himself; and, assuring them of his good-will, desired their presence at the spectacle he had provided for them. The terrified citizens dared not disobey, and soon the market-place was filled with spectators, even to the roofs of the houses. The czar then addressed them upon what he termed the righteous justice of the punishments, and elicited from them insincere expressions of approval. They knew that to have crossed his will would have been to court instant destruction. This preliminary over, 120 pallid creatures were selected from the group of destined victims, and pardoned, on account, said the despot, of their being less guilty than the others. The rest were given into the hands of the executioners, who put them to death in the most revolting manner. Some were cut to pieces, or plunged half alive into the boiling cauldron. We cannot dwell longer on these disgusting atrocities: it must be sufficient to say that the executions lasted about four hours, and that nearly 200 innocent persons were put to deaths of the most repulsive and protracted kind. The monster endeavoured to reconcile his subjects to his mad career of blood, by asserting that his authority over them was divine. "I am," he said, "your god, as God is mine; whose throne is surrounded by archangels, as is the throne of God."

It may be supposed that, under this time of progressive horror, the Russian people lost all public spirit, and were no longer formidable to surrounding enemies. The distracted country soon became a prey to those foes who were ever ready to take advantage of its weakness. Sweden made itself master of Esthonia; the Livonian knights seized upon Courland and Semigallia. Towards the close of Ivan's reign, Stephen Bathori, who, though of a noble family, had been raised by his merits and military reputation to the rank of King of Poland, defeated the czar in many engagements, and deprived him of Livonia, which, on account of its being washed by the waters of the Baltic, was justly regarded as a highly important part of his dominions. It, as well as Courland, was an outlet for the commerce of Russia, and a point from which communication with the more civilised nations of Europe could be opened. The Polish king, who was a wise, brave, and just man,* viewed the conduct of Ivan with disgust; and acted with such decision, as to throw the tyrant into the greatest trepidation. Bathori charged him with the commission of the grossest of crimes, with falsifying treaties, with revolting inhumanity to his people, and, finally, challenged him to single combat.

Ivan not only shrunk from the proffered duel, but carefully kept back from all

* An instance of his just and tolerant nature is contained in the following fact. On being urged to adopt severe measures for the suppression of certain religious nonconformists, he replied, "I reign over persons; but it is God who rules the conscience."

danger in the contests between his troops and the Poles. This man, so reckless of human life, was himself the slave of the most abject fears. He dreaded assassination, as well he might; and it is strange that he did not fall a victim to the fury and despair of some bereaved father or maddened son, who had been deprived of those dearest to them by his wanton cruelties. He feared death even in the course of nature; as well he might, if he believed in the doctrines of that religion of the forms of which he made so ostentatious a parade, and ever had visions of judgment and the wrath of an avenging God. It has even been stated, that the very cruelties of this Russian monster were chiefly the result of the terrors which haunted him like evil spirits by day and by night, and made him dread an assassin in every one who approached him.

Awed by the courage of the Polish monarch, Ivan, for a time, held back from repelling his aggressive actions. Impelled at length by the urgency of the position, and the entreaties of his boyards, he was induced to take the field. But he took no share in the conflicts that followed, and in which his troops were generally defeated. Such was his aversion to the war, that he actually bought the intercession of the pope's envoy by lying promises that, in the event of his proving successful in disarming the animosity of Bathori, he would endeavour to convert the Russian people to catholicism. When any of the Poles or Livonians were taken prisoners by Ivan's soldiers, the wretch caused the captives to be put to death in some shocking manner. Some he had spitted on lances; while others were thrown into boiling cauldrons, or slowly consumed at fires, which the monster often amused himself by stirring up while the execution was in progress. These atrocities Bathori had resolved to avenge; and he was occupied in preparing for a vigorous campaign, when he died suddenly, and thus relieved the czar from the fear of a well-merited retribution.

Among his other tyrannies, Ivan oppressed his people with the most exorbitant taxes. Next to cruelty, a selfish desire for accumulation seemed his master-passion. Not content with the imposition of taxes, which were enormous for those times, he established the most offensive monopolies, and even robbed his people by the frequent confiscation of their property on any pretext, or on none. It was his will, and resistance was unavailing: to have offered it, would have been a suicidal exposure to his fury. Accustomed in all things to obey his appetites, he disregarded the customs of Russia and the precepts of the Greek church, and married seven wives. Notwithstanding, he even sought the hand of Queen Elizabeth of England, who politely declined it. Thinking that a refuge from the fury of his subjects would be necessary, in the event of their awakening from the state of apathetic terror into which he had plunged them, he solicited and obtained from Elizabeth a promise that she would grant him an asylum in England, "should his ungrateful subjects render it necessary for him to retire from Russia." Disappointed in obtaining the hand of Elizabeth, he desired to add an eighth lady to his matrimonial circle, and that she should be from the English court. Elizabeth, who was devoid of womanly delicacy in such matters, had no objection; and the daughter of the Earl of Huntingdon was, at her own desire, and with the permission of the queen, offered to the inspection of the Russian ambassador. Statements of Ivan's atrocities, however, reached the ears of the lady before the match was concluded, and she begged Elizabeth to spare her the perilous honour.

The czar's appetite for cruelty increased as he advanced in life. All ordinary modes of slaughter, and even wholesale massacres, at length failed to arouse that sanguinary excitement from which he derived delight. He broke at length into an eccentricity of murder, in which he compelled his victims to trample upon the most sacred bonds which unite society. He required his subjects to become fratricides and parricides. One man he compelled to become the executioner of his own father; another, of his brother! Then he caused no less than 800 unhappy women to be drowned, and put their relatives to the torture until they pointed out the places in which their wealth was hidden. Amongst the lesser atrocities of this abandoned wretch, was the keeping a number of bears, who, when hungry and irritated, he would let loose in the public streets; especially when he happened to see from his windows a group of citizens collected in them. The struggles and cries of those who were injured by the brutes elicited from him uncontrollable shouts of laughter.

This frightful man had other moments of

grim mirth when he required a number of jesters, whom he retained to amuse him. This was commonly both before and after executions, at which times he was more than usually disposed for hilarity. Sometimes these professional fools were beaten or severely injured by their capricious master, if their jests did not happen to please him. The most distinguished of these jesters, who bore the name of Goosdef, met with a sterner fate. Failing one day to amuse the tyrant, the latter poured a basin of scalding soup on his head. The unhappy jester attempted to retreat, when Ivan struck him in a vital part with a knife, and he dropped senseless. A feeling of momentary regret followed the act, and a surgeon was immediately summoned. "Preserve my faithful servant," exclaimed the czar, "I have jested a little too hard with him!" "So hard," was the sycophantic and blasphemous reply, "that only God and your majesty can restore him to life; he breathes no more." Ivan threw a glance of contempt on the corpse of the murdered jester, bestowed upon it the name of dog, and returned to his pastimes. Even the merriment of this terrible man was frightful; and those to whom he seemed most attached were not safe from his whimsical cruelties. On another occasion a boyard, who is described as one of his favourites, visited the czar. No sooner had he made the reverential bow which the etiquette of the court exacted, than the czar exclaimed, "God save thee, my dear Boris, thou deservest a proof of my favour." As he spoke, he seized a knife and cut off one of the boyard's ears. The miserable sycophant uttered no cry or word of complaint; but concealing the pain he endured, thanked his persecutor for his gracious favour, and wished him a happy reign. There was something of policy, as well as brutal instinct, in this conduct of the czar. He lost no opportunity of impressing upon the Russians that, as their ruler, he was something more than human—something even akin to Deity; that, indeed, to repeat the impiously arrogant expression of his we have already quoted, "he was their God, as God was his." Such a point once admitted, it necessarily followed that even injuries or death, at his hands, were to be received with submission, and, if possible, with gratitude. Repulsive as this may seem, it was merely carrying to the extreme that effete doctrine of divine right and passive obedience which the Stuarts afterwards struggled so long to establish in England. There was a wide difference between the dispositions of Charles I. and Ivan the Terrible; so wide a one, that some will be surprised at my establishing a comparison on any point between them; but the principles which actuated them were the same.

The blood-red catalogue of Ivan's crimes was nearly complete, and the close of his awful life was approaching. One dark deed yet remained to be performed, and then the sadly imperfect work of retribution commenced. His eldest and favourite son, accompanied by several of the boyards, one day entered his presence, and desired to be entrusted with the command of a body of troops, that he might proceed to the assistance of the city of Pskof, which was then being besieged by the Poles. The suspicious czar, always apprehensive of conspiracy and assassination, believed that even his own son was implicated in some insurrection against his government, and that the troops were perhaps wanted for the purpose of deposing him. A wild gust of rage broke over him; and, with a furious voice, he replied, "Rebel! you are leagued with the boyards in a conspiracy to dethrone me." As the words left his mouth he struck the prince several severe blows with the iron-bound staff he carried. Each inflicted a severe wound, and the last felled the unfortunate man to the earth, where he lay in a pool of blood. This frightful result was unintentional—the consequence of giving way to that madness of passion which years of unchecked cruelty had made a tyrant over the tyrant. Nothing was further from Ivan's intention than to slay the only one of his three sons who was capable of succeeding him on the throne. Indeed, it will shortly be seen that, in effect, those mad, thoughtless blows, destroyed the regal race of Ruric, and extinguished his dynasty.

On seeing the tragic consequence to which his unbridled fury had led, Ivan was instantly seized with remorse. Struck with horror and despair, and trembling violently, he threw himself upon the body of his son, and, with mingled words of endearment to his victim, of self-reproach and passionate appeals to heaven for assistance, he endeavoured to stop the crimson tide with which the life of the prince was issuing. It was too late: he who had ever been deaf to the agony of others, was now himself to experience the torture of heedless supplication. Whatever might have been the character of the victim, had he succeeded to power, he had at least the merit of being a remarkably dutiful and even affectionate son. At this sad moment, his chief care was to soothe the agony of his father. Clasping the hand of the repentant wretch, he implored him, with tears of tenderness, to be patient, and not to distress himself for an unintentional deed. His next thought was to exonerate himself from the unjust suspicions which had by this time vanished from the mind of the czar. "I die," he exclaimed, "an obedient son and a faithful subject." For four days the wretched prince lingered, and the now more wretched father sat by the bedside of his murdered son. Then the latter breathed his last in a chamber of that gloomy fortress of Alexandrovsky, whose dungeon walls had often re-echoed with the groans and wailing cries of those whom the tyrant had tortured in reckless wantonness.

The calamity which Ivan had brought upon himself, he felt with a poignancy which could scarcely have been expected from his hardened and brutal nature. His heart, which had so long been inaccessible to the faintest emotion of pity, seemed riven in twain. His conscience, so long seared and closed, was awakened into a condition of morbid activity. His mind was filled with horrible imaginations, and his sleep disturbed by dreadful dreams. Sometimes he started from his bed during the solemn hours of night, and appalled his attendants by his cries of terror; nor would sleep again visit him until exhaustion followed the excitement. So greatly did he suffer from remorse, that he expressed an intention of leaving Moscow and spending the remainder of his life in some monastery. The accomplishment of this desire was prevented by his subjects, who entreated him not to desert them. These strange people, who thus wooed the scourge and the gibbet, must have been, as it has been acutely expressed, "fascinated by the very cruelties that appalled them."

The tyrant did not long survive his son: within a few months both were laid in the grave. The exhaustion resulting from constant nervous excitement, induced a declining state; and, in the spring of 1584, his illness assumed a form which indicated that the career of this curse of the peace of his country was near its close.

The approaching death of Ivan had been predicted by some astrologers, whom he threatened to burn alive for their officiousness. Yet he felt the coming shadows of dissolution, and seemed, at times, disposed to die in peace with a world he had so fearfully outraged. He appointed wise counsellors to watch over the actions of his son, Feodor or Theodore, who, though twenty-seven years of age, was very feeble in intellect. He commanded that all prisoners not charged with capital offences should be liberated, and that the enormous taxes he had extorted from his subjects should be reduced. Yet this conscience-smitten man had his hours of repose from self-accusation and mental disquiet. There were times when the expiring czar forgot with what a frantic violence he had murdered his son and massacred his people. On one of these occasions he caused himself to be carried to the chamber where his treasures were accumulated, that he might feast his eyes upon the glittering store. To an English gentleman who accompanied him, he dwelt at some length on the qualities of diamonds and other precious stones, pointing out to him the marks by which their genuineness could be ascertained, and their value estimated. At other times his fancies were not so innocent. Only two days before his death he attempted to violate the person of his daughter-in-law, who rushed terrified from his chamber, and thus avoided the violence of the libidinous savage, who persevered in crime even to the verge of the grave.

The last few days of his life he suffered from fever and delirium, and, in this condition, fancied himself in the presence of his murdered son, whom he sometimes seemed to converse with in accents of tenderness, and whose name he at other periods shouted aloud in tones of terror. The astrologers had predicted that he would die on the 18th of May. Having taken a warm bath on the 17th, and feeling himself better in consequence, he gave orders, on the following morning, that they should be put to death. The supposed prophets begged delay, on the ground that the time spoken of by them had not yet expired. Ivan then resorted to the remedy which had benefited him the preceding day, and, entering the bath, remained in it three hours. He indulged in a sleep after his bath, and, upon awaking, called for his chess-board. It was brought, and the czar, sitting up in bed, busied himself in arranging the pieces. While thus occupied a sudden pang seized him, and he fell backward, and expired almost

instantly. The prophecy was accomplished:* the world's worst monster was no more.

Thus, in the fifty-fourth year of his age, perished Ivan the Terrible, who, into a life of but moderate length, had compressed the atrocities of centuries of crime. A nominal monarch from infancy, he was crowned czar at the age of seventeen, and ruled for thirty-seven years after that period. To sum up the character of such a wretch is almost a superfluity: the darkness of his crimes is not irradiated by one sunbeam of goodness; and in speaking of him, it is difficult to prevent the sobriety of judgment from merging into the bitterness of invective. It might be supposed that he was a madman, but that he steadily pursued, throughout his whole reign, a prudent and crafty policy. His object was to exalt the czar at the expense of the princes and boyards; and he accomplished this so perfectly, that those who at the commencement of his reign aspired to divide the empire, had, at the close of it, sunk into the abject courtiers of a tyrant. Notwithstanding his career of murder and oppression, Russia, in some respects, prospered under his rule; for, while he smote his people, his policy bound more closely together the yet unamalgamated portions of the empire. We cannot explain the crimes of Ivan on the theory of madness. His brain was rather malformed than diseased. That fury led occasionally to a state of transient disease, and produced brief aberration, is probable, nay, almost certain; but we must seek for the source of his crimes not in madness, which is the result of a *diseased* brain, but in an originally darkly-evil nature proceeding from a *deformed* brain. These distinctions may not be heeded by the cursory reader, but they will be regarded with interest by the reflective one. A wicked mother, and a persecuted infancy, will serve also, in some degree, to explain the awful nature of this man: the fountain of his being was evil, and the early progress of the stream contaminated by severity, neglect, and polluting influences.

During some part of his reign he was the promoter of civilisation, and appeared to take an interest in the prosperity and advancement of his people. Notwithstanding his neglected education, his natural abilities were good, and his understanding far above the average of those by whom he was surrounded. Nor was he destitute of accomplishments. We have referred to the fact that he was proud of his talent as a letter-writer; and his epistles show a considerable power of sarcasm and a freedom of language. His behaviour with respect to religion is difficult to be accounted for. A believer even down to the coarsest superstitions of his church, yet he frequently burlesqued its most venerable forms and its sacred principles, in a manner which, in most men, would have been regarded as profane, even to the height of blasphemy. We do not, however, think that his conduct ever appeared to him in that light. He had proclaimed, and heard others maintain, his semi-divinity so long, that he no doubt came in a large measure to believe it. He endeavoured to prove himself the *god* of Russia, by trampling upon those things which other men held sacred, and by disregarding those laws which common men must obey. When he condemned the innocent to deaths of torture, and when he surveyed their dying agonies undisturbed, he appears to have believed that he was imitating the Divine wrath and immovable calmness. Awfully arrogant as such an idea is, and painful as it must appear to the bulk of English readers in this age, yet it was pandered to by his priesthood—fostered by that very clergy against whom he afterwards so prominently directed his cruelties; and who, in his capricious fury, found the punishment of their parasitical parody of the sacred tenets of their Divine Master.

Nearly the whole of Ivan's life was a prolonged outrage against both God and man; the former, he believed, he propitiated by his reiterated prayers, while the latter he terrified by the recklessness of his cruelty. His nerves of steel, and his utter absence of feeling, awed his superstitious and brutal people into that abject obedience on which his power was based. His sceptre was a sword which ever ran with the blood of his subjects. His very ferocity was by them regarded as greatness; and the people of Moscow deplored his absence whenever he withdrew himself from their city. Truly, barbarous nations are the nurseries of tyrants; and Ivan was made worse by the base adulation of his courtiers, and the dull, superstitious reverence of his people. We dismiss the consideration of this bloodthirsty and capricious wretch by saying, that he was a concentration of the darkest vices which disfigure our nature; brutally savage; utterly remorseless, sparing neither helplessness nor innocence; revelling in carnage with more than the ferocity of a beast; abandoned to a gross licentiousness, which spurned even the commonest forms of decency; rapacious and avaricious; a crafty hypocrite and a trembling coward. In a word, he went beyond the greatest tyrants of the earth in tyranny; and in the number and diversity of his crimes, outdid its most infamous criminals. Such was the man, that until the records of Russia are forgotten in the dreamy lapse of distant centuries, the name of Ivan the Terrible will be pronounced by all posterity either with a shudder or a malediction.

* Concerning uninspired prophecies, Lord Bacon observes—"My judgment is, that they ought all to be despised, and ought to serve but for winter talk by the fireside. Though when I say despised, I mean it for belief; for otherwise, the spreading or publishing of them is in no sort to be despised; for they have done much mischief; and I see many severe laws made to suppress them." The prediction in the czar Ivan's case is remarkable; yet it is one of those which have an especial tendency to bring about their own fulfilment. The monarch whose life has been by one of his historians described as one long scene of fear, might have had the feeble flickering of life extinguished by the nervous excitement arising from such a prophecy. A living writer, of more merit than orthodoxy, insists on the existence of prophecy—or, we should rather say, of natural insight into the future—in these days, and instances many curious examples in support of his opinion. He explains it upon the principles of mesmerism—an unproved science, which we neither believe nor disbelieve, for the very sufficient reason that we have not addressed ourselves to a serious examination of it. Credulity is not our failing; yet are we ready to confess we think society, for the most part, is too ready dogmatically to condemn new-born and unestablished matters. When on such themes we hear totally uninformed persons say, with an air of authority, "*I* think this," and "*I* think that, &c.," we are almost disposed to say as Coleridge did once to a superficial fellow—"You think, sir! you only think you think."

CHAPTER XII.

FEODOR IVANOVICH ASCENDS THE THRONE; BORIS GODUNOF BECOMES CHIEF MINISTER AND ACTUAL RULER OF THE EMPIRE; HE AIMS AT THE CROWN; MURDER OF THE CZAREVITCH DMITRI; BORIS IS BELIEVED TO HAVE INSTIGATED THE CRIME; ATROCITIES AT UGLITCH; BORIS DRIVES BACK THE TARTARS FROM BEFORE THE WALLS OF MOSCOW; BORIS CAUSES THE ISSUE OF AN EDICT WHICH CONVERTS THE PEASANTRY INTO SERFS; FEODOR PROPOSED FOR ELECTION AS KING OF POLAND; DEATH OF FEODOR, AND EXTINCTION OF THE DYNASTY OF RURIC.

THE royal house of Ruric was virtually extinguished on the death of Ivan IV., though that event did not absolutely take place until seven years later. The deceased monarch left two sons, Feodor and Dmitri, or Demetrius; the latter the offspring of his father's seventh marriage, and an infant only two years of age.

Feodor Ivanovich, though he had reached the age of twenty-seven, was altogether incapable of directing the affairs of state. Extremely feeble, both in body and mind, he seems to have been not far above that point from which feebleness of intellect degenerates into idiotcy. Pliant, timid, superstitious, and devout, he was better fitted to be an obscure monk than the sovereign of a vast empire. In early life, his chief amusement was to ascend the towers of churches, and ring or strike the bells; a silliness in which he frequently passed hours of his time. Though this miserable creature was married, such was his state of debility, that there was but little expectation of his having children to succeed him. He had been united, in 1580, to Irene, the sister of Boris Godunof.

As this remarkable man was in reality the new sovereign of Russia, and swayed the sceptre which the feeble Feodor could scarcely grasp, it is necessary to bring him forward upon the canvas. He was born in 1552, of a noble family of Tartar descent. At the age of twenty-two he was attached to the court of Ivan the Terrible, in consequence of having married the daughter of Maloota Skooratoff, a favourite of the czar, and the leading actor in his atrocities. Though Boris avoided taking any part in the monstrous cruelties which disgraced the reign of Ivan, yet he contrived to insinuate himself into the good graces of that mon-

arch. So much so, that he was made one of the five members of the supreme council of state, which Ivan appointed to watch over and direct the actions of his imbecile successor. To an untiring activity, Boris united a more comprehensive mind than fell to the lot of any of his coadjutors. Versed in business and in the ways of men, possessed of an inordinate ambition—which he concealed under a veil of religion—and a grave and noble presence, he soon became the paramount member of the council, and acquired a complete ascendancy over it. By the exhibition of an assumed tenderness for the feeble-minded czar, Boris gained a yet more decided power over him, and the able minister soon became regarded as the real ruler of the empire. He received from the czar the highest titles ever bestowed upon a subject, and such enormous estates, that his wealth has been estimated as amounting to £150,000 a-year; though other writers set it down as being less than a third of that sum—which last would have been a magnificent fortune in those days. His wealth enabled him to secure numbers of active partisans and followers, amongst whom were many of the poorer nobility. It is not surprising that such a man, at such a period, should aspire to obtain the sceptre which he really wielded, and to become the acknowledged czar of the empire as well as its secret ruler. What stood between him and the throne? An idiotic and childless sovereign, and his infant brother. To an ambitious and unprincipled man, the temptation was irresistible.

Boris Godunof ruled the empire, under the name of Feodor, with an absolute sway; and, for a while, he exercised his unlimited power to the satisfaction of both boyards and people. Some jealousy necessarily existed; but the court and the first offices of the state were filled with his adherents, and all attempts to overthrow him were speedily and severely repressed. He had a politic aversion to public executions, as being calculated to deprive him of that popularity which he laboured constantly to attain. But those who were opposed to him were driven into exile, or thrown into prison, where they died suddenly, or were at other times poisoned by domestic traitors. It was soon apparent to close observers that Boris aimed at the crown, and that he was reckless as to the means by which he obtained it.

The boy Dmitri was the most serious impediment to the designs of Boris, and the latter soon resolved upon removing him. Soon after the accession of Feodor, the subtle minister had removed Dmitri and his mother from the court of Moscow to a distant and obscure town called Uglitch, where they lived in a state resembling honourable banishment. For some time, Boris thought of branding the boy Dmitri with illegitimacy, on the ground that he was the son of Ivan's seventh wife—it being contrary to the canons of the Greek church for any one to marry more than thrice. He, however, abandoned this idea; because, although the marriage of the czarina was unquestionably illegal according to the laws of the church, yet, as it had been sanctioned, or at least tolerated, by the ecclesiastical authorities, they could not now pronounce it to be so without a serious loss of credit. Boris had too much need of the assistance of the priesthood to drive them to a confession of weakness or of shame. Besides this, he knew that even if the young prince was declared to be illegitimate, the people were so attached to the race of Ruric, that they would still regard the boy as the true czarevitch, and rightful successor of Feodor.

Boris therefore resolved upon another and more pitiless course. He decided on the murder of the boy. As a preliminary, he spread evil reports over the country concerning his intended victim. To inspire the people with a disgust for the young prince, the crafty minister caused it to be reported that the boy's disposition exactly resembled his father's; that he was perverse, whimsical, and savage; that he manifested a precocious delight in blood and the sight of torture, and that his favourite amusements consisted in putting domestic animals to death. Another story was spread abroad among the nobles to excite their antipathy to the boy. It was related, that while playing on the ice one day with other children, he gave orders that twenty images of men should be made of snow. To each of these he gave the name of one of the leading men of the state, and the largest of them he called Boris Godunof. Then, armed with a wooden sword, he began to hack and hew at them all. Having cut off the head of Godunof's image, he stabbed at the rest, or lopped off their feet and hands, exclaiming as he did so, "This is what you will have when I am czar." If this tale was true, it showed that

the boy possessed an evil disposition; and it has an air of probability when related of a child of Ivan's—especially of one born during the latter part of the life of that monster. We have, however, no means of judging as to its truth or falsehood; but we know that it was freely circulated in Moscow by the agents of the man who had an interest that it should be believed.

When the minds of the people had been sufficiently prepared, the tragical catastrophe followed. Dmitri, now ten years old, was playing one afternoon in May, 1591, with four other boys, in the courtyard of the palace of Uglitch—a large enclosure containing several detached dwellings, irregularly placed. His governess and two other women were also near him at the time; but all of them lost sight of him for a moment. When last seen before the event we are about to speak of, he had been amusing himself by cutting a piece of wood with a knife. Suddenly one of the women saw him struggling on the ground bathed in blood, which was flowing from a large wound in his throat. The unhappy boy, unable to articulate, died almost immediately, of course without being able to explain how he came by so terrible an injury. The shrieks of the women brought the mother of the prince to the spot, who at once denounced one Michael Bitiagofski, a man whom Boris had placed in the palace of Uglitch, as the murderer of her son. The alarm-bell was rung, and in a short time the courtyard was thronged with servants and townspeople, who, supposing the palace to be on fire, had hurried to the place with forks and hatchets. Bitiagofski, his son, and some of his followers, came among the rest. Raising his voice above the tumult, he shouted that the prince had killed himself by falling on his knife in a fit of epilepsy; a disorder to which he was known to be subject. This ready explanation of an event concerning which he could, if innocent, know no more than others, instantly aroused the suspicions of the distracted mother, "No, no!" she cried: "There"—pointing to Bitiagofski—"there is the murderer!" The accusation was at once believed, and the excited crowd rushed upon him with uplifted weapons. The startled assassin (for very little doubt can be entertained that he was such) fled to one of the houses in the courtyard, and barred himself in. He could not, however, elude the fury of the mob, who burst the door, and massacred him and his son on the spot. The excitement of the crowd was uncontrollable; and they hacked to death every one who was known to belong to the presumed murderer, or who dared to say a word in his behalf. Even the daughters of Bitiagofski were with great difficulty rescued from the mob by the priests of the neighbouring church, to which the blood-bedabbled corpse of the young prince was carried. His governess was savagely beaten; and her son, who was on friendly terms with Bitiagofski, cruelly murdered.

So tragical an event demanded the strictest investigation; but the weak Feodor left the matter entirely in the hands of Boris. This minister immediately appointed a commission, consisting of two boyards, to conduct the inquiry. Unfortunately for his good name, they were both men entirely devoted to his interests. The inquiry was conducted in secret, without any examination of the body, or comparison of the wound with the weapon said to have inflicted it, or indeed any rigid attempt to ascertain the truth. Under such circumstances, it is difficult to resist a suspicion that the verdict had been prearranged. It was, that Prince Dmitri had met his death in the way declared by Bitiagofski; that is, by a wound accidentally inflicted upon himself during a fit of epilepsy.

The czar Feodor remained satisfied with this report; and the easy patriarch and bishops unanimously adopted it. The latter even added, that the people of Uglitch deserved to be put to death for their treason in murdering the czar's officers;* though this, they said, was a matter which concerned the secular jurisdiction. Some of the persons thus prejudged were brought to trial before the supreme council. Amongst them were the two brothers of the dowager-czarina. The object to be obtained by these trials was to clear the name of Bitiagofski (and, necessarily, that of his high-placed master) from the suspicion of having murdered the czarevitch, and to convince every one interested in the affair, that the boy came to his death in the course of nature. Certain witnesses deposed that Michael and Gregory, the brothers of the czarina, influenced by a fraudulent desire to

* Bitiagofski and his followers held in the household of the prince appointments which had been conferred upon them by Boris; that is, nominally by the czar.

prove that the young prince had been murdered, had produced knives, sabres, and other weapons, smeared with the blood of a fowl, and pretended that they had seen them in the hands of the persons put to death in the tumult at Uglitch. The trial was as unsatisfactory as the investigation; and both were doubtless instigated for the same purpose. The brothers of the czarina were sent to distant prisons; and she herself to adopt the dismal seclusion of a convent. As to the inhabitants of Uglitch, they were punished with an atrocious and indiscriminate severity. More than 200 of them were executed, and many others had their tongues cut out, or were incarcerated in dungeons. Some fled in terror; but the remainder were sent to the newly-discovered country of Siberia, there to pass their lives. Thus a town, said to contain 30,000 persons, was converted into a desert;—a wild act of fury, which gave rise to rumours that Boris had exterminated a people who were too numerous to suborn, and destroyed a whole city to deface even the mute memorial of his guilt. He had overacted his part; and from that time was generally regarded as an assassin.

While those who dared to express the suspicions they entertained of the guilt of Boris were seldom able to elude his vengeance, he showed a great anxiety to reward his adherents, and to gain new ones. Nearly every powerful offender against the laws, who applied to him, was sure of protection. The documents granting pardon to such persons, always declared that these acts of grace were due to his intercession with the czar; but his name never appeared in the decrees of condemnation, where it was always declared that the punishment was ordered by the boyards. The regent (for so Boris was in effect) adopted many other modes of procuring popularity. The same year that his erroneous policy converted Uglitch into a collection of deserted ruins, a tremendous fire broke out at Moscow and destroyed a considerable portion of the city. Boris expressed great sympathy with the sufferers from this calamity, distributed pecuniary assistance amongst them, exempted them from taxes, and even rebuilt whole streets at his own expense.

Before this eventful year (1591) passed away, Russia was invaded by Kassim Gherei, khan of the Crimea, who, at the head of a powerful army, directed his march upon Moscow. The Russians were in a state of despair; for their army was in a neglected state, and there was no commander of reputation to lead it. The vacant-minded Feodor, when applied to concerning what should be done, replied, that "the saints who protected Russia, would fight for her." Boris stood aloof sufficiently to make the people feel their weakness and their dependence upon him. He then showed himself fully equal to the emergency. Reanimating the drooping courage of the people, and imparting something of his own activity to all with whom he came in contact, he effected wonders in the space of a few days. Within that brief space, Moscow was surrounded by palisades and redoubts, and defended by numerous forces and a formidable artillery. A new spirit animated the people; and, influenced by him, cowards became men. When the Tartars attacked the city, they were repulsed with so severe a loss, that they dared not attempt a second assault. After several days spent in hesitation, the invaders turned to depart. They were not suffered to go scathless. The troops of Boris attacked them during their retreat, and converted it into a disorderly rout. Confusion was followed by carnage, and scarcely a third of the Tartar army reached home again. The imbecile Feodor, though grateful to his preserver, thought that the saints had discomfited the foe; while the common people said that Boris had brought in the Tartars, in order to efface the remembrance of the death of the boy-prince Dmitri.

Notwithstanding that the feeble constitution of the czar had led his subjects to believe it to be impossible for him to become a father, yet, in the year 1592, it was unexpectedly announced that the czarina Irene had given birth to a daughter. This circumstance was a formidable obstacle to the designs of Boris. The people ever suspected him of acting treacherously, and even worse when it answered his purpose. At first it was rumoured that he had caused a female child to be substituted for the male of which it was averred his sister had become the mother. After a few days the infant died, and then it was said he had poisoned it. It is probable that both of these reports were idle calumnies. Certainly, if the last was true, the first was false; for it is not likely so acute a man would have committed a crime which the necessity of several accomplices rendered easy of detection, at the very time when he contemplated another

crime which would have rendered the first quite unnecessary. No motives of humanity, or feelings of conscience, would have deterred Boris from the murder of an infant which stood in his path to power; but nothing is more probable than that the child of a father whose debility of nature hovered on the verge of exhaustion, should expire soon after birth. Though the czar was merciless when under the influence of his master-passion—ambition—yet he did not, like Ivan the Terrible, love crime for its own sake. There were occasional touches of softness in that iron nature; and, like the remorseless and sensual Egyptian in one of our modern romances, Boris would have stepped out of his path to avoid crushing a worm, though he had but just consigned one whom he deemed his enemy to a lingering death. Such are the dark enigmas of human nature!

The year 1592 was memorable for an event which, though not very seriously regarded at the time, was fraught with deep and calamitous mischief for the future; an event, the effects of which, even at this hour, rankle deeply in the social condition of the Russian people, and which has produced a state of things at once perplexing to the government, dangerous to the security of society, obstructive to national advancement, and formed a reproach to the empire over the rest of Europe. We allude to that measure which converted the peasants of Russia into serfs, and which was deliberately framed by Boris as a bribe to the boyards and landed proprietors, as it increased the wealth of the rich at the price of the personal liberty of the poor. Up to this time the Russian peasantry enjoyed that freedom which arises from the absence of oppressive restrictions. They had the natural right of being enabled to leave the estate on which they lived or had been born, and enter the service of another master, if they desired to do so. Certainly the liberty of the peasantry was of a passive and negative, rather than active and positive character. They did not enjoy liberty on any reasonable basis; but were free rather because they had been overlooked; because no powerful party in the state saw any reason for restraining or extinguishing the barren freedom enjoyed by them. The thinness of the population, and the vast distances which separated the towns and villages, and almost prevented communication, rendered co-operation among the peasantry an impossibility, and public opinion scarcely more than an imagination. Thus the peasants were politically nothing; and though not slaves, they did not possess the privileges of freemen. The peasantry had not unfrequently availed themselves of their slender right of moving from place to place, with the natural hope of improving their condition; but their doing so diminished the wealth and personal influence of the noble on whose estates they dwelt, and who had already but a very small part of his lands subjected to any profitable use. When land was so cheap as to be almost worthless, men came to be regarded as valuable. Without them the soil was unreclaimed desert; but if they surrendered ever so small a portion of what they raised from it to the owner, their presence was in some measure productive of wealth. Boris, therefore, to conciliate the boyards—and especially that inferior order of them who, without ancestral distinctions, had risen by craft or merit to their position—made a law by which the peasant was bound to the soil, and thus sunk into the serf. Before this there had been domestic slaves in Russia, as we have already stated; but from this time only is the existence of the predial serfs to be dated. Boris coloured his tyranny by an excuse which bore an air of soundness. The peasantry of Russia were in the habit of migrating towards the south, in consequence of the mildness of the climate and other presumed advantages to be found there. This was necessarily injurious to the less favoured bulk of the country—a circumstance which was put forward by Boris as the cause of his new decree, rendering the people irremovable from the domains on which they were located. The immediate result was, however, the very reverse of that anticipated by the regent. The peasants fled by thousands to escape slavery—an act to which they were encouraged by those landed proprietors who wanted hands to cultivate their estates. Unjust legislation seldom promotes the end for which it was designed; its reaction is always dangerous, and its remote working pregnant with unforeseen evils.

We alluded to the patriarch of the Russian church—an ecclesiastical dignity which was first used in the reign of Feodor. Prior to this time, the Russian church derived what was assumed to be its divine power through the medium of the patriarch of Constantinople, who consecrated the metropolitan of Moscow. But the supremacy of

the Greek patriarch was almost a titular affair after the city of Constantinople had passed by conquest into the hands of the Turks. Boris had need of the services of the church to assist him in carrying his ambitious designs to a successful result. Jeremy, the patriarch of Constantinople, having arrived at Moscow to collect alms for the erection of churches, it occurred to Boris that it would be an excellent thing to induce him to consecrate a Russian patriarch who, of course, the regent took good care should be entirely the creature of his will, and devoted to his interests. He accordingly induced the childish and devout Feodor, who was delighted at the presence of the Greek patriarch, to load him with honours and rich donations. The head of a once powerful, but then comparatively ruined church, showed his gratitude by acceding to the suggestions of Boris. Moscow accordingly had its patriarch—a dignity which lasted until the time of Peter the Great, who abolished it, and blended the chief authority of the Russian church with the absolute power of the czar.

Russia prospered under the shadowy domination of Feodor. This must necessarily be attributed to the able administration of Boris, who was czar in all but the name, and wanted but the claim of a legitimate sovereign to have been an illustrious one. Commerce was protected and rendered secure. Smolensk was fortified to a state of presumed impregnability. The Tartars were confined within their own domains by strong military posts. Fortresses were erected at the foot of the Caucasian range, into the regions of which Russia made her first abortive attempt to penetrate; and the arts and arms of the empire, rude though they were, carried into the wilds of Siberia. The Swedes were driven into Narva, and closer diplomatic relations were entered into with foreign courts, and especially with that of England. But one of the most remarkable events of the reign of Feodor was the attempt of Boris to get his master, or rather creature, the czar, elected king of Poland. Boris proposed to the states of Lithuania and Poland, that if they elected Feodor their king, he would unite all the forces of Russia with those of Poland, and conquer the Crimea for the former power; and Wallachia, Moldavia, and Hungary for the latter. The proposed union would probably have created a power perfectly capable of accomplishing the projected conquests. The proposals of the czar also found many partisans among the Poles, and were readily accepted by the Lithuanians. The union might, in fact, have been accomplished, but that the Poles were disgusted with the overbearing conduct of the Muscovite ambassadors, which induced them to elect Sigismund Vasa, Prince of Sweden, as their king, instead of Feodor.

Boris had dazzled the boyards by his power, and the people by an assiduous practice of the arts of popularity. He had been long regarded as the actual ruler of the empire, whose interests he had promoted, and whose reputation he had raised in the estimation of Europe. The bulk of the Russian people looked to him as the natural successor of the childish and childless czar. Such was the state of things when, early in the year 1598, Feodor died! With the death of this nonentity the dynasty of Ruric expired, after having yielded no less than fifty-two sovereigns to part or the whole of Russia. It now terminated in weakness, in mystery, and perhaps in violence. It is impossible to say absolutely that the feeble Feodor did not come by his death naturally; but it is equally difficult not to suspect that his life was shortened by treachery. It is at least a startling coincidence, that the impotent czar lived until all the schemes of Boris were matured, and that he died exactly at the time when the interests of that ambitious man required that he should die. A reasonable presumption therefore exists, that the life of Feodor was practised upon, and that the crafty minister was the assassin.

Some comparatively obscure members of the race of Ruric still existed, but they were in no condition to set up a claim to the vacant throne; they had, in fact, become private persons. Virtually the family was extinguished. No powerful prince existed who could legally claim the Russian sceptre; and the succession being thus broken, the people were at liberty either to change the form of government, or elect a new czar from themselves. With this event terminates a natural era of the history of the empire of whose progress we are writing.

CHAPTER XIII.

BORIS GODUNOF ELECTED CZAR; HE OVERAWES THE TARTARS OF THE CRIMEA; WISDOM OF THE EARLY PART OF HIS RULE; HE BECOMES DISLIKED; A DREADFUL FAMINE PREVAILS FOR THREE YEARS; THE COUNTRY INFESTED BY FORMIDABLE BANDS OF ROBBERS; BORIS BECOMES DESPOTIC; A YOUTH IN POLAND CLAIMS TO BE PRINCE DMITRI, THE SON OF IVAN IV.; HE ENTERS RUSSIA AT THE HEAD OF A SMALL ARMY; OBTAINS A VICTORY AT NOVGOROD; IS DEFEATED AT DOBRYNITCHI; GENERAL FEELING IN HIS FAVOUR; SUDDEN DEATH OF THE CZAR; HIS SON FEODOR SUCCEEDS TO THE THRONE; HE IS DEPOSED, AND DMITRI PROCLAIMED CZAR; EARLY POPULARITY OF HIS RULE; HE IS ACKNOWLEDGED BY THE WIDOW OF IVAN AS HER SON; HIS IMPRUDENCE MAKES HIM UNPOPULAR; CONSPIRACY AGAINST HIM; HIS MARRIAGE; INSURRECTION, AND MURDER OF DMITRI.

BORIS GODUNOF was well prepared for a state of things which he had at least anticipated if not brought about. He, however, affected to be quite overcome with grief on account of the death of the last lineal descendant of Ruric. In this assumed despair he retired to a monastery, and declared his intention of spending the remainder of his life in religious seclusion. The late czar had bequeathed the throne to his widow Irene, who was immediately proclaimed sovereign. But she appears to have shrunk from a responsibility she felt herself unable to bear; and, after a few days, she followed her brother into retirement, and expressed a firm resolution to take the veil. She was sincere, and resisted all entreaties to alter her determination.

The eyes of the people and of the lesser nobles were now turned towards Boris as the most fit person to fill the vacant throne. The greater nobles, the ancient princes of Russia, looked for advice at this juncture to the patriarch, who, in addition to the authority necessarily attaching to his holy office and dignity, had acquired a considerable influence over both nobles and people. Indeed, so much was he respected, that no opposition was anticipated to the election of the noble whom he nominated.

It would seem that the election was by no means a general act of the people; for those permitted to express an opinion must have been very few in number. The deputies of the towns of Russia, and the princes and boyards of the empire, assembled in the house of the patriarch six weeks after the death of Feodor. The greatest anxiety existed on the part of the people to know whom the patriarch would recommend to their choice as the future czar. Most of the nobles, however, were prepared for the result that followed; for they knew that the patriarch was but a creature of the late minister, and would act according to his instructions. After a pious prelude, he named Boris as the wisest man in the country, and the one most deserving the confidence of the people. The name was hailed with clamorous applause, which was repeated in other places by mercenary agents, as soon as the news was known. No one was bold enough to offer opposition; and thus, on the 17th of February, 1598, was Boris Godunof (notwithstanding his Tartar descent) elected Czar of Russia! With a remembrance of his declared intention of devoting his life, in seclusion, to the exercise of piety, public prayers were offered that he might be induced to accept the throne.

When Boris was informed that he was chosen to wield the sceptre of the empire, he declined to accept it. Like our Richard III., to whom he has been compared, he affected to despise the prize he longed for. He thanked the people for so distinguished an honour, but he begged with humility to decline it. This stratagem was perfectly understood by the patriarch and his other friends, who were not so dull as to take the ambitious schemer at his word. The next day the systematic priest returned, accompanied by the principal clergy and nobility, and followed by immense crowds of the people. Entering the church of the convent, preceded by a train of monks carrying the cross and a multitude of saintly relics, the patriarch performed a religious service, and then again requested Boris to accede to the wishes of the nobles and people, and accept the throne. The answer was another refusal, which was persisted in, notwithstanding the entreaties and tears of the chief clergy, and the enthusiasm of the people who surrounded the convent. The crafty Boris was so certain of the game he was playing—had grasped with so firm a hand all the links of power, that he seems

to have felt a pleasure in obstinately refusing a sceptre he so ardently desired. For nearly six weeks he kept up the excitement of the people, and repeated, at intervals, the farce of refusal. At length his sister, the widowed Irene, added her entreaties to those of the patriarch and the populace. Then, with an appearance of the greatest humility, he exclaimed—"The will of God be done!" and appeared rather resigned to make a sacrifice than to accept a position of great power and dignity. Boris ascended the throne amidst a chorus of adulation from the deceived people; but he continued to show himself so able a ruler as to justify their apparent choice. His first act was to repay the populace for their enthusiasm by means of pageantries, public shows, and acts of grace to offenders. He outdid all his predecessors in the splendour and hospitality of the entertainments which he provided for the people and the soldiery, and in the affability of his bearing in public.

Successful usurpation commonly depraves the character of the man who profits by it, and brings evils upon the people who suffer it. Of this particular instance of triumphant political intrigue, it has been observed—"A crown, obtained by indirect and fraudulent measures, could not be preserved without tyranny. Boris, conscious of the jealousies which his elevation engendered in the minds of the nobles, and especially in the family of the Romanoffs, who were allied to the race of Ruric, but not to the Moscow line, was constantly haunted by apprehensions, and sought to lose them in the revel, and to propitiate them by the sacrifice of all persons whom he suspected. Had he been a legitimate sovereign, he would have conferred lasting benefits upon his country; because he was a wise and paternal ruler in all matters apart from his personal affairs. He bestowed considerable pains on many laudable measures of improvement; but these were so sullied by acts of merciless revenge, to which he was moved by the danger in which he was placed by his usurpation, that it is difficult to separate his merits from his crimes."

At first the new czar seemed likely to retain the popularity he enjoyed on ascending the throne. Scarcely had his coronation taken place before the Tartars of the Crimea threatened a descent upon the southern part of Russia. The people stood in awe of these turbulent and savage foes; but Boris promptly assembled so numerous an army, that the Tartars were dismayed in their turn, and abandoned their intended enterprise; and the khan, instead of attacking him, sued for a continuance of peace. This incident won for Boris, at least to some extent, the gratitude of the people, and the admiration of the soldiery.

While on one side Boris hurled back the savage barbarism of Asia, on the other he courted the arts and civilisation of Europe. Before his whole time was engrossed by troubles at home, he strove earnestly to extend the relations of Russia with the great powers of the continent. He was also anxious to establish himself on the throne, and secure it to his descendants by promoting a matrimonial alliance between his own family and some reigning house of Europe. With this object he invited Gustavus, son of Eric, the deposed king of Sweden, to his court, where he treated that accomplished prince with great honour. Extensive estates were even conferred upon him; but as the prince was unwilling to become a tool of the Muscovite policy against his native country, he fell into disgrace, and was exiled. Boris then proposed an alliance between his daughter Xenia, a princess of great beauty, and the Duke John, brother of the King of Denmark and of the queen of James I. of England. This proposal was assented to both by the king and the duke; but it could not be carried into effect on account of the premature death of the latter. Amongst the diplomatic negotiations of Boris with foreign powers, should be mentioned his frequent, though desultory communications with Austria, to bring about a league against the Turks. Some negotiations with Persia on the same subject were equally unsuccessful. Like the fierce Ivan, Boris exhibited a decided partiality towards the government and people of England. This seems to have been, at least to some extent, reciprocated; for, in the year 1603, Queen Elizabeth proposed to the czar a marriage between his son and a young English lady of rank, then only eleven years old.

The first two years of the reign of Boris were attended with remarkable prosperity to the empire. Though the character of the czar has been variously drawn, and he has even been represented as a savage tyrant, yet during this period he ever leaned rather towards clemency than severity. He laboured to raise Russia in the scale of nations, by importing into it the civilisation

of the most polished of the neighbouring states. He conceived the plan of establishing universities, where the young Muscovites should be instructed in foreign languages and the sciences. He even sent into Germany for teachers for the intended schools; but his project failed on account of the vehement opposition of the clergy, who considered the measure as an innovation dangerous to religion. Notwithstanding this obstruction from a quarter whence it ought not to have arisen, he sent eighteen young men of noble families to be educated in Germany, England, and France. He further showed his desire to promote the elevation of the empire and people by an anxiety to attract to Russia all gifted foreigners, such as physicians, engineers, and able artisans. In these agents of the country's progress he placed great confidence, and frequently conversed with them with familiarity. Indeed, this must have been a period of calm, if not of happiness to him, as well as of prosperity to the country; but unfortunately it was not destined to last, and a darker time—a time of calamity and terror—was at hand.

Jealousies against the elected sovereign had existed from the first; but this was to be expected, especially in a country which contained a nobility so turbulent as that of Russia. Boris constantly experienced some incident which reminded him that he was not regarded as altogether a legitimate sovereign; that he could not plead either divine right or ancestral claims to the throne. From this feeling arose the resistance of the clergy to his educational innovations. It was natural for ignorant and narrow-minded men to oppose the spread of information among the people; for persons of this description ever dread novelties, however wise or brilliant, and "cling to error like a bat to a dead bough." But it did not proceed from this alone; but from the fact that the clergy, released from the presence of a sovereign who ruled them by a presumed mission from heaven, and influenced by the jealousy of which we have spoken, began to exhibit uneasiness and impatience of control. A similar feeling animated the boyards, some of whom were accused by their slaves of being ill-disposed to the czar. Boris punished them with merciless severity; some he banished or imprisoned, while others were consigned to the hands of the executioner, and that frequently without trial or other preliminary ceremony. These actions turned indifference or ill-feeling into hatred; and he who had been regarded as an adventurer, was now secretly denounced as a tyrant.

In countries where agriculture has scarcely risen to the dignity of an art, where commerce only just exists, and communication between distant parts is so difficult as to be impracticable for all ordinary purposes, a scanty harvest is necessarily followed by severe distress, and a repetition of it by famine. A heavy calamity of this nature now fell upon Russia. The harvests of 1601 and 1602 were meagre in the extreme. A general famine was the result; a famine so terrible, that its horrors, as described by eye-witnesses, seem almost incredible. As is commonly the case, its ravages were followed by those of pestilence, both of which afflicted the people for a period of three years. In this time of prolonged misery, Boris acted in a most commendable manner, and showed himself not only the sovereign, but the father of the nation. He employed himself incessantly in inventing modes of relief, and he caused immense quantities of provisions to be distributed daily. These were paid for, to a large extent, out of his own private wealth, which we stated to be very great. He also levied a kind of rate upon the rich, to ameliorate the miseries of the poor. The nobles and clergy, so far from imitating his noble example, displayed a grasping avariciousness, which induced them not only to hold aloof from the miseries that surrounded them, but to take advantage of those very miseries by exacting enormous prices for their stores of grain. Boris punished them for this selfish conduct by compelling them to dispose of their stores of grain to him at a low price, the better to enable him to distribute it gratuitously among the starving people.

Means of this nature, necessarily limited and inefficient, were eventually exhausted. Still the terrible famine prevailed; and the number of its victims increased. Half a million of people are computed to have died of hunger in Moscow alone. The attenuated dead lay unburied in the streets and squares, rotting in loathsome heaps. The mouths of many of the shrunken corpses were full of hay, straw, or the filthiest offal, which they were vainly endeavouring to eat when death terminated their terrible and degrading misery. The pangs arising from prolonged hunger must indeed be dreadful; for they induce men and women to cast

aside those antipathies which are so deeply woven into our instincts as to be regarded as natural, and therefore unalterable laws. Not only was strange and loathsome food consumed at Moscow, but the frightful practice of cannibalism arose in that city. In many houses, the person who had suffered least from the effects of the famine, was secretly slain, to furnish food for the rest. So far was this terrible practice carried—so far had the tyrannical cravings of hunger subdued the natural bonds of affection, that parents devoured their own children, and children their parents; or, still worse, *sold* them for the same revolting purpose to others, that they might purchase bread with the price of the blood of those who, till hunger had made them mad, were dearest to them. A Russian chronicler relates, that he saw a woman in the open street tearing with her teeth the flesh of a living child she carried in her arms. Another mentions, that four women having decoyed a peasant into their house under pretence of purchasing food from him, killed him and his horse, and dragged the two carcases into their ice-pit, to serve them as food.

At length this time of horror passed away, and the diminished population was relieved from the incessant cravings of hunger by the return of nature to her customary beneficence. But so severe a calamity had produced a general disorganisation, and the country was infested by bands of robbers, who had taken to that lawless life in consequence of the drying up of the regular channels of industry. The chief of these gangs of ruffians, who was named Khlopko, became so formidable, that it was necessary to send an army to subdue him. He was defeated and captured in a regular battle not far from Moscow, in which the commander of the czar's forces was killed. This engagement, however, by no means exterminated the robbers, who continued their depredations and outrages to a great extent, especially in the border provinces, where they were further from the avenging arm of authority. But the existence of this social scourge must not be attributed to the famine alone. It arose partly from unwise and unjust legislation. The ordinance by which Boris had, during the reign of Feodor, bound the peasant to the soil, and converted him from a state of negative freedom to that of absolute serfdom, had induced great numbers to take to flight. Of these, many doubtless settled down peaceably upon the lands of other proprietors; but many also joined the wandering bands of robbers which famine, pestilence, and a stoppage of the ordinary business of society had engendered. This circumstance led to very severe measures against these barbarous but miserable men. An inquisitorial search after runaways was established, and the bitterness of despotic rule was felt even down to the lowest link of the social chain. This, too, to such an extent, that it has been plaintively observed by a sympathetic writer, that "the Russian nation was now no longer anything but a hierarchy of slaves. Thenceforth there was no intercourse; none of those public meetings in which the youthful part of society, at least, orally acquired knowledge; no compacts to protect the weak, no asylum for them. Russia became sad and sullen; the minstrels, who had been wont to traverse the country, now disappeared; their songs of war and the chase, and even of love, were heard no longer. It is only in the chronicles of the time that we discover the traces of those perished manners, those forgotten songs: on meeting with them, the national historian is surprised and affected, and mournfully exclaims, 'that in these recollections, the Russia of the present day, mute and enslaved, finds but the image of an object which no longer exists—the echo of a voice which no longer vibrates on her ear.'"

Boris was driven into despotism by the disaffection of the nobles and people whom he ruled. His benevolent exertions during the period of the famine, were regarded with malice by the former, who set them down to the score of a subtle policy. Their murmurs were no longer uttered in private, but even assumed a threatening tone. The signs of disaffection were no longer to be misunderstood. In this position Boris followed the example of Ivan, and resolved to appal those whose confidence he could not win. Many of the proudest grandees were consigned by him to the hands of the executioner, and a number of capital punishments were crowded into a short space of time. The danger to which he was undoubtedly exposed was magnified by alarm, and thus all the latent cruelty of his nature brought into action. He even rose up from table at his own banquets, and denounced some of his guests as traitors, who

were immediately seized upon by his followers, and dragged away to dungeons or to death. Despotism thus became universal, and noble and peasant were alike oppressed; not from any desire of the czar for such a result, but as an inevitable consequence of the disorder arising from usurpation. Some measures of this period were remarkably severe and sanguinary. With an unreasoning and capricious ferocity, it was enacted, that all the members of a family were held to be involved in the punishment of a single member. To restrain the peasantry in their natural exodus from bondage, every Russian who passed beyond the frontiers was denounced as a rebel and a heretic. One of the injudicious measures of Boris, and that which perhaps more than anything else contributed to his unpopularity, was the whimsical one of punishing drunkenness with death.

Something of the despotism of the crown was transferred even to the heads of families; probably with a view to win their allegiance by sanctioning existing barbarous practices. The peasant within his own hut was invested with all the powers of a despot. Not only was he permitted to inflict summary chastisement upon his wife and children, but also to sell the latter into slavery—privileges which were, however, restrained by the edict which converted the father himself into a serf. Yet the merciless sway of Boris must be regarded as a consequence of his situation, which exposed him to hazards from which he could not escape except by some such decisive and terrible measures.

Throughout the whole of Russia there prevailed that sort of feeling which so often precedes insurrections. In 1604, a singular rumour was brought from the frontiers of Lithuania, and spread with surprising rapidity throughout the empire. It was to the effect, that Prince Dmitri, who was supposed to have been murdered at Uglitch, was alive, and making preparations in Poland to recover the throne of his ancestors. Several versions exist as to the way in which this presumed discovery was first made. The one generally regarded by Russian historians as authentic, runs thus. A stranger having fallen seriously ill in a Polish town, sent for a confessor, and informed him that he was the youngest son of the czar Ivan, and consequently legitimate heir to the Russian throne. This information the confessor communicated to Prince Adam Wiszniowiecki, who, on the recovery of the stranger, sent for him to substantiate his statement. The latter obeyed, and stated that his physician, Simon, having been tampered with by Boris, had affected to comply with the regent's designs against the life of the heir-presumptive, but only that he might the more effectually frustrate them. With a forgetfulness of the actual circumstances of the case, he added, that on the night appointed for the murder, Simon put the child of a serf into his young master's bed, and it was this unhappy boy who fell a victim to the assassin. Simon, satisfied of the uselessness of appealing to the feeble-minded czar Feodor against so powerful and unscrupulous a man as Boris, fled with Prince Dmitri from Uglitch, and committed him to the care of a loyal gentleman, who, for his better protection, made him enter a monastery. The stranger admitted that this gentleman and the physician were both dead; but in confirmation of his narrative he produced a Russian seal, bearing the arms and the name of the czarevitch, and a gold cross, adorned with jewels of great value, which he said was the baptismal gift of his godfather, the Prince Ivan Mstislavski.

Notwithstanding the suspicious nature of this story, the Polish noble was convinced of its truth. The plausible manner of the stranger won upon him, and the costly diamond cross seemed an irresistible evidence in favour of the truth of the pretensions of the young man; for how, he reasoned, could such a jewel have come into his hands unless he really was the czarevitch? Prince Wiszniowiecki was convinced. He treated his mysterious visitor with great distinction, presented him with money, raiment, horses, and a retinue suitable to his supposed birth. On taking him to the residence of his brother Prince Constantine, a Russian fugitive, named Pietrovski, made a voluntary statement, that he had formerly been in attendance on the czarevitch Dmitri, of whose identity with the youth before him he was perfectly convinced. These coincidences were certainly remarkable. The murdered czarevitch, if alive, would have been about twenty-two years old; which was the apparent age of the stranger. The latter had a wart on the forehead, another under the right eye, and one arm a little longer than the other: the son of the czar Ivan was said to have been marked in the same way.

The pretender—for such he assuredly was—soon subdued all doubts in the Polish nobles, who thronged to Prince Constantine's mansion, to be presented to the man they regarded as the rightful czar of Russia, and to offer their services to him. The bold intriguant performed his assumed part with consummate skill—a representation in which he was assisted by nature. Even his gestures and tone of voice were said to have resembled those of the murdered prince. His deportment was perfectly in accordance with his alleged rank. Possessed of a fine figure, an insinuating manner, and a ready speech, he was always perfectly at his ease amongst the noble persons with whom he now associated. He had been liberally educated for those days; spoke both Polish and Russian, had a slight smattering of Latin, wrote a bold and rapid hand, was well versed in the history of Russia, and in the genealogies of all the great families. In addition to this, he ingratiated himself not only with the Polish nobles, but with the Roman pontiff, by representing that he was disposed to embrace the catholic faith; and that, should he be so fortunate as to recover the throne of his ancestors, he would endeavour to bring his subjects into the communion of the Roman church. Such was the success of the assumed Dmitri, that the Palatine of Sandomir, a Polish noble of great wealth and influence, promised him the hand of his daughter Marina when he should become czar—a promise to which the lady cheerfully assented. The palatine even presented the young adventurer to the King of Poland (Sigismund III.), who was delighted with an incident which promised an opportunity of gratifying a dislike he entertained towards Boris. Sigismund having received the youth at a solemn audience, and listened to a statement of his pretended birth and misfortunes, observed—"God preserve thee, Dmitri, Prince of Muscovy; thy birth is known to us, and attested by satisfactory evidence: we assign thee a pension of 40,000 florins; and, as our friend and guest, we permit thee to accept the counsels and services of our subjects."

In the May of 1604, Dmitri (as we must call him) signed a promise of marriage to Marina, the daughter of the Palatine Sandomir, in which he engaged to confer on her the towns of Novgorod and Pskov as a wedding gift, and to pay her father a million of Polish florins (about £160,000) as soon as he should have ascended his throne. The following month he signed another document, by which he engaged to cede the province of Severia to the palatine and the King of Poland; and at the same time he privately abjured the Greek faith, and was admitted as a member of the Roman church in the palace of the nuncio. By these equivocal acts he secured the services of a small Polish army; but they eventually assisted in destroying his reputation.

News of Dmitri's proceedings soon reached Boris, who had excellent reasons for knowing that he was an impostor, and that the true prince had long lain in his grave. The czar denounced Dmitri as an impostor, and stated that he was a renegade monk, named Gregory Otrepief, who, on account of his bearing an accidental resemblance to the dead prince, had been led into the idea of personating him. Some mystery hangs over this question, and many inquiries have been made concerning it, but without any satisfactory result. The distinguished modern Russian historian, Karamsin, considers that Otrepief was the spurious Dmitri; other writers, who have had the advantage of being able to compare all the circumstances (many of them minute, and necessarily uninteresting to an English reader), are of opinion that the assumed Dmitri was neither what he pretended to be, nor what Boris asserted—a negative conclusion, which leaves us as much in doubt as before as to the man's actual origin.

The first proceeding of the czar Boris, with respect to Dmitri, was an unwise one. He offered a heavy bribe to Prince Wiszniowiecki and his brother Constantine, if they would give the impostor up to him. This they indignantly refused, and the circumstance only had the effect of confirming their belief in the representations of their *protégé*. Boris then proclaimed Dmitri to be an adventurer; and employed a number of spies, who were armed with authority to seize and put him to death. He proceeded further, by prohibiting all intercourse between the Poles and the Russians, compelled the patriarch to anathematise "the rascally disrobed monk, the apostate rebel and magician, who wished to introduce the Latin heresy into Russia, and to build catholic churches in the orthodox land." Boris also procured the testimony of the living mother of the murdered prince to her son's death, and wrote a letter to the Polish monarch, entreating his majesty to withdraw his protection from the impostor. These efforts

failed to produce the desired effect, and indeed only more effectually aroused the curiosity of the Russian people, who, tired of what they regarded as an illegitimate government, were disposed to give credence to a claim which might overturn it. For this reason, also, the discontented nobles lent an ear to a tale which they did not really believe.

Dmitri was unabashed by the denunciation of Boris, which he affected to treat with calm contempt. He again asserted his claim to the Russian throne, and detailed the whole story of his life, which he said Boris endeavoured to discredit from motives of selfish fear. He spoke of the extraordinary interposition of Providence, which had, he said, preserved him for the sacred purpose of rescuing his faithful subjects from the thraldom of usurpation; and reiterated his determination never to cease in his efforts to restore the throne of Muscovy to the race of Ruric.

Unquestionably, the pretender was a man of remarkable talents and activity. While Boris was vainly endeavouring to blacken his reputation, he was busily occupied in gathering recruits to his standard. He knew that the Russian people were favourably disposed towards him, and likely to rise in his favour if he appeared among them. Accordingly, on the 31st of October, 1604, he crossed the Russian frontier with his little army, which consisted of about 3,000 Polish horse, 500 foot of the same nation, and a few thousand Russian refugees. It would have been an act of madness to invade so vast an empire with such a petty force, had not Dmitri really won the attachment of the common people, most of whom, by this time, firmly believed that he was the son of the czar Ivan. His forces increased rapidly on his march, and town after town received him with enthusiasm. The barbarian inhabitants not only presented him with bread and salt, as tokens of allegiance, but placed their governors and other officers, bound and gagged, in his hands. The pretender immediately liberated these unfortunate gentlemen, and behaved to them with great courtesy—a policy which brought with it its own reward.

Boris had been unwilling to increase the importance of his rival by making any great military preparation; and it was not until the 23rd of November, by which time Dmitri had arrived before the walls of Novgorod, that he met with any opposing force. Peter Basmanof, an able general, had thrown himself into that city with a body of no more than 500 Strelitz. On being summoned to surrender in the name of the czar and the grand prince Dmitri, he replied, "The grand prince and czar is at Moscow, and your Dmitri is a robber, who shall be impaled, and his accomplices with him. Be off, if you value your lives." Basmanof was not to be won; and the invaders were unable to take the citadel, into which he and his troops had retired. Several weeks were passed before the fortress, and the besiegers repulsed with considerable loss in an attempt to storm it. Their enthusiasm was rapidly cooling, when it was revived by the capture of a sum of 80,000 ducats, which the czar was sending to the governors of the towns that adhered to him. The siege was renewed; and Basmanof, aware that an army was on its march from Moscow for his relief, had the address to obtain a truce for a fortnight, by promising to surrender at the end of that time, if he was not succoured.

The usurping czar had proved himself an able soldier; and if he had the energy that marked his actions in earlier years, would no doubt have destroyed his opponent. But he was no longer the man he had been; his health was broken, and his spirits crushed by the opposition with which he had had to contend. He is said to have laboured under the pangs of a guilty conscience; and it is possible that his mind was to some extent diseased. Confiding to others the command he should have assumed himself, he trusted men who were at least cold in his cause, if not absolutely averse to him.

Mstislavski, the general entrusted by Boris with the command of a large army, which he had much difficulty in collecting, arrived at Novgorod towards the close of December. Some days were passed in inactivity. The sanguine Dmitri hoped to see the hostile army adopt his cause, and arrange itself beneath his banner; while Mstislavski expected that the adherents of the pretender, who scarcely amounted to 15,000, would disperse without coming to hostilities. Both were disappointed; and on the 31st, Dmitri, whose army was not more than a third as numerous as that opposed to him, boldly led his troops into an open plain, and placed them in array of battle. Such a challenge was of course accepted, and the adversaries were soon drawn up

face to face. Before the battle, Dmitri prayed aloud before his soldiers, and then addressed them in tones of the most animating eloquence. "Almighty God!" cried he, in conclusion, "if my cause is unjust, may thy wrath fall on me alone! But thou knowest my right, and will make my arm invincible!" The strife, though fierce, was brief; for there were many among the army of Boris who trembled lest they should be fighting against the czarevitch. The brave and well-armed Polish lancers, by a desperate charge, broke the right wing of the Russian army, and drove it upon the centre, which soon fell into confusion. Prince Mstislavski strove in vain to rally his dismayed troops; and, after receiving fifteen wounds, was borne from the field. This was conclusive: the victory fell upon Dmitri; and the Russians would have been utterly routed, but that Basmanof made a sortie in their favour, set fire to the camp of the conquerors, and thus drew them from the field. By means of this *rusé*, the humbled troops of Boris were enabled to escape beneath the cover of the woods.

The pretended Dmitri conducted himself after the battle with princely moderation, and a policy which would have done credit to an older man. The prisoners taken were addressed by him with kindly familiarity, and treated as mistaken subjects, instead of as foes. He also commanded his followers to conduct themselves with humanity—a circumstance which rendered them a striking contrast to the brutal Russian soldiers, who ruthlessly slaughtered the inhabitants of those districts which had exhibited a disposition to favour the cause of the adventurer. Dmitri also actively spread abroad the idea, that his victory had been due to the fact that Providence fought upon the side of truth, and that it should, therefore, be accepted as an indication from heaven that he was undoubtedly the son of Ivan IV. This belief rapidly made way among the ignorant peasantry, who were ready, at the first opportunity, to hail him as their sovereign.

Still the position of Dmitri was but a desperate one; and he knew that he could not obtain any permanent success unless the people fell away from Boris and adopted his cause. Shortly after the battle, a mandate came from the King of Poland, commanding his subjects to return home immediately. It had been drawn from him by Boris before Sigismund knew of the victory obtained by Dmitri, and while he was influenced by disgust at the inconceivable prolongation of the siege of such a petty fortress as that of Novgorod. The command was obeyed by the palatines and the principal Polish gentlemen; and within a fortnight after the battle, but 400 soldiers of that nation remained with Dmitri. Feeling that nothing but a daring stroke could save him from destruction, and that hesitation would be death, he abandoned the siege of Novgorod; and after refreshing his troops by a few days' rest, again took the field with a force which, in consequence of the Russians who had joined him, still amounted to about 15,000 men.

Prince Mstislavski was disabled by his wounds from resuming the command of the czar's army. Basmanof was summoned by Boris to Moscow to receive the honour he had won by his bravery, and the royal troops were committed to the direction of Vassili Schuisky, who, though brave, did not possess those other and more important qualities which aid in forming an accomplished general. On the 20th of January, 1605, the czar's forces, amounting to 70,000 men, were drawn up on the plain of Dobrynitchi. Dmitri, with his army of only 15,000 men, did not hesitate to attack them. Having addressed his troops and prayed aloud before them, he, with one division of his army, gallantly charged the centre of the enemy. He was received with a fire from fourteen cannons and 16,000 muskets, which might have done terrible execution had it not been hurried and ill-directed. As it was, it proved almost harmless, and a few moments afterwards Dmitri's horse had broken the line of their opponents. Once again victory might have favoured the pretender but for the cowardice, or more probably treachery, of 8,000 mounted Zaporogues, who formed the main body of his army. Instead of seconding their brave young leader, these men stood still until the troops of Boris were enabled to rally, and then wheeling round, they quitted the field without striking a blow. It is said that they were bribed by Boris; but whatever was the cause of their misconduct, its result was the defeat of their companions. Dmitri perceived that the day was irredeemably lost: his Cossack infantry, numbering 4,000 men, withstood for a time the whole Russian army, and perished on the field to a man. The scanty remnant of Dmitri's army took to a flight in which he was compelled to

join. It is said, that they might have been all put to the sword, but that Schuisky and his officers, though they fought on the side of the czar, had no intention of altogether removing a man through whom they could keep Boris in a state of constant agitation and necessity for their services. For this reason, they gave orders to check the pursuit, saying, "The fowl is in the pot"—a familiar phrase by which the soldiers understood that Dmitri was either slain or taken prisoner.

The pretender had no longer an army. He and the miserable remnant of his followers fled to a town named Putivle, near the frontiers, which, on account of its strong defences, offered an asylum he deemed tolerably secure. Schuisky, instead of attempting to secure his person, remained at Dobrynitchi, where he occupied himself with hanging or shooting the prisoners he had taken. Then, after several subterfuges for avoiding action, he placed his troops in winter quarters, and sent word to the czar that no more could be done that season.

Boris, delighted with the recent victory, expected a very different result. He expressed his displeasure in so severe a manner as altogether to alienate from him many of those officers who had before been lukewarm in his service. Animosity to the czar naturally engendered a favourable feeling towards his opponent; which only needed some return of good fortune to Dmitri to induce the disaffected to desert to him. Though stimulated by the reproaches of the czar to some further exertions, such as besieging the town of Kroury, which had declared for Dmitri, Schuisky merely deceived his master by idle efforts, which had not, and were not intended to have, any result. Dmitri, who remained unmolested, still preserved an undaunted spirit and a hopeful mind. He made use of the time which the delays of Schuisky created for him, by sending manifestos and letters throughout the country. He had many agents also at work in the army of the czar; and the result was soon seen in the desertion to him not only of many common soldiers, but also of some persons of rank. The alarmed Boris again attempted to accomplish by stratagem that which he could not effect by the open hand of power. He sent three monks to the town of Putivle with letters from himself and the patriarch, offering to the townspeople a full pardon, and a magnificent reward, if they would give up the impostor to him alive or dead. The inhabitants disdained the bribe, and, arresting the monks, put them to the torture. One of them then confessed that he carried about him a subtle poison, which was to be administered to the supposed czarevitch by two boyards, who had insinuated themselves into his confidence for that purpose. The monks were put to death; and the exposure of the attempt of Boris on the life of his rival, did much mischief to the cause of the former. Dmitri turned it to advantage by writing a haughty letter both to the patriarch and the czar. He reproached them with the dastardly and criminal means to which they had resorted, and boasted of the especial protection of Divine Providence. With a calm audacity, he told Boris that he was disposed to act mercifully towards him. "Let him," he said, "descend from the throne he has usurped, and seek in the solitude of the cloisters to reconcile himself with heaven; in that case I will forget his crimes, and even assure him of my sovereign protection."

The arrogance of Dmitri was extremely politic. To a populace who were daily becoming more impressed that his claim was a just one, his haughty language seemed but natural to a person of such distinguished birth. At this period all things seemed to favour him, and to frown darkly upon the fortunes of the troubled czar. The northern lights having appeared with unusual brilliancy, and a comet being visible, the superstition of the people interpreted these events into a mystic indication of the ruin of the czar. Others went further, and believed that these appearances were signs of the anger of God, and warnings to them to come forward in support of their rightful sovereign; and that, unless they abandoned the usurper who had attempted the life of the last descendant of the royal race, the phials of the divine wrath would be poured out upon the country. In consequence of the prevalence of this feeling, Dmitri received so many offers of allegiance, that he was soon at the head of a very formidable party.

Boris appears to have been quite unnerved at the progress of the defection, and it is very probable that he was now the victim of great mental excitement, if not disease. It is said that sometimes, during periods of despondency or terror, he fancied that the forces of the pretender were led by the disinterred skeleton of the murdered

prince. Surrounded, as usual, by a court reputed for its splendour, and directing as hitherto the councils of the nation, yet he knew that he was environed by hypocrites and traitors. He was still the autocrat; but he knew that amongst his courtiers were some who feared his fall, and others who secretly rejoiced at the probability of such an event.

Such was the aspect of affairs when the Russian people were startled by the news of the sudden death of the czar! This unexpected event took place on the 13th of April, 1605. Boris had that day risen apparently in his usual state of health, which, though seriously impaired, was not such as to excite alarm of immediate danger. He had presided, according to custom, at the council-board, and afterwards dined with some distinguished foreigners who had been presented to him. Before leaving the dining apartment, he was seized with sudden sickness, and effusions of blood from his nose, ears, and mouth. Every assistance was rendered, but he sank slowly into a state of insensibility, and expired within two hours. Before he became unconscious, he desired to enter the church as a monk, and was accordingly consecrated by the name of Bogolep, which means, agreeable to God. Thus, after a reign of six years, died one of the most remarkable rulers of Russia, in the fifty-third year of his age. His death was generally attributed to poison administered by his own hand; and some writers affirm, without any qualification, that such was the fact. Such an end to the life of a man who had won his path to power by hypocrisy and murder, seems so poetically just, that many will not wish to sift its accuracy. But however we may feel on such points, experience instructs us differently. The great criminals of the world too often escape the doom to which a moral justice would condemn them; and the faith of the weak is vexed by events in which they strive in vain to discern the invisible hand of Deity. Perhaps Boris, the murderer and tyrant, did commit suicide in a paroxysm of despair, in which case popular belief would be confirmed, and moral justice vindicated. But the circumstances of his death are perfectly consistent with natural dissolution. It might have arisen from apoplexy, or from the bursting of a large blood-vessel; either of which events would have been promoted by the long nervous excitement which the czar had endured. Certainly there are difficulties in the way of a belief that he was the voluntary cause of his own death. It has been well reasoned, "That so long as the czar lived, and the army had not actually revolted, the pretender's aspiring fortunes were not secured from all chance of failure. The existence of Boris was the only safeguard of his family. Would so cool a calculator have thrown away a chance however faint? Would a man of such energy and resolution, so noted for the depth and tenderness of his domestic affections, have wilfully hastened the triumph of his foe, and abandoned his wife and children to inevitable destruction—to destruction only rendered inevitable by his own act?" To this it may be replied, that if Boris suffered from sickness, despair, and partial insanity, he would be unable to reason upon his misfortunes, or to feel for the position of those dependent upon him. Despair excludes with clouds of impenetrable gloom all but one, and that the most painful, view of a case; while insanity is incapable of reasoning upon it.

But to whatever circumstance we must attribute the death of the czar Boris Godunof, or however sternly we may denounce his many crimes, it must be admitted that he was a sovereign of remarkable abilities. Russia prospered under his administration when the simple Feodor sat in the seat of the czar; and Boris, during the early part of his own reign, acted in many matters like the father of his people. His strong arm swept back the Tartars; his acute sense encouraged a civilisation which might have produced brilliant results but for the barbarous opposition of the priesthood; and benevolence, or policy, induced him to pour out his mighty hordes of wealth at the feet of the people, to avert the horrors of famine. Such was his administrative ability and mental vigour during the early part of his reign, that he has even been compared with his illustrious successor, Peter the Great. He was assuredly a murderer and a tyrant; but he was no common criminal. His early crimes arose from a dazzling ambition, and his later ones from a constantly oppressive sense of insecurity. Such are the evils of usurpation. Had he been a legitimate sovereign, he would have proved not only a wise one, but most probably have descended to his grave in honour, and left an unsullied reputation for the contemplation of a sad yet grateful people.

The death of Boris was so sudden, that Dmitri was not prepared to take instant advantage of it. A hurried council of the principal nobility took place at Moscow, at which it was decided that Feodor, the son of the late czar, should succeed him on the throne. Feodor, who was but sixteen or eighteen years old, was proclaimed without opposition. General Basmanof was appointed to the command of the army, which, notwithstanding its disaffection, passively took an oath of fidelity to the new czar.

His day of power was but a brief one. Basmanof proved false, and opened a secret correspondence with Dmitri, which he shortly afterwards followed up by publicly declaring for him, and proclaiming the adventurer as czar of Moscow. Most of the troops received the proclamation with enthusiasm, and the rest were overawed by superior numbers. On the 8th of May, Prince Galitzin presented himself at Putivle, to tender to Dmitri the submission of the army. The pretender received him with great affability, and sent a command to Basmanof to prepare to march to Moscow. Dmitri also dispatched envoys to the capital, who, backed by a number of the boyards and wealthy merchants, assembled the people in the grand square, and called upon them to acknowledge and proclaim their lawful sovereign. The people were ripe for the desired change; and with vociferous shouts they declared for Dmitri. Thoroughly excited, they then hurried to the Kremlin, which they forced, and bursting into the royal apartments, seized Feodor, his sister Xenia, and his mother, and placed them as prisoners in the house which Boris had occupied before he ascended the throne. The other distinguished members of the Godunof family were put in chains, and sent to the camp of Dmitri.

The latter had now almost attained the summit of his wild ambition: he had but to advance and seize the crown, for which he had played so boldly. The princes Galitzin and Massalski preceded him to the capital as his plenipotentiaries. There they arrested the patriarch who, in the time of Boris, had anathematised Dmitri as a rebel and "rascally monk." The time-serving old priest now professed his willingness to crown the man whom he had formerly denounced; but this suppleness did not save him from deprivation and imprisonment. For deposed princes there is but a step between the prison and the grave, and the unfortunate Feodor and his mother soon ceased to live. It was reported that they had destroyed themselves by poison; but a chronicler of the time stated, that when their bodies were exposed in public, he himself saw on their necks the livid marks of the cords with which they had been strangled. The murder was generally attributed to the commands of Dmitri; but doubts are entertained on that point. "The zeal of his agents," says Mérimée, "doubtless had no need of positive instructions. The sequel of this young adventurer's history shows that, far from being cruel, he was goodnatured and generous to a degree which was very rare in those days, even among the most civilised nations. I am more inclined to believe that men who, within a month, had taken two oaths, and successively betrayed Boris and Feodor, eagerly seized, without orders, the opportunity to remove enemies out of their new master's way, and objects of remorse out of their own." Indeed, the blood of but one other person was shed in the accomplishment of this remarkable revolution. Semen, the head of the secret police under Boris, was put to death, apparently more from the general odium he had incurred, than from any vindictive feeling on the part of the new czar.

Dmitri behaved with a princely composure, and avoided any undignified haste in grasping the sceptre which fortune had laid at his feet. At length he complied with the entreaties of his subjects; and on the 20th of June, 1605, he entered Moscow in great state, amidst the enthusiastic congratulations of enormous throngs of people. No heir of the house of Ruric had ever been received by his subjects with such demonstrations of affection. Yet even in this hour of triumph, there were to be discerned slight indications of that popular fickleness, the bitter cup of which the new sovereign was to drain to the dregs. As the procession crossed the great square before the Kremlin, a sudden whirlwind arose, which almost deprived the horsemen of their seats, and hid the czar and his *cortége* for a short time from the spectators, beneath clouds of dust. This natural event was regarded by the superstitious people as an omen of evil; and, making the sign of the cross, they whispered to each other, "God keep us from harm." Other incidents occurred which the fickle Muscovites beheld with

displeasure. The new czar was attended by a large body of Poles, who, at the moment he dismounted from his horse to kiss the relics with which the clergy advanced to meet him, struck up a flourish of military music, which drowned the chaunt of the *Te Deum*. The Poles, or "Pagans," as the Russians contemptuously called all foreigners who were not of the Greek church, entered the cathedral with him—a circumstance which was regarded as a profanation. Afterwards, Dmitri knelt in tears before the tomb of Ivan, and kissing it in a well-affected transport, exclaimed, "O father! thy orphan reigns; and this he owes to thy holy prayers!" At this sight the spectators were affected with a contagious emotion, and, weeping with him, exclaimed, "He is indeed the son of the Terrible."

Notwithstanding the natural doubts entertained by many of his subjects, and their superstitious regard to omens, the reign of the new sovereign began auspiciously. The nobles rejoiced that Boris was no more; and the people, that events promised a return of tranquillity. Dmitri's manners were courteous and attractive—a circumstance which won for him the attachment of those who approached him. He was also extremely generous, and conferred with a profuse hand benefits upon all who had helped him to the throne, and sometimes even upon those who had been his enemies. With a liberality approaching to wantonness, he doubled the pay of the army, and the salaries of all public functionaries. He also created some sensation by an announcement that he would pay all the debts contracted by his father the czar, Ivan IV. Corrupt judges he punished with severity; and sternly admonished others in whose decisions he detected any partiality. In order to insure a better administration of justice, he adopted the Eastern practice of sitting, twice a-week, in the portico of his palace, for the purpose of receiving the petitions of the poorest of his subjects, and redressing their grievances. He also accomplished many important reforms; remitted many taxes which had previously fettered commerce and made justice unattainable by the needy; and modified the unjust enactment of Boris, which converted the peasantry into serfs. The noble was authorised to reclaim his fugitive serf, but restrained, under severe penalties, from fraudulent claims of ownership. All serfs, also, who had been abandoned by their lords during the late famine, were enfranchised, upon the principle that the master's right of property was inseparable from the serf's right of maintenance. Where freemen, who had hired out their services for a period only, were retained as serfs against their will, Dmitri visited the oppressor with a severe punishment. Proceedings of this nature induced the people to anticipate that his reign would be a period of prosperity for the empire. His supporters, also, were highly gratified; for he had shown himself, in no small degree, a brave and skilful soldier in the field, and an efficient statesman at the council table.

The new czar had yet to pass through one remarkable trial before his presumed identity with the murdered son of Ivan could be said to be confirmed. The mother of the true Dmitri was yet living in the convent to which Boris had compelled her to retire. If she acknowledged him as her son, it was naturally assumed that even the most sceptical would be satisfied. A month elapsed after the entrance of Dmitri into Moscow before the interview took place—a circumstance that created some remark. A meeting with the lady before she had been prepared and won over to countenance the deception, would have been fatal to his claims. Her own brother, however, undertook the delicate task of eradicating any scruples she might entertain against a compliance with what was required of her. It was pretty certain what course a woman, of no great strength of mind or loftiness of principle, would take in such a matter. If she refused to acknowledge the czar as her son, her life was in danger; if she consented, she exchanged a position of obscurity for one of distinction and brilliancy.

At length the widow of Ivan left her convent at Vyska, and proceeded to Toininsk, where she was to meet her supposed son. Dmitri started from Moscow with a numerous and magnificent retinue, and was followed by multitudes of people anxious to behold the result. The first interview took place in a sumptuous tent erected for the occasion. Dmitri and the widow of Ivan each entered alone; for it was cunningly assumed that the first emotions, at such a meeting, were too tender and sacred to be beheld by common eyes. A brief time elapsed; and then, emerging from the tent, they threw themselves into each other's arms with every appearance of intense affection. The multitude shouted with joy: they

were now thoroughly convinced that Dmitri was the true son of Ivan the Terrible. He then escorted the princess to Moscow with the profoundest respect, walking during part of the distance bare-headed by the side of her carriage. On their arrival, he conducted her to the convent of St. Cyril, in the Kremlin, where she was to reside until he should have built a magnificent convent expressly for her. He also assigned her a revenue and household suitable to her rank, visited her every day, consulted her on affairs of state, and even associated her name with his own in the ukases he issued. The coronation of Dmitri followed her arrival, on which occasion the favour shown by him to the Poles again excited the jealousies of his subjects.

It was necessary, at least in the commencement of his reign, for the new czar to be more circumspect than other monarchs. Unfortunately for the permanence of his sway, he was less so. It has frequently been observed, that perhaps no man can effectually fulfil the duties of a ruler, unless his education has been directed into that channel. The habits of private life, of unrestrained intercourse, and of commonplace associations, form an incompetent preparation for the novelty of a station which admits of no equality, and is removed from the sympathies and influences affecting the rest of mankind. The new czar had been intoxicated with the splendour of his fortune and the rapidity of his success. This, combined with his intrepid spirit and a superstitious confidence in his destiny, rendered him indifferent, if not averse, to the counsels of prudence. The Russian people were then, as now, animated by a powerful feeling of nationality, which is usually attended with a contempt or dislike for the inhabitants of other countries. Prudence required that the new czar should be, or affect to be, eminently national in his habits and predilections. So far from this being the case, his subjects soon began to perceive, with uneasiness, that their sovereign was influenced by foreign notions; that he surrounded himself with Polish guards, preferred them to all offices of importance, and laughed at many of the customs of his people, which he deemed uncouth, and even barbarous. In the council-chamber he astonished the Russian nobles by his superior knowledge and capacity, and offended them by his sarcastic observations and his preference of foreigners. "Go and travel," said he to the boyards; "observe the ways of civilised nations; for you are no better than savages." The very truth of this and similar remarks, made them the more bitter and less easy to be forgiven. The marked preference Dmitri gave to the Poles, had the effect not only of making the Russians discontented, but also of encouraging the haughtiness and insolence of the former. His private secretaries were Poles; while the only Russian on whom he bestowed his confidence was General Basmanof, a man not liked by the nobles of his nation.

This imprudence on the part of the czar revived the controversy, which had never altogether slept, concerning the questioned royalty of Dmitri's birth. The assumed proofs of his royal origin had never been examined by any competent tribunal. They were accepted, without examination, during the wild tumult of revolt; and as important evidence of the fact of the murder of the young prince was still extant, very little persuasion was requisite to induce the people to adopt any opinion in accordance with their political bias. Latent doubts were called into activity by Dmitri's neglect of the national prejudices. These, once encouraged, were carried to an absurd extent. Even his mode of riding was quoted to show that he was not of royal blood. He delighted to leap, without help, upon the back of a wild stallion, and ride the animal furiously like a Cossack; while the czars, in imitation of oriental custom, were in the habit of being lifted into the saddle, and riding with slowness and gravity. Other insignificant matters in the personal habits of the czar were cited in disproof of the distinguished origin to which he laid claim. He frequently passed the images of saints without saluting them; he ate veal (which was considered an unclean meat), dined without having his table blessed and sprinkled with holy water, and even so far neglected pious conventionalities, as to rise from it without washing his hands. Then he never slept after dinner, according to Russian custom, but selected that period for walking about the city, alone or with one companion, greatly to the astonishment of the people, who, being accustomed only to see their sovereigns when surrounded by a pompous equipage, not unnaturally considered such conduct undignified, and indicative of a humble origin. In addressing the clergy, it was noticed that he spoke of "*your* religion," and "*your* ritual;" which gave a

further colour to the suspicion that he had adopted the religion of the church of Rome. One day, during a sitting of his ministers, he was told that something he had just proposed was prohibited by the seventh general council of the church. He replied—"Well, what matter? very likely it is allowed by the eighth." This flippant response, which, at the worst, was but an unbecoming levity, was condemned by the clergy as an abominable blasphemy.

The circumstance, however, which most excited the nationality and anger of the Russians, was the approaching marriage of the czar with Marina Mniszek, the daughter of the Palatine Sandomir. "Could it be possible," said they, "that a heretic woman, an unbaptized Pole, was to be raised to the throne of orthodox Russia?" Such was the state of public feeling when Dmitri ventured upon an expedient which led to his ruin. Ambitious by nature, he aspired to the glory of conquest: he contemplated, by a combination of the Polish and Russian forces, to reduce to insignificance those aggressive and insolent powers the Turks and Tartars. The enterprise would be glorious, but it presented numerous difficulties, some of which were of a kind to be encountered rather by the statesman than by the warrior. It was necessary to conciliate the King of Poland, whose assistance he desired; and to amuse the pope, against whose decision that monarch would not enter into the scheme. The vastness of the military preparations, also, were such, that the resources of the Kremlin were found to be altogether inadequate to the expense. Here was the point which led the inconsiderate czar to his doom. He reasoned, that it was the duty of the clergy to bear part of the cost of an expedition to be undertaken for the glory and triumph of Christianity. He therefore demanded an exact account of the revenues of the numerous monasteries throughout the empire, and bluntly affirmed that he would not suffer so many monks to live in idleness, when a part of Christendom was to be delivered from Mussulman bondage. Reform in this direction was needful, but not judicious at the time. Dmitri, however, went beyond reform, and proceeded to confiscation, which was manifestly unjust. With arbitrary severity he suppressed several monasteries, and seized the wealth belonging to them. The rest of the priesthood lived in fear of a similar proceeding towards their religious houses, and a clerical conspiracy was soon formed against him. Ségur observes—"His other offences and irregularities might have been endured; the enmity of other classes he might have assuaged or curbed; but when he laid his sacrilegious hand upon the ark of the Lord, that is to say, upon the coffers of the clergy, he raised up against himself legions of implacable foes, whose malice baffled resistance, for they fought with the impalpable but deadly weapons of calumny and superstition. The priests and monks became the industrious propagators of every false or exaggerated rumour that could poison the minds of the people against the czar. They compared him to Julian the Apostate; and all the truly royal qualities, which they could not but recognise in Dmitri, they turned to his vilification, as so many points of resemblance to the persecutor of the Christians."

The clergy promoted a conspiracy against the czar, which many of the boyards readily joined. They had assisted his cause, without caring whether or not he was the son of Ivan. All they wanted was some one whom they could set up against Boris. It was their intention to make a puppet of the new czar, and to grasp the reality, while he held the shadow, of regal authority. In this they were disappointed. Dmitri had far too much intelligence to be made a tool of; and they found that, notwithstanding the general mildness of his nature, he could be quite as absolute as ever Boris was.

Prince Schuisky was the principal of the conspirators; for, as the nearest collateral heir of the Rurics, he looked forward to obtaining the crown for himself, in the event of the deposition or death of Dmitri. Schuisky advised the delay of the execution of the plot until the arrival of the intended czarina from Poland—a circumstance which led to its detection, and the arrest of himself and his two brothers. The latter were condemned to be banished to Siberia, and the former to death. They were, however, all subsequently pardoned—Schuisky himself, at the very moment when, having knelt upon the scaffold, the axe was uplifted over him. The traitor then behaved with so much humility as to disarm the suspicions of Dmitri; but his danger had only made him the more cautious; and, in reality, he directed the proceedings of the malcontents with as much authority as ever. To those who advised the generous czar not to spare a convicted traitor, his reply was—"I have

sworn not to shed Christian blood, and I will keep my oath. There are two ways of governing an empire—tyranny and generosity. I choose the latter. I will not be a tyrant. I will not spare money; I will scatter it on all hands."

Before the arrival of Marina from Poland, a new pretender to the throne made his appearance among the Cossacks of the Volga; and, assuming the name of Peter Feodorovitch, represented himself to be the son of the czar Feodor and his consort Irene. The clumsy tale he told was, that immediately after birth he had been taken from his mother, and placed with some Cossacks; while the female infant, which had been substituted at the command of Boris, died in its cradle. This statement found Cossacks simple enough to believe it; and a few thousand of them, having proclaimed Feodorovitch as the lawful czarevitch, abandoned themselves to the congenial occupation of plundering. Dmitri acted with a dignity befitting his presumed rank: he addressed a letter to the new pretender, saying, that if he would come to Moscow and prove his parentage, he should receive a pension suitable to his high birth; but that, if he knew himself to be an impostor, he had better retire at once, while he might do so with safety. The hint was taken, and Feodorovitch and his followers disappeared for the time among the barren wilds of the steppes.

Notwithstanding the impatience of the czar for the arrival of his bride, to whom he appears to have been sincerely attached, the nuptial journey, from Cracow to Moscow, was conducted with so much pomp and ceremony, that it extended over a period of three months. It was not until the 12th of May, 1606, that she made her public entry into the Russian capital. So numerous was her retinue, that the offended people compared it to an invading army; and such was the haughty bearing of the Poles, that they rather gave themselves the airs of victors than assumed the courteous bearing of guests. Consequently, amidst all the external demonstrations of loyalty and gladness, there was a deeply-seated and widely-spreading spirit of discontent. "Is it the custom in your country," said the jealous Muscovites to their armed and uninvited guests, "to go to a wedding cased in steel, as if you were going to a battle?" The feelings of the citizens grew more bitter when they beheld the Poles, who had come with the expectation of a campaign against the Tartars, unloading whole arsenals from their waggons. The conspirators turned this uneasiness to account. Mingling with the people, they spread a report that the czar had sent for the Polish allies for the purpose of massacring the orthodox Christians, and, by this terrible exhibition of his power, seat himself more firmly on the throne. The idle calumny was believed; a general though suppressed hatred to Dmitri followed; and even the grim passiveness of the people indicated the coming storm. A less unreasonable, though equally unfounded report was, that the real object of the Polish ambassadors who came in the equipage of the elect czarina, was to receive from the czar the cession of a considerable portion of Russian territory.

During the week that elapsed between the arrival of Marina and her marriage, her conduct was not of a kind to conciliate those among whom she had come to dwell. Though lodged in the convent occupied by the dowager-czarina, she could not, even for so brief a period, behave with the decorum which was considered due to the character of the place. She pettishly complained of the tiresome babble of the Greek priests, and the long litanies of the nuns. She induced the czar to bring her musicians, and the convent was profaned with concerts, balls, and masquerades. She would not even place any restraint upon her most frivolous caprices; and in this temper, insisted on having a set of Polish cooks instead of the Russian ones, as she protested she could not eat the food prepared by the latter. These circumstances were soon spread abroad, and added considerably to her unpopularity. Even so comparatively unimportant a thing as the rejection of the Russian cooks was converted into a religious question; and the offended people said, that the czar and his betrothed had brought in pagan cooks, that they might break the commands of the orthodox church with respect to forbidden meats and fast days. She also insisted in being married and crowned in a Polish dress, though no czarina ever went through those ceremonies except in the national costume, consisting of a head-dress, called *kokoshnik*, a gown hanging straight down from above the bosom, and boots with great iron-shod heels. Marina declared that she would never consent to be made such a fright of; but the affair was taken up so seriously, that it was brought

before the council for their decision. This was against the petulant girl, who was thus compelled to conform to the national usages for a single day.

The marriage and coronation took place on the 18th of May; but the czarina did not abjure the Romish form of Christianity, or the Latin heresy, as the Russians termed it, as they had fully expected her to do. The Poles, who were admitted into the cathedral on the occasion, excited great scandal by the levity of their behaviour. Some sat on tombs that contained revered relics, others laughed and talked aloud, and derided the ceremonies of the Greek church. Their intercourse with the Russians was altogether marked by great insolence and barbarity of manners. "It is we," said they to the citizens, "who have given you a czar." During the festivals that followed the marriage, the Poles often, while in a state of intoxication, drew their swords upon peaceful persons in the streets, and behaved with disgusting effrontery to their wives and daughters. Even the wives of the boyards suffered insults from them, and, on some occasions, were actually pursued to the doors of their husbands.

The chief conspirator, Schuisky, rightly conjectured that the fitting time for the execution of his villany had arrived. Secret meetings were held at his house, and immediate action resolved upon. Agents were chosen to go about among the people, and declare Dmitri an impostor and a heretic, and that the indiscriminate massacre of the people, to which we have alluded, was to take place on the 27th of the month. One fellow was arrested while spreading these reports; but his examination took place before some of the boyards who were in the conspiracy, and they informed the czar that the language of the prisoner was the incoherent raving of a drunkard. The unsuspecting czar believed a report which corresponded with his own impressions. He believed that his troops were attached to him, and that he was perfectly secure against any attempts to shake his power. Even the warnings of General Basmanof and the Polish officers were utterly disregarded by him. So far from deeming that danger was near, he seemed to think himself eminently secure. "I hold Moscow and the empire in my hand," he remarked, "and nothing shall be done in it but my will."

The insurrection began during the night of the 28th of May, only ten days after the ill-fated marriage which had drawn down on Dmitri his ruin. At daybreak on the following morning the whole city was in a savage tumult. In the great square, Prince Schuisky and a number of boyards were assembled on horseback, and arrayed in armour. The people, still further inflamed by the monks who mingled with them, were assembling in vast numbers, and, with barbarous shouts and cries, preparing to storm the Kremlin. Violence in this direction was needless; the guards within had been tampered with, and at a signal from Schuisky, one of the gates was thrown open. The armed boyards and their followers entered, followed by countless throngs of the people, bearing axes and clubs.

Rebellion, to be successful, must ever be associated with religion. In this case, the Russian prelates were among its chief instigators. The crafty Schuisky, however, resolved to avail himself of every advantage that might be derived by throwing the veil of religion over a deed which, in him at least, was selfish and criminal. Proceeding to the church of the Assumption, he leapt from his horse, and falling on his knees before an image of one of the saints, appeared for a few moments as if absorbed in prayer. Then rising suddenly, as if inspired, he brandished his sword with one hand, while he grasped the crucifix with the other, and shouted aloud, "Orthodox Christians, death to the heretic!" The shout was re-echoed by the people, accompanied by furious yells and discordant shouts of execration. At the same time the great bell of Moscow rung out a solemn note of alarm, which was responded to by all the church bells of the city.

At this signal, the people yet in the streets began to break into the houses of the Poles, and to massacre the inhabitants as they started from sleep in alarm. The czar, who was aroused by the sound of the bells, inquired the cause of the confusion. It happened that one of the conspirators was on duty at the palace, and he replied to his unsuspicious master, that a great fire had broken out in the city; and then hurried off to join his comrades. But the increasing uproar soon convinced Dmitri that something more serious than a fire had taken place. Having hastily dressed himself, he sent General Basmanof to ascertain the actual state of affairs. The latter beheld the outer court filled with an armed

and furious mob, who constantly yelled out "Death to the impostor! death to the heretic!" Commanding the halberdiers to stand to their arms, the faithful soldier hurried back to his prince. He was followed by one audacious conspirator into the apartment of the czar. "Well! unlucky emperor," exclaimed the fellow, "at last thou art awake. Come and give an account of thyself to the people of Moscow." Basmanof cleft the skull of the insolent ruffian; and then he and the czar prepared to cut their way through the rebels who were assembled around the peristyle of the palace. Dmitri slew several who assailed him, and appealed to others who had formerly been his adherents. Basmanof also vainly attempted to recall the conspirators to a sense of their duty. While thus engaged, one whom he had recently saved from banishment stabbed him to the heart, exclaiming, as he did so, "Go to hell, villain, with thy czar."

Dmitri and his guards were compelled to retire into the interior of the palace, where they barricaded themselves in chamber after chamber, as the latter successively yielded to the violence of the insurgents. When the last apartment was forced, and the guards compelled to surrender, it was discovered that the czar had escaped. The unfortunate man, hunted like a wolf, and seeing the hopelessness of resistance to the overwhelming multitudes of his howling pursuers, laid down his sword, and leaped from the window of a room in a retired part of the palace. It was thirty feet to the ground, and in the fall he broke his leg. No one was near; but the groans which agony elicited from Dmitri brought some soldiers to the spot. These men, who were not in the conspiracy, on recognising the czar, swore that they would defend him with their lives. The rebels soon found out the retreat of the miserable prince, and thronged tumultuously to the spot. They induced the guards to lay down their arms by a threat of slaughtering their wives and children unless they did so. Dmitri was then dragged back into the palace, which by this time had been sacked by the mob. His captors having torn off his royal garments, insultingly placed upon him the dress of a menial, and brought him before the assembled chief conspirators, to undergo the mockery of a trial. But the brutal impatience of these men defeated their object, and shortened the agony of their victim. "Bastard dog," said one of their number, "tell us who thou art, and whence thou art come?" Collecting his strength, the persecuted man replied, "You all know that I am your czar, the legitimate son of Ivan Vassilovitch. Ask my mother. If you desire my death, give me time at least to collect my senses." On this, one of the number, by rank a Russian gentleman, named Valuief, exclaimed passionately, "What is the use of so much talk with the heretic dog? This is the way I confess this Polish fifer!" As he thus spoke, the traitor shot Dmitri through the breast, and laid him a corpse upon the floor.

Not satisfied with this savage act, the conspirators abandoned the body to the mob, who exhibited their barbarous fury by hacking it with axes and sabres. Then rolling it down the palace steps, they threw it contemptuously upon that of his faithful general Basmanof. "You were friends in life," shouted the ruffians, in their savage exultation; "go along to hell together." The frenzy of the mob was not yet satisfied. Eventually, they carried the bodies to the place of execution, and exposed them upon a table. There one man placed a set of bagpipes on the breast of the murdered czar, and thrust the pipe into the mouth of the corpse, remarking, "You played upon us long enough; now play for us." Other brutes lashed the mangled body with their whips; while the women, in the exhibition of a frantic fury, even went beyond the obscene ferocity of the men.

The murder of Dmitri was followed by a frightful massacre of the Poles, who, wherever they were met, were slaughtered on the spot. Polish priests, musicians, domestics, and other defenceless persons, were murdered without mercy; but the nobles and their armed adherents barricaded themselves within their strong-built houses, and repelled their assailants with volleys of musketry. About mid-day the confusion abated, and Prince Schuisky and the chief boyards of the council rode through the streets, attended by a body of troops, and pacified the people. They also promised the Poles that their lives and property should be respected, provided they would remain within their houses until the popular excitement had subsided. Amongst those who escaped the slaughter was she whose wanton caprices had partly occasioned it. Marina, whose marriage festivities had terminated so tragically, eluded

the fury of the mob, who would probably have torn her limb from limb. When the insurgents first burst into the palace, she ran, in her night-dress only, to hide in the cellars. Unable to reach them on account of the mob, who fortunately did not recognise her, she returned to her own apartments. There she was for a time concealed by the grand-mistress of the palace, beneath the wide-hooped skirts of her dress, while the door was defended by a Polish chamberlain, sabre in hand. The door was at length shattered by a volley of musketry, which killed the Pole and one of the ladies of the czarina's suite. The ruffians then poured in and gratified their brutal appetites by subjecting the trembling women to the most insulting violence. Some of the chief conspirators entering the chamber, drove out the savages, and having detected Marina, placed her in secure custody.

The mangled body of Dmitri was exposed for three days, in the place of execution, to the gaze of the people. This was done that, at least, no doubt might exist as to his death. But the disgusting fury of the assassins had defeated their purpose. The corpse, bruised, mangled, and misshapen, covered with blood and dirt, bore but little resemblance to humanity. Certainly, no one could recognise in that shocking mass the handsome young man who, but a few days before, had been seen glittering with gold and jewels, and wearing on his open brow the imperial crown. As the disfigured features could not be identified, conjecture was speedily at work; and some of the people suggested that Dmitri had again escaped, and that some one else had fallen a victim by mistake. Some persons even said that the dead man had a beard; while it was well known that Dmitri had none. On the third night a blue flame was observed playing over the body, and this natural result of putrefaction inspired the people with a feeling of superstitious terror. The corpse was therefore buried in a cemetery beyond the city walls. As a hurricane blew when Dmitri entered Moscow, so another followed his mangled corpse out of it. It was reported that supernatural events followed even after the body had been placed in the grave; and the affrighted people whispered to each other, that the dead Dmitri was a vampire, or one of those wizards who, by means of hell-born arts, can rise at intervals from the grave, and resume the functions of life. This wild superstition was so generally believed, that the authorities caused the body to be exhumed and burnt. The ashes were then collected, mixed with gunpowder, rammed into a cannon, and fired down the road leading to Poland.

CHAPTER XIV.

PRINCE SCHUISKY IS PROCLAIMED CZAR; IT IS RUMOURED THAT DMITRI IS ALIVE; INSURRECTION IN HIS FAVOUR; SIEGE OF TOULA; APPEARANCE OF A SECOND FALSE DMITRI; MARINA ASSERTS HIM TO BE HER HUSBAND; THE KING OF POLAND INVADES RUSSIA, AND LAYS SIEGE TO SMOLENSK; SCHUISKY IS DEPOSED; MURDER OF THE PRETENDER DMITRI; AN INTERREGNUM; THE POLES COMPELLED TO ABANDON RUSSIA.

We now approach a period of anarchy and national danger. Russia was to pass through one of those fiery ordeals in which nations are sometimes extinguished; while at others they emerge from them endued with a renewed strength and a better life. The overjoyed Muscovites neglected to proceed at once to the election of a new sovereign: for several days they were entirely occupied in celebrating their brutal triumph. The ambitious Prince Schuisky then directed his adherents to proclaim him as the czar—a result with which bribes and intimidations induced the council to comply. Immediately upon his assumption of the regal authority, Schuisky took an oath not to punish any one without the advice and consent of the boyards; not to visit the offences of the fathers on the children; and never to revenge himself in any way on those who had offended him during preceding reigns. Dreading the anger of the Poles, Schuisky also sent an ambassador to Sigismund III., with directions to represent the late czar as

an impostor, who had deceived both Poland and Russia. But Sigismund had determined to revenge the recent slaughter of his subjects at Moscow, and he would not even permit the ambassador to approach him.

By his irregular assumption of the crown, Schuisky had taken both the Russian people and nobles by surprise. He had never been popular with the latter, who now felt that they had merely been used as steps to enable him to ascend the throne. They felt that, had the people been allowed to elect a czar for themselves, they might have competed with him for that illustrious position. The new sovereign also, despite the oath he had taken, was unable to conceal his dislike to old opponents; and he showed that he was ready to become a tyrant as soon as he could assume a despotic bearing with safety. Like many other utterly worthless persons, Schuisky affected a great devotion to orthodox religion, and he made large promises to the clergy, by which means he obtained their support; but this did not balance the indifference, if not dislike, of the people, and the bitter animosity of the nobles. The latter actively disseminated their feelings of antipathy to the czar, which soon became almost universal throughout the country; and he who had been the chief of the late conspiracy, appeared likely to become the victim of a new one. So fleeting is popular favour, so rapid its reactionary power!

Credulity and ignorance are natural, and indeed inseparable, companions. In the unsettled state of society which now existed in Russia, the people were disposed to credit the wildest assertions, and the nobles to encourage any reports which threatened to endanger the throne of the czar, whom they hated and burned to depose. It might be supposed that the last had been heard of Dmitri, and that the memory of that unfortunate pretender was soon to be engulfed in oblivion. Had he survived the insurrection, it would be supposed that death would be the penalty of his making himself known. Such does not seem to be the case; for rumours that Dmitri was still living were received with avidity and satisfaction. Many denied that the mangled body exposed in the place of execution was that of the late czar, and affirmed it to be the corpse of an officer who had been accidentally murdered instead of him by mistake. Some swift horses were missed from the royal stable, from whence they had no doubt been stolen by the mob; but it was supposed that Dmitri, by means of them, had escaped during the tumult of the insurrection. Three strangers in Russian attire, but speaking the Polish language, crossed the Oka in a boat; and one of them gave the ferryman six ducats, observing, as he did so, "You have ferried the czar; when he comes back to Moscow with a Polish army, he will not forget this service." Similar language was held by the same party at an inn in the direction of Putivle. It was eventually ascertained that one of them was Prince Shakhofskoi, who, upon the death of Dmitri, had, in anticipation of a revolution of popular feeling, immediately conceived the idea of finding a new impostor to personate the dead one—a device which might, perhaps, enable the prince to place a creature of his own upon the throne.

The incompetent Schuisky held the sceptre with so feeble a grasp, that the laws were openly violated, and confusion prevailed throughout the empire. The nobles, who regarded the new czar not only with feelings of anger and jealousy, but considered him also as a political trickster, pretended to believe the rumours concerning Dmitri, with the hope that they might yet be able to dethrone Schuisky, and set up some puppet in his stead, whom they would permit to reign until they had come to a better understanding amongst themselves.

The startled czar devised a plan which, he trusted, would at once silence these idle but dangerous reports. He had the grave of the real Prince Dmitri, at Uglitch, opened, and the body of the unfortunate boy removed to Moscow, and canonised by the patriarch. It was remarked that the corpse, though it had lain in the grave for fifteen years, was in a state of perfect preservation; that the hue of life was upon it; and that, in its hands, it held some nuts—an incident which seemed inconsistent with the received details of the boy's death. This circumstance eventually led to the no doubt calumnious report, that Schuisky had substituted the body of a newly-murdered boy for that of the decomposed Dmitri. For the present, however, it was reported that miracles were performed by the remains of the martyred prince; but these gross inventions took no root in the belief of the people, and were soon disregarded. Another proceeding of the czar would probably have had considerable effect, if his conduct had

not been such as to destroy his character for truth and honour. He obtained from the czarina (the widow of Ivan), a declaration that the impostor Gregory Otrepief, the late czar, had threatened to put her and all her family to death, unless she acknowledged him as her son; so that she had merely supported his false claims for the sake of saving her life. She was not believed; but it was assumed that she acted under intimidation rather on this occasion than on the former one.

A popular belief in the existence of Dmitri still existed, and an insurrection was actually got up in the cause of a phantom. Of this, Prince Shakhofskoi was the chief mover. He excited the inhabitants of Putivle to rise in arms; and, with the assistance of a body of Cossacks and peasants, successfully resisted the forces which Schuisky sent against them. Though this success wonderfully increased the numbers of the insurgents, still no czar Dmitri made his appearance to lead them. Notwithstanding this, one Ivan Bolotnikof arrived from Poland with a commission, bearing, he asserted, the imperial seal of Dmitri, and conferring on the bearer the command of the insurgent forces. This adventurer had been a serf, who had suffered imprisonment amongst the Turks, and, having escaped from them to Venice, had acquired some military knowledge in the service of the republic. His commission was recognised; he was installed in the command; and, shortly afterwards, twice defeated the forces of the incompetent czar. But the non-appearance of the supposed living Dmitri damped the ardour of the rebels, and many of them deserted from the visionary cause, which they began to feel they had too readily embraced. In consequence of this defection, Bolotnikof was defeated by Skopin Schuisky, the nephew of the czar, and compelled to take shelter in the fortress of Kaluga.

Prince Shakhofskoi appears to have been unable, during this period, to meet with any unprincipled person, suited by nature and education, to personate the murdered czar Dmitri. Under these circumstances, the impostor, who had taken the name of Peter Feodorovitch, and assumed to be the son of the czar Feodor and his consort Irene, made his appearance at Putivle, and offered himself to Shakhofskoi and the people as regent, during the absence of his uncle. Under other circumstances, the audacious adventurer would probably have been put to death for his traitorous and insolent pretensions; but as the rebels were terribly in want of some colouring for their conduct, any royal name was acceptable. The offer was received, and the assumed czarevitch, Peter, welcomed with acclamations.

The czar Schuisky resolved to make a decisive effort to crush a rebellion which distracted the empire and poisoned his peace of mind. Collecting an army of 100,000 men, he took the field in person, and besieged the rebel chiefs in the strongly-fortified town of Toula, where they had taken refuge. The rebels, despairing of pardon if they were defeated, fought with a reckless fury which drove their assailants to a respectful distance, and prevented Schuisky from being able to take the place. The czar began to despair of success, when one day a priest, named Kravkof, presented himself before the council, and said he would communicate a plan which, if followed, would drown both the inhabitants and garrison of Toula. On being desired to explain himself, he called their attention to the fact that Toula is situated in a valley, and that the little river Cupa ran through the town. This river he ingeniously proposed to dam up below the town; and he pledged himself that, within a few hours after that operation, it would be under water. The scheme was adopted, and a bank of earth raised across the stream. The project, though partially successful, was not entirely so. An inundation which did much mischief was produced, but the water did not rise in the town to such a height as to destroy the lives of the inhabitants. Still the garrison held out manfully, though suffering from famine and a severe epidemic. Besiegers and besieged laboured incessantly at the dam; the first to maintain it, and the latter to break it down. The superstitious inhabitants believed it could not have been raised without the assistance of magical power, and they attempted to resort to the same supernatural means for its destruction. Wizards and exorcists are, in barbarous times, soon found when they are wanted; and it is well known that men have actually believed themselves to be possessed by the spirit of concentrated evil, or to have power over him. A monk of Toula presented himself before the rebel chiefs, and boasted that he possessed the power of controlling the agents of darkness. He made the somewhat suspicious offer of overthrowing the infernal schemes of the enemy

on consideration of a reward of a hundred roubles. His proposal was accepted, and, stripping off his clothes, he plunged into the swollen river, and was lost to sight. As some time passed without his reappearance, he was given up for dead. After the lapse of an hour, however, he rose to the surface, with his body covered with scratches. These he accounted for by saying, "I have just had to do with the twelve thousand devils at work on Schuisky's dam. I have settled six thousand of them, but the others are the worst of all, and will not give in."

The garrison and inhabitants of Toula still held bravely out, despite the inundation, and the terrible effects of famine, which were felt more severely every day. Rumours that Dmitri was coming to their assistance with an army, supported and sustained them; but it is needless to say, that he did not make his appearance. Yet such was the indomitable spirit of the Cossacks, that when Prince Shakhofskoi, the principal conspirator, proposed to capitulate, they indignantly thrust him into a dungeon. At length, all the horses, dogs, and carrion of the town were consumed, and the hour of inevitable submission approached. The town was surrendered to the czar on condition of an amnesty being granted to the garrison and inhabitants; but the leaders of the insurrection were not included in this act of grace. Bolotnikof, though a rebel, was at the least a brave man, and such a one as a generous sovereign would have pardoned. He approached the czar with an undaunted air, and presenting his sword with the edge turned towards his neck, said—"I have kept the oath I swore to him who, rightfully or wrongfully, calls himself Dmitri. Deserted by him, I am in thy power. Cut off my head if thou wilt; or if thou wilt spare my life, I will serve thee as faithfully as I served him." This manly appeal did not affect Schuisky. He sent the bold rebel to a distant prison, where he was soon after put to death. As to the impostor Peter Feodorovitch, Schuisky caused him to be hanged at once; but Shakhofskoi, whom he found in a dungeon, had the address to obtain his liberty, by persuading the czar that he had been so treated in consequence of an attempt to induce the rebels to return to their allegiance.

While Schuisky was engaged in the attempt to crush rebellion at Toula, it appeared in a more dangerous form elsewhere. A new impostor arose in the frontier town of Starodub, and boldly proclaimed himself to be the czar Dmitri. The audacity of the attempt was remarkable; for the new speculator, in a game where the stakes were a crown or the scaffold, did not bear any resemblance to the unfortunate man whose name he assumed. Dmitri was at least a prince in his appearance, manners, and education; but the new candidate for a sceptre or a grave was a vulgar and ignorant fellow, whose numerous deficiencies for the part he assumed to play, were supplied only by a daring effrontery. The original position of the man was a humble one, though some doubt exists as to its exact nature. Some writers aver that he was a Russian schoolmaster; others, that he was a Polish Jew, named Michael Moltchanof.

Such was the unsettled state of the country, the knavery of some of the people, and the credulity of others, that the new twice-murdered Dmitri not only obtained numerous adherents, but was even received with enthusiasm. Zurucki, a Polish adventurer, who had become a leader of the Cossacks of the Don, and had won distinction in the service of the first Dmitri, entered that of the new pretender, and impudently declared that he recognised him as the late czar. Miechawiecki, another Pole, who had held a distinguished position in the court of the first Dmitri, also affected to recognise his master in the new intriguant. Indeed, the latter was secretly instructed by Miechawiecki in the details connected with his assumed character.

Dmitri—as, for the purpose of avoiding circumlocution, we shall call the new impostor—grew rapidly in popularity and in strength. He defeated a considerable force sent against him by the czar, and advanced as far as the town of Kozelsk, on the road to the capital; though he was compelled to retire when Schuisky had made himself master of Toula. Still adherents flocked to the adventurer; and many Polish officers of distinction joined his standard, together with large bodies of their countrymen. Amongst them was Prince Adam Wiszinowiecki, who brought with him 2,000 armed horsemen. This unprincipled noble knew at a glance that the new pretender was not the Dmitri whom he had been the first to assist; still he countenanced the deception, in the hope of being able to place a puppet of his countrymen on the throne of Russia.

Schuisky directed his forces against his new antagonist; and in the month of April, 1608, they were defeated, with great slaughter, by those of the pretender, near the banks of the Volkhof. The routed forces of the czar fled in disorder to Moscow; and the capital itself was in danger of falling into the hands of Dmitri and his followers. It had been suggested, that the Polish leaders were not disposed to bring the war to a speedy conclusion. Whatever was the cause, they halted about twelve versts from Moscow, at the village of Tushino, where Dmitri established both his camp and court. From this circumstance, his opponents gave him the name of "the Robber of Tushino."

We mentioned that Marina, the young wife of the czar Dmitri, had escaped the massacre that accompanied the insurrection to which her husband fell a victim. She and her father, the Palatine Sandomir, had, since that period, been kept in confinement by Schuisky, who now thought it politic to liberate them; only exacting a pledge that they would not bear arms against Russia, or favour the new pretender. He then allowed them to depart, under the protection of a small escort. It was intercepted by a body of Poles from Tushino, who brought to the disgraced czarina and her father a letter from the assumed Dmitri. "Come," said the document, "both of you to me, instead of going into Poland to hide yourselves from the world's scorn." No doubt little choice was left to the humbled girl and her father, as they were in effect prisoners to the band who had crossed their path; but they went without much unwillingness to pay a visit to "the Robber." Marina, frivolous and wanton, longing for the pleasures which she associated with the enjoyment of royalty, and burning for revenge upon those who had murdered her husband and hurled her from splendour to desolation, was willing even to acknowledge a vulgar impostor to be her husband, and to share the bed of one who might, perhaps, be able to replace the imperial diadem upon her brow. On being brought into the presence of the man whom she was to acknowledge as the husband to whom he bore no resemblance, the natural womanly emotions of Marina made her recoil from so impudent a deception. What delicacy she possessed rose within in insurrection against the abandoned part she was playing. It was a painful thing at once to lay aside her modesty, and to become, morally speaking, a harlot, though the reward for her offence might be grandeur and revenge. But she had made her choice; and, at a second interview, she publicly embraced the impostor as her husband, and apologised for her former coldness, which she said arose only from a doubt that what she beheld was perhaps but a delusion, and that she could not at once believe her dear Dmitri to be alive again.

This recognition of the adventurer by Marina greatly assisted his cause. The people reasoned that it was not possible that a wife could be deceived as to the identity of her husband; and as they were not disposed to suspect her of falsehood, they concluded that the present Dmitri was, indeed, the czar. But the chief strength of the pretender lay in his Polish adherents, who were disliked by the Russians, and divided amongst themselves. Such was the jealous feeling with which their commanders regarded each other, that it became necessary to resort to the dangerous expedient of separating them. Dmitri sent Sapieha with a force, amounting to 30,000 men and sixty cannon, to reduce the monastery and fortress of the Trinity, near Moscow. This place conferred a considerable moral support or sanction to whoever held it. The monks adhered to Schuisky; and so valuable was their aid in influencing the loyalty of the people, that it was considered the loss of the monastery would go far towards promoting his ruin.

Sapieha and his Poles were, notwithstanding their numerical force, unable to take the monastery. Subjected to harassing attacks from the surrounding peasantry, they were at length defeated in a sanguinary engagement, and compelled to retire for shelter within the walls of Dmitrof. Skopin Schuisky and James de la Gardie, assisted by 5,000 Swedish auxiliaries, had taken the field for the czar in the spring of 1609, and gained many successes, by which the aspect of the war was changed. It was Skopin who defeated Sapieha; but the jealousy of the czar induced him to recall his brave relative to the capital, where, two months afterwards, he died suddenly—a circumstance which brought upon Schuisky the odium of having poisoned him.

The King of Poland, though he had deferred his design of revenge for the massacre of his subjects at Moscow, had not abandoned it. In September, 1609, Sigismund, having

declared war, entered Russia with a small army, and laid siege to the important town of Smolensk. Most of the Poles who had hitherto followed Dmitri, obeyed the command of their sovereign, and flocked to his standard—a circumstance which reduced the pretender to great distress and danger, though he yet held possession of Kaluga, Toula, and other places.

Amidst all this confusion and crash of selfish interests, the country was falling into a distracted state. Governed by a powerless czar, torn by an unprincipled and factious nobility, furrowed by the tracks of opposing armies, it naturally followed that commerce was oppressed, civilisation driven back, and the coherence of the empire itself endangered. Those calamities also arose which are ever found in a disordered state. Bands of Polish mercenaries offered their services to the highest bidder, and lived upon plunder, until they were hired to slay their fellowmen for any reason whatever. A powerful and worthless Russian noble, Procope Liapunof, also indulged his appetite for blood and plunder at the expense of his suffering country. Having no valid claim to put forward, he assumed to be greatly interested in religion, and proclaimed himself the defender of the faith: his pretensions were of little importance; but what he did was to carry on a war of extermination against the adherents of either Schuisky or Dmitri. This necessarily placed him in a hostile position towards the great mass of the people; and such was the brutality of his nature, that a Russian chronicler applied to him the remark which had been in past times made use of concerning Attila: "No grass grew where his horse's hoof had trod."

During the seven years that the unprincipled and incompetent Schuisky occupied the throne, Russia was a prey to desolating anarchy and civil war. Ill-fortune almost constantly attended the proceedings of this poor shadow of an imperial ruler. An army of nearly 60,000 men, consisting partly of Swiss mercenaries, whom he sent to the relief of Smolensk, was disgracefully defeated at Tushino by the veteran Polish general Zolkiewski, at the head of a very small army of his countrymen.

Smolensk surrendered to Sigismund: the power of the czar Schuisky had been annihilated by the Poles, who, led by Zolkiewski, directed their march upon the capital, where the people were in a state of insurrection. The fortunes of the pretended Dmitri were thus again raised from the dust, for the Poles advocated his cause, and claimed for him the Russian sceptre. The citizens of Moscow, finding the Polish army thundering at their gates, were thrown into a state of consternation. In this position they resorted to cunning, and rested their hope of escape from destruction in an attempt to create division between Dmitri and the Poles. They accordingly opened their gates to the latter; and, delivering their czar Schuisky and his two brothers to Zolkiewski, professed their willingness to place Uladislas, or Ladislas, the son of Sigismund, the Polish king, upon the throne of Russia. The offer was accepted, and the prince proclaimed. The deposed Schuisky, fearing that assassination might follow on his fall from power, obtained permission to retire into a monastery. The Poles, however, did not long leave him even in this obscure retreat. As a punishment for the indignities he had heaped upon the husband of Marina, they threw him into a prison, where he lingered out the remainder of his worthless life.

The pretended Dmitri was scarcely more fortunate. The Poles abandoned his cause when Uladislas was proclaimed czar of Russia, and the adventurer then became little better than a robber and a public pest. Having lost all hope of ascending the throne of Moscow, he kept up his camp at Kaluga, surrounded by ferocious gangs of Cossacks and Tartars, who obtained their support by plundering the neighbouring country. At length he was murdered by a Tartar chieftain, in revenge for having taken the life of one of the countrymen of the latter. Shortly after the death of the impostor, Marina became the mother of a son, to whom the followers of the late Dmitri swore allegiance. That poor infant, however, was not to become a brand of discord in the country of its birth; its little life was soon to be tragically extinguished.

After the deposition of Schuisky, Russia had, in fact, no ruler, and an interregnum existed. Pretenders arose almost daily, and disappeared with as much rapidity; the Russian nobles abandoned themselves to the most grasping avarice; universal disorder prevailed; and the empire was swayed by an incessant fluctuation of names and authorities. Not only Poland, but Sweden, also, aimed at becoming masters of this immense territory. The son of the Polish sovereign had been proclaimed,

and even invited to Moscow to assume the imperial dignity. But here a difficulty arose: a condition had been made, that before Uladislas could ascend the Russian throne, he should adopt the Greek form of Christianity. Sigismund, though he had agreed to this condition, was not disposed to fulfil it. He first hesitated, and then refused. His motives might have been conscientious ones; but it is said that he repented having nominated his son to the sovereignty of Russia, instead of having secured the crown of the northern empire for himself. Whatever was the cause, his vacillation was fatal to his ambition. Zolkiewski, incensed at the conduct of his master, and still more so that he could not obtain money for the payment of his troops, returned in disgust to Poland, leaving his countrymen in Moscow under the command of a leader of little or no military talent.

The people of Moscow now began to reflect upon their conduct in reference to recent events. They saw that their nationality was at stake: a revulsion of feeling took place; and a sense of something approaching to patriotism sprung up amongst them. Was Russia to remain a powerful empire, or become a dependency of the comparatively little kingdom of Poland? No less a question was now to be decided. Moreover, its religion was at stake; for the Russians soon began to perceive, that after the election of a catholic czar, there was no security for the Greek religion. This reflection decided the clergy; who, as if roused from a strange slumber, devoted themselves with untiring energy to arousing the national feelings of the people. At the call of the patriarch Hermogenes, they armed themselves and rose in hostility against the Polish garrisons. A furious contest followed, and great slaughter took place on both sides. After burning down a considerable part of Moscow, the Poles took refuge within the Kremlin. There, encompassed by the walls of this old heart of the empire, which the Russians deemed polluted by the presence of foreign intruders, the Poles were besieged by three armies from the Russian provinces. Of these, the only really formidable one was that led by Procope Liapunof—the turbulent noble who had hitherto plundered and slaughtered both Poles and Russians alike, in the name of religion, of which he assumed himself to be the defender. But this human nuisance was assassinated, and his disheartened followers dispersed. Still the siege of the Kremlin was maintained, though the country generally seemed abandoned to irretrievable confusion, and almost inevitable partition. Kasan and Viatka proclaimed the infant son of Marina as their sovereign; the citizens of Novgorod, out of hatred to the Poles, offered the crown to Charles Philip, the second son of the reigning king of Sweden; while at Pleskof, another impostor arose, and calling himself Dmitri, claimed the Russian sceptre: the knavery of this fellow, however, soon became apparent: he was identified as a fugitive monk; and after adding for a while to the distraction of his country, met the fate he deserved, and was hanged.

But in the career of nations, as in that of men, the hour of the blackest darkness is commonly followed by that of the gray streaks of dawn; the time of the severest danger and most painful trial, by one of at least tranquillity and repose. Thus, when the fate of the empire seemed doomed, there arose a man of the people, who, influenced by a powerful sense of patriotism, succeeded in reviving the drooping energies of his countrymen, aroused their nationality, and induced them to unite their efforts. Once again the cry rang throughout the land, of "Russia for the Russians." This man, Kozma Minin, was merely a butcher; but his unselfish energy obtained him so much popularity, that he was called "the Elect of the whole Russian empire." Through his exertions, a Russian army, under Prince Pojarski, took the field, dislodged the Poles from the Kremlin, and, after a severe struggle, forced them to abandon the empire. The Polish monarch now saw the mistake he had made, and was willing that his son should adopt the Greek faith, so that he might rule the great empire of the north. It was too late; the Russians were now thoroughly aroused, and they treated his offers to that effect with disdain. Sigismund would have renewed the conflict, and endeavoured to force the Russians to submit to his wishes; but his own subjects were not disposed to enter into another war, and he was very unwillingly forced to submit, at least for a time, to a state of things which he could not avert.

CHAPTER XV.

ASSEMBLY OF DEPUTIES TO ELECT A NEW CZAR; THE ROMANOFF FAMILY; MICHAEL ROMANOFF ELECTED AS CZAR; AN OATH LIMITING HIS AUTHORITY IS REQUIRED FROM HIM; THE SETTLING DOWN OF THE ELEMENTS OF DISCORD; UNSUCCESSFUL WARS WITH SWEDEN AND POLAND; MICHAEL CONFERS THE DIGNITY OF PATRIARCH UPON HIS FATHER, AND SHARES THE GOVERNMENT WITH HIM; CHARACTER AND DEATH OF MICHAEL.

The seven years of discord which had prevailed in Russia were drawing to a close. The expulsion of the Poles left the nation at liberty to proceed as it pleased with respect to the formation of a government. Anarchy, and the misery which ever attends it, had exerted a purifying influence upon the nobles and people; and the emotion of patriotism obtained that sway over them which it commonly has over all civilised states. It has been observed, that the Russians "felt that the last spring of hope was within themselves. That it was worse than fruitless to place any trust in the protection and fosterage of neighbouring states, who only made their necessities an excuse for preying upon the last fragments of their means; and that security for life or property could not be obtained through any other measure than the establishment of the sovereignty in the person of some man who should combine the qualities of the statesman with that loftiness of character which should elevate him above the reach of faction."

Rulers of this kind are at all times desirable; but they are not commonly to be found. It is not likely that the vicious nobility of Russia could furnish one. But the attempt must be made; and in the month of November, 1612, the boyards of the council summoned the inhabitants of every town throughout the empire immediately to send deputies to Moscow, to meet in national council, and proceed to the election of a new czar. To render the occasion the more solemn, and also with the object of obtaining the blessing of heaven upon it, a national fast of three days was proclaimed, and most rigorously observed.

The election took place during Lent, in the year 1613; but the new czar had previously been chosen. Two of the ancient princes of Russia declined to put forward any claim for a crown, the possession of which would probably expose them to the jealous animosity of their peers. Few others were able to obtain the confidence of the people; while it was useless for any candidate to start from the ranks of the latter, as the nobility would have instantly combined to dethrone him, on account of the humility of his origin. After much debate and hesitation, the name of Michael Romanoff was generally pronounced as the person to whom the destinies of his country were to be entrusted.

This Romanoff was a youth only, in his seventeenth year; and the election by the people of such a person did not, as Voltaire has observed, seem to be the surest way of putting an end to their troubles. His fitness for the distinguished position of ruler of the Russian empire was somewhat of a negative character, and consisted largely of his not being obnoxious to the nobility, and less likely, therefore, to excite their jealousy. At the same time it must be remarked, that he came of a family which enjoyed the confidence of the people, and of a father who was generally esteemed by them. On the female side the Romanoffs were distantly related to the extinct dynasty of Ruric. Michael was himself too young to have any strongly-marked character, or to be at all known to the people; but great reliance was placed on his father Philaretes, who had inflexibly asserted the independence of the empire under the least hopeful aspects. One circumstance might have militated against the general feeling in favour of the young Michael. The family was not of a Russian stock. Its founder is said to have been an obscure Prussian, who settled in Russia about 1350; but, for two centuries and a-half, all who bore the name had been distinguished for public virtue, national zeal, and brilliant achievements. At the time of the election, Philaretes was a captive in Poland; for he was one of several ambassadors whom Sigismund, regardless of the generous fiction which deems the persons of such officers to be sacred, had carried away with him when he abandoned Russia.

Though Philaretes contrived to communicate with the council of the boyards, and use his influence in the election, it is said that he had no idea the imperial honour would be conferred upon his son.

The day of election came, and the choice fell upon Michael Romanoff. His name was received with acclamation, and he was chosen by the unanimous voice of the assembly. Certain conditions considered requisite were fulfilled in him. "There were but three surviving members in his family," says Strahlenberg; "he had not been implicated in the preceding troubles; his father was an ecclesiastic, and in consequence, naturally more disposed to secure peace and union, than to mix himself up in turbulent projects."

Michael Romanoff was unwilling to accept the crown; he remembered the fate of Boris, Dmitri, and Schuisky, and declined the offered dignity. He had lived in strict retirement with his mother; and that lady, on the arrival of the deputies, entreated them, with tears in her eyes, to spare her son the intended distinction. Decisions of this kind are, however, seldom persevered in; and upon the repetition of the offer, it was accepted. While the power was yet in the hands of the people, they wisely resolved to obtain some recognition from the newly-elected czar, of the *duties* as well as of the right of his exalted position—some guarantee, or at least solemn promise, that he would not abuse the sacred trust reposed in him. With this object, they proposed to him the following oath, which, as it placed a rational limitation on the hitherto absolute power of the czar, would, if rigidly observed, have transformed the government from a despotism to something resembling what in England we call a constitutional government. The oath which was proposed to, and accepted by Michael, ran thus:—"That he would protect religion; that he would pardon and forget all that had been done to his father; that he would make no new laws, nor alter the old, unless circumstances imperatively required it; and that, in important causes, he would decide nothing by himself, but that the existing laws, and the usual forms of trial, should remain in force; that he would not at his own pleasure make either war or peace with his neighbours; and that, to avoid all suits with individuals, he would resign his estates to his family, or incorporate them with the crown domains."

The throne which the young czar ascended had been stripped of much of its power and magnificence. A Russian writer thus describes the internal condition of his country at this period:—"Bands of Cossacks, from the Don and the Zaporogues, and whole divisions of Poles and Tartars, ravaged the villages and the convents that were still entire, where there were hopes of finding booty. The country was wasted, soldiers were dying of hunger, the land-tax was no longer collected, and not a kopeck was in the treasury. The state jewels, crowns of great price, sceptres, precious stones, vases—all had been plundered and carried into Poland. The young prince was surrounded by persons belonging to twenty different factions. There were to be found the friends of Godunof, the defenders of Schuisky, the companions of Uladislas, and even partisans of the brigand of Tushino; in a word, men professing the most various opinions and aims, but all equally ambitious, and incapable of yielding the smallest point as regarded precedence. The lower class, irritated by ten years of misery, were become habituated to anarchy; and it was not without difficulty, and resistance on their part, that they were reduced to obedience."

Notwithstanding these deplorable and trying circumstances, the young czar was successful in restoring tranquillity to the country; or perhaps it would be more correct to say, that his election having silenced all other claims, tranquillity naturally succeeded to a state which bordered upon exhaustion. Michael himself was not, even in mature life, the sort of man to rule the storm, and awe the turbulent into submission.

Michael Romanoff had soon to contend against a formidable foreign foe. This was Gustavus Adolphus, the young king of Sweden, who afterwards, by his holy struggle of thirty years in favour of religious liberty, obtained the honourable title of "the Lion of the North, and the Bulwark of the Protestant Faith." Gustavus was one of the most just and honourable men that ever wore a crown; and his proceeding against Russia did not arise from any attempt to profit by its misfortunes. The war arose chiefly from the dishonesty of the Russians, who refused to repay to Sweden a sum of money advanced to her in a period of distress. Gustavus was greatly offended at this dishonesty; and leading a powerful army across the Russian frontier, he took

possession of the province of Ingria. This success was followed by others, remarkable alike for their rapidity and brilliancy. They brought Gustavus, however, little else than reputation; and in the year 1617, peace was restored between Sweden and Russia. The latter country purchased the cessation of hostilities at a heavy price. She was compelled to submit to the cession of Ingria and Karelia, and once again to give up Esthonia and Livonia. Though dishonesty oftener succeeds with nations than with individuals, it sometimes, as in the present case, meets with the punishment it deserves.

The year before peace was concluded with Sweden, the frivolous and unhappy Marina, the widow of the two Dmitris, closed her chequered and restless career. Influenced, probably more by a mother's affection than by personal ambition, she contrived to get up an insurrection in favour of her infant child, the son of the "Robber of Tushino," whom she announced to be the true heir to the throne. Schemes of this kind had had their day; they were now almost worthless, for popular credulity no longer ran in the direction of resuscitating murdered princes, or finding new and suspicious claimants to the throne. The people did not second the mad attempt, and the chief conspirators were seized. No mercy was shown to them. Zurucki, the leader of the insurrection, was impaled; Marina thrown into a prison, where she was eventually murdered; and her child, the poor infant, who was but three years old, hanged or strangled! Such a circumstance is painful and revolting; but it must be recollected that we are speaking of a semi-barbarous people, in an age altogether barbarous.

Sigismund, the king of Poland, was unable long to acquiesce in the recent decision of the nobles and people of Russia; and he still cast longing glances towards the throne he had lost by his irresolution and equivocal conduct. He therefore, in 1617, sent his son, Prince Uladislas, across the Russian frontiers with an army. The latter penetrated even to the walls of Moscow, but obtained no satisfactory results. In fact, the struggle was soon discovered to be profitless and exhausting to both sides; and, after many Poles and Russians had perished by the sword, and more by the severity of the weather, an armistice was entered into on the 1st of December, 1618. It was to last for fourteen years, and was accepted by each nation as a present necessity, which they intended to disregard as soon as they had the power to do so without involving too heavy a sacrifice. In this instance, also, Russia purchased peace at the price of territory; for she abandoned Smolensk and several other towns to the enemy, not, however, without a secret intention of getting them back again on the first favourable opportunity.

On the conclusion of peace with Poland, Philaretes, the father of the young czar Michael, was restored to liberty, and returned to his native land. He arrived at Moscow in June, 1619, and was immediately raised by his son to the office of patriarch, which had been vacant for several years. The affection of the czar even led him to associate his father with him in the government, and divide with the venerable pontiff the dignity of the sceptre. Henceforth his ukases, or imperial edicts, were headed—"Michael Feodorovitch, sovereign, czar, and grand prince of all the Russias, and his father Philaretes, mighty lord, and most holy patriarch of all the Russias, &c." Such, indeed, was the influence of the father, that he sometimes issued ukases in his own name alone; and the power he exercised was more absolute than that of his son. At solemn audiences he sat on the right-hand of the czar, and all foreign ambassadors were specially presented to him. He held his own court, and raised the patriarchate to such a height of power and splendour, as to cause it, in after-times, to excite the jealousy of Peter the Great, who consequently abolished it. Fortunately, the vast influence of Philaretes was exercised for good; and to him is attributed the endurance of the tranquillity which prevailed during the reign of his son. He appears, indeed, to have been a very estimable character; and he revived that feeble civilisation which discord had almost extirpated from the land. Among many other useful labours, he re-established a printing-press at Moscow, and had the satisfaction of seeing many copies of the Liturgy issued from it.

The czar himself appears to have had neither a large amount of mind or principle. It was dishonesty which brought upon him a chastisement from Sweden; and he now resorted to some equivocal conduct towards Poland. The amnesty with that nation was approaching a termination, and Michael busied himself in collecting a powerful army, that he might imme-

diately, upon its expiration, reconquer the provinces he had been compelled to cede to Sigismund. That monarch had been succeeded by his son Uladislas; and Michael, taking advantage of the disorders attending the installation of the new sovereign, commenced hostilities even before the close of the armistice, on the pettifogging pretext that he had entered into it with Sigismund, and not with his successor. This vile quibble, unworthy of a monarch of any position, again brought punishment and disgrace upon its inventor.

Uladislas, though surrounded by difficulties, and at a loss both for money and troops, was an able soldier, and the idol of his people. Seconded by the declared wish of his council, he took the field against the Russians, who, after several destructive incursions into his territories, were engaged in the military investment of Smolensk, preparatory to laying siege to it. The Russian army of 50,000 men was under the command of a general named Michael Sekin, who had earned a reputation in the field for promptness, activity and courage. These qualities seemed at length to have deserted him. Having remained in complete inaction for two whole years, encamped within sight of Smolensk, he fled before the far inferior force of Uladislas. Sekin took refuge in an intrenched camp within the depths of the neighbouring forests; but there he was pursued by the Polish king. The Russians resisted their assailants for five months, and trusted to the extreme severity of the winter to rid them of the Poles. The ranks of the latter were rapidly thinned by the bitterness of the weather. The soldiers, however, were nerved to endurance by the heroism and self-denial of their king, who took up his abode in a wretched hut, and submitted to the same privations as those endured by the meanest of his followers. Sekin at length, not daring to encounter his hardy enemies, submitted; and surrendering his camp to Uladislas, purchased safety by entering into an engagement not to take any further part in the war. For this unsoldierly behaviour, Sekin and several of his officers were brought to account, and suffered the punishment of decapitation.

The beheading of a few unsuccessful or timid soldiers, did not bring Russia any nearer to a triumph over her foes. The Poles proceeded in their energetic course, and took possession of many places, of which Viazma was the most considerable. The czar Michael was alarmed; for he feared a descent upon Moscow, and the probable loss of his capital, and perhaps of his throne. He therefore resolved to shuffle out of this war, into which he had been so dishonestly eager to enter. He had sufficient cause; for the Russian troops were not a match for those of Poland, of whom they stood in awe: consequently, all the victory was upon one side, and the sufferance upon the other—a distribution of matters extremely unsatisfactory to the weaker party. So Michael sued to Uladislas for peace, which the latter only granted at the price of the cession of a large extent of territory. The Polish monarch was, on his part, to renounce all claims upon the throne of Russia, and to return the diploma of election which had been sent to him: but as he thought the latter might, some time or other, be useful, he pretended it was lost, and the Russians were obliged to close the treaty without receiving it.

Michael had a long reign, extending over a period of thirty-two years; but it was neither eventful nor illustrious. Historians have pronounced it as "distinguished by moderation." It would have been better to have said *characterised* by moderation; for it was not distinguished in any sense, except in the altogether accidental circumstance, that Michael was the founder of a new dynasty. The first czar of the Romanoff line was a feeble, tepid, no-character sort of man; apparently composed, as one of our poets very ungallantly said of the opposite sex, of "matter too soft a lasting mark to bear." In the early part of his reign, he rushed into quarrels without any regard for their justice or injustice; but he afterwards got very much more prudent, and warily avoided entering upon wars which he was incapable of conducting. At all times he had the negative merit of being able to see his own mistakes, and to retreat from the consequences before the latter became too serious. Yet such an insipid ruler as this was an advantage to the country. Russia wanted peace and leisure to recover from the terrible ravages to which she had been subjected. The empire enjoyed peace under a czar who was unable to conduct war; for it fortunately happened that neighbouring nations were too much engaged with their own affairs, to think of aggressions. The length of Michael's reign, also, gave the country that leisure which

was necessary for the restoration of order, security, and an approach to the proper administration of justice. Russia regained strength during the passive reign of Michael; and he obtained the credit of a change due only to the undisturbed action of natural laws. It has been well observed, that "his reign was the term of convalescence; that which followed was the development of restored strength." True; but Michael was like the wily physician who, observing the restoring influence of nature upon his almost exhausted patient, takes credit for the cure he was unable to accomplish. Michael expired on the 12th of July, 1645, and left the throne to his son, Alexis Michaelowitz, by his second consort Eudokia Lukianowna Streshnew.

CHAPTER XVI.

ALEXIS BECOMES CZAR; COUNCIL OF REGENCY; ITS AVARICE AND EXTORTIONS; INSURRECTION IN CONSEQUENCE; A NEW PRETENDER TO THE THRONE; THE COSSACKS OF THE UKRAINE; COSSACK INSURRECTION UNDER BOGDAN CHMIELNICKI; BOGDAN SOLICITS AID FROM ALEXIS, AND PROFFERS HIS ALLEGIANCE; TRIUMPHS OF ALEXIS OVER THE POLES; CHARLES GUSTAVUS OF SWEDEN SNATCHES POLAND FROM THE GRASP OF RUSSIA; BRIEF AND PROFITLESS WAR WITH SWEDEN; RUSSIA OBTAINS POSSESSION OF THE UKRAINE, AND THE COSSACKS ACKNOWLEDGE THE SWAY OF THE CZAR; PEACE RESTORED; DEPRECIATION OF THE CURRENCY, AND CONSEQUENT INSURRECTION; SEVERITY OF THE CZAR; HE GOVERNS WISELY; BUILDS THE FIRST RUSSIAN VESSELS; INSURRECTION OF STENKA RADZIN; OUTRAGES COMMITTED BY HIM; HE IS TREACHEROUSLY SEIZED AND EXECUTED; DISPUTE WITH TURKEY; DEATH OF ALEXIS.

Alexis, who was born at Moscow in 1630, was therefore but in his sixteenth year at the death of his father. In consequence of the youth of the new czar, he was guided in all government affairs by a council nominated by his deceased parent. These were three grasping and worthless persons. The chief of them was Morosof, a noble of an ambitious and intriguing temper, who was tutor and brother-in-law of Alexis, and was suspected of a desire to tread in the steps of Boris Godunof. The others were Miloslawskoi and Plessow; the latter a judge in one of the high courts at Moscow.

Morosof took the lead in the administration, and showed both ability and energy in the introduction of military reforms, and in strengthening the Russian frontiers against Poland and Sweden. He also erected manufactories for arms, in which he employed a number of foreign artisans. Indeed, for a while Morosof ruled Russia in the name of the czar, and might have continued to do so much longer, but for the imprudence of himself and his compeers.

Avarice was the ruling passion of the whole three, and they were incessantly bent upon the accumulation of wealth, without the slightest compunction as to the means by which they did so. The base dishonesty with which they acted, was as mean as it was unbecoming in men of high position. The records of most European nations, even at so comparatively modern a period as that of which we now speak, reveal incidents which often make us blush for humanity. Yet remembering this, there does still appear to have been a more than ordinary addiction to petty vices in Russian nobles and ministers, and a more incessant grasping after bribes and penalties, than is to be heard of in other countries laying claim to civilisation. Under the direction of Morosof, the most flagrant enormities were committed, especially in the administration of justice. The public courts were made mere instruments of extortion; and the judges, whom Morosof appointed, sold their decisions with a more than common audacity and openness, and shared the tainted produce with their high-placed accomplice. These men scarcely concealed the infamous trade they carried on in selling the sentences they so gravely pronounced; and such was the extent to which they carried their shameless profligacy, that many of them kept a number of depraved vagabonds in their pay, who were ready at all times, for a trifling sum, to come forward and affirm or deny anything. These fellows were also employed as spies upon the wealthy, whom they would get arrested

upon some real or concocted charge, for which the unfortunate accused could only get exonerated by the payment of heavy fines. In some cases persons unjustly charged were sentenced to death and executed, merely that the villanous judge and his ruffian assistants might seize the property of the presumed criminal.

Oppression of this galling kind had a most demoralising and injurious effect upon the people, whom it was rapidly converting into two classes—the plundered and the plunderers. But not only was the fountain of justice polluted for the basest of purposes, but the whole system of government was used as a means of extortion. Monopolies were created, and the heaviest taxes laid even upon the necessaries of life. In addition to this, those officials who plundered the people most, behaved to them with an insolent haughtiness which caused great offence.

Murmurs were giving place to curses; and the temper of the people of Moscow, who were the greatest sufferers from the prevailing iniquities, grew threatening. They first addressed a number of petitions to the czar, imploring a reform of abuses, and plainly exposing the oppressive dishonesty of the council of regency. Morosof took care that none of these petitions reached the young monarch, and things went on as before. But the fraudulent minister had not rightly estimated the perseverance and the power of a goaded and insulted people. Guessing the fate of their petitions, they resorted to a more effective way of reaching the ear of their sovereign. Waylaying him one day as he was returning from church to his palace, they reiterated their complaints, and, with loud outcries and fierce gestures, demanded the appointment of righteous judges and officers, instead of those who were merely instruments of knavery and extortion. Alexis listened with patience, promised to make a strict inquiry into the grievances complained of, and to inflict punishment on the guilty. At an earlier period, such an assurance would have calmed the popular excitement; but now it came too late. The people had learned to distrust judicial inquiries; and they believed that their oppressors, if left in the hands of the law, would be suffered to escape, if not to plunder them still. The limits of passive endurance had been past, and affairs had arrived at that point where discontent merges into insurrection. Leaving the czar, they proceeded in a state of furious tumult to the houses of the public officers who had incurred their displeasure. These they broke into and plundered; while the principal magistrate and a few others they put to death. Even Morosof himself would have fallen a victim to their fury, but that he was saved by the entreaties of the czar, who implored the mob, with tears in his eyes, to spare the guilty minister. This they consented to do, on condition that Alexis put another corrupt judge to death and promised to remit some of the recent oppressive taxes. The young monarch was wise enough to see and avoid the precipice upon the verge of which he had been so unconsciously standing. Though he had saved the life of Morosof, yet he prudently dismissed that worthless man, together with his associates, from the imperial councils.

This event occurred in 1648, in the third year of the young czar's reign; and not long after, disturbances scarcely less violent, and arising from similar causes, broke out at Novgorod and at Pskof. Salutary measures were, however, instantly taken; the guilty instruments of corruption were restrained or dismissed, and tranquillity soon returned. Necessarily, the cause of discontent being removed, the effect ceased.

It might be supposed that no one had the effrontery again to personate the thrice-murdered Dmitri. This source of imposture seemed utterly exhausted; but let none presume to set bounds to the extravagances of credulity and knavery. An obscure and worthless young man, the son of a draper in the Ukraine, suffered himself to be made the tool of a scheming Polish nobleman, named Danilovski, who hoped, by troubling the political waters, to be able to fish in them with ease and profit. One day, when the young draper was bathing, certain natural marks were observed on his back, of so peculiar a kind that it was surmised they resembled letters in some unknown tongue. The circumstance coming to the ears of the Polish intriguer, he resolved to create a conspiracy out of it, which might lead to the overthrow of the Russian government. Sending for the young man, he had the marks examined by a Greek priest, whom he had prepared and paid for the expected exposition. The vagabond priest, after looking intently upon the marks, exclaimed, "A miracle!" and then added, in explanation, that they were, indeed, mystic words, and that their signification was, "Dmitri, son of the czar Dmitri." The murder of Marina's

infant child was notorious, for the atrocious barbarity had been done in public, under the pretence of a legal execution; the difficulty, however, was clumsily evaded by the stale device of an alleged change of children. Both Poles and Swedes were invited to support the cause of the pretender, and some of the former nation offered their services. But the plot utterly failed to create a sensation in Russia; and the impostor, after leading a life of forlorn misery for a time, fell into the hands of the czar, who executed the unfortunate wretch by quartering him alive.

The hatred borne by the Russians to the Poles was not diminished by the reverses which the former suffered from the latter during the reign of Michael. Uladislas died in 1648, and Alexis became one of the candidates for the throne of Poland; but he was rejected by the people, who elected John Casimir, one of the sons of Sigismund III., who resigned his dignity of cardinal, and succeeded at once to his brother's throne and the hand of that brother's widow. This rejection was a fresh source of irritation to Alexis, who soon had an opportunity of expressing his displeasure.

The Ukraine (a name derived from the Polish, and signifying boundary) is the title of that vast and fertile tract of land lying on the banks of the broad Dnieper, and extending to those of the Don. This wild district had been peopled by the Cossacks, a race of mixed origin, but derived chiefly from Poles and Tartars. The nucleus of this singular people were deserters from the armies maintained by Poland near the banks of the Borysthenes, or Dnieper, to arrest the incursions of the Tartars. The almost inaccessible islands of that river, and the vast steppes of the Ukraine, served for places of retreat. The course of nature, and the constant arrival of fresh fugitives, rapidly increased their numbers. They opened their arms to recruits from every nation, and were joined by all the outcasts whose crimes compelled them to abandon civilised society. In this manner they ceased to be mere fugitives, and became a people. As may be supposed, their habits revealed the taint which sullied their origin. Plunder became a recognised pursuit amongst them. They frequently made predatory incursions into the Ottoman territories, sometimes venturing even as far as the suburbs of Constantinople. Such was their boldness, that they trusted themselves on the stormy surface of the Black Sea in mere boats of very primitive construction, consisting only of trees hollowed out; and thus they ravaged every shore of that great inland water. As the richness of the soil they occupied made it produce without much labour, they were consequently at liberty to pass their time mostly in plunder, piracy, or open war. "As they were Christians in their origin, they preserved a sort of Christianity among themselves; but so mingled in time with idolatrous and Mohammed annotions, that its fair characters were almost lost. The Polish gentleman, whom infamy had branded or justice threatened; the Polish serf, who fled from the iron despotism of a haughty, rapacious master; the Greek schismatic, the persecuted Lutheran, either imperfectly remembered, or but negligently practised the rites of their respective churches: hence a sort of mongrel worship prevailed, of which the leading features more resembled the Eastern than the Western church. But they did not much trouble themselves with either the doctrines or the duties of Christianity. Robbers by profession, and cruel by habit, they were the terror of surrounding countries; strong, hardy, of indomitable courage, fond of war, even more for the dangers which attended it than for the plunder it procured them, their alliance was eagerly sought by Lithuanians, Poles, Muscovites, Tartars, and Turks. To the former people, as the stock whence the majority were derived, they long bore sentiments of affection; indeed, they acknowledged themselves vassals of the republic, though their chief obedience was owing to their own grand hetman. Ostafi Daskiewitz, a peasant on the estates of a Lithuanian noble (many nobles, both of the crown and the grand-duchy, had extensive estates in the Ukraine), was the first who divided them into regiments, and taught them discipline. As a reward for his exertions, he was presented by Sigismund I., who appeared sensible of the advantages which these formidable warriors might procure for the kingdom, with the starosty of Tserkassy, and the jurisdiction of some fortresses near the Borysthenes. Had the advice of this simple but strong-minded man been taken, Poland would have been effectually screened against the incursions of the Tartars. He counselled Sigismund to maintain 10,000 armed men on the banks of the river, who in their rude rafts could easily prevent the enemy from crossing: a few troops of horse might forage for this stationary little army. A still more important

suggestion was to build forts and little towers on the islets of that magnificent stream. What Sigismund had not the spirit, perhaps the means to accomplish, Bathori might and should have effected. The latter monarch, however, did much towards so desirable an end. He diligently cultivated the affection of the Cossacks; and they are among the most grateful of men. He gave them the city of Trychtymirow, which became their chief magazine, and the residence of their grand hetman; he introduced among them the useful arts of life, and greatly improved their discipline; he formed them into six regiments, each consisting of 1,000 men (ten companies of 100), and commanded by a hetman (*hattaman.*) Each grand hetman, whom the whole force obeyed, received his investiture at the hands of the king; the symbols were an ensign, a horse-tail (*bonzuk*), a baton resembling a club, and a looking-glass. The Cossacks, being thus attached by those of new ties—those of gratitude and allegiance—to the republic, were well disposed to fulfil the purpose assigned them: their fidelity was striking; until, from friends, they were transformed into enemies by the most intolerable wrongs."*

Of these wrongs we must speak briefly, that it may be seen why the czar Alexis became engaged in a war with Poland. The nobles of that country long behaved towards the Cossacks with great haughtiness and inhumanity. Many grants of land in the Ukraine had been bestowed upon these nobles, who seldom visited their new possessions, which they abandoned to the direction of Jews—who, in Poland, as, indeed, elsewhere, were the most exacting and unpopular of stewards. These men usually advanced money on the forthcoming produce of the soil, and they were therefore naturally anxious to make the most of it, and less likely to show any indulgence in its collection. The fierce Cossacks would not submit in patience to this system of oppression; and they insisted, not only on the entire abolition of their grievances, but also that their chiefs should have a seat in the Polish diet. Their demands not being complied with, they rose in insurrection. They were at first defeated, and reduced to the condition of serfs; and the insolent Polish nobles even resolved to extirpate them and their religion if they attempted to throw off the bondage thus forced upon them. Again the Cossacks rose in arms, and presented so formidable an appearance, that a promise was given that their privileges should be restored to them. The Polish rulers had no intention of keeping this promise; and the Cossacks knew as much, and no longer refrained from depredations on the territory of the former.

Such was the state of things, when a shameful outrage incensed the Cossacks, and drew down much trouble upon their oppressors. A veteran Cossack named Bogdan Chmielnicki, who was famous for the valour he had displayed against the Tartars, possessed a mill and some land near the banks of the Dnieper. This small estate was coveted by the steward of a Polish noble, who resolved to obtain it by ruining the owner. Preferring some petty charge against the Cossack, the latter was thrown into prison, but liberated through the interference of the castellan of Cracow, to whom he had rendered some service. But the protector of Bogdan died; and then Czapalinski, the covetous steward, seized the poor Cossack's mill and land. The latter, unable to obtain redress, fled to the Tartars for assistance. In his absence, the infamous Czapalinski violated and murdered Bogdan's wife, and then set fire to his house, the flames of which consumed his infant son. Another son, a young man, the ruffian procured to be publicly scourged, for expressing a natural indignation. Some accounts state, in explanation of the diabolical malice of the steward, that on one occasion he had been ignominiously whipped by the servants of Bogdan.

The hour of retribution soon arrived. The infuriated Bogdan succeeded in interesting the Tartars in his behalf; and at the head of 40,000 of them, he commenced a march against the Poles. His force was soon trebled by the number of Cossacks who flocked to his aid, in answer to a call to unite themselves in a great effort for liberty. Two successive Polish armies, which endeavoured to stem the tide of inundation, were swept away by it, their generals and officers led away captives, and 70,000 peasants consigned to bondage. In a short time Bogdan was in possession of the whole of the Ukraine. At this time, Uladislas died; and a brief interregnum followed. which necessarily favoured the

* Dunham's *History of Poland.* Also Chevalier, *Histoire de la Guerre des Cossacs contre la Pologne*, &c., p. 302, &c. Malte-Brun, *Tableau de la Pologne ancienne et moderne*, tom. i., p. 464, &c.

progress of disorder. Bogdan, breathing threats of vengeance as he advanced, directed his steps towards Red Russia. In his destructive march through Podolia and Volhynia, the excesses committed by him and his followers were of a frightful and repulsive kind. He had been joined by crowds of Mussulmans, Greeks, and Socinians, who all, equally with himself, detested the Roman church; and his crusade of vengeance assumed something of a religious nature. The Jesuits, who had been notorious for their animosity to the Greek church, and the Jews, whose acquisitiveness in their capacity of stewards to the Polish landowners had excited the people against them, were visited with unrelenting vengeance. The Roman churches and monasteries were laid in ruins, and the nuns forced to satisfy the brutal appetites of the infuriated followers of this fierce avenger of a people's wrongs and an irreparable private injury. Some priests were forced, under threats of instant death should they refuse, not only to contract, but also to consummate, a marriage with the trembling inmates of the cloister; and frequently they were both afterwards slaughtered. But it was upon the recently insolent and oppressing nobles that the chief weight of vengeance fell. Those who were unfortunate enough to fall into the hands of the Tartars and the Cossacks, were put to death in various cruel and lingering ways; their unhappy wives and daughters also suffered even an aggravated doom. They were stripped naked before their husbands or fathers, and after being violated, were mercilessly flogged to death. Terrible as were these atrocities, it must be remembered that they were the inevitable retribution of an ignorant and infuriated people, lashed into desperation by a painful accumulation of wrongs.

But though the chivalry of Poland fled in dismay before the fierce hosts of Bogdan, yet the latter experienced a great reverse of fortune in the desertion of his Tartar allies; who, being well loaded with plunder and captives, retired to their own country to enjoy the proceeds of their expedition. On the election of John Casimir to the throne of Poland, that monarch admitted the justice of the complaints of Bogdan, and opened negotiations with the Cossack chief. While these were in progress, and Bogdan, relying upon the honour of the king, exercised less than his customary vigilance, his camp was attacked by Wiszinowiecki, a Polish general, who committed a terrible slaughter amongst his followers. Bogdan was compelled to retreat; but it was with a stern resolve to punish this perfidy at the earliest opportunity. When he returned, he was reinforced by a large body of Tartars, and then invested the intrenched camp of the treacherous general. The combined forces under the command of Bogdan, are said to have amounted to 160,000 men. The army which Casimir advanced to relieve his besieged general was but 20,000 strong, and he was unable to effect a junction with those shut up in the camp. In this position, policy accomplished for him what valour could not effect. He bribed the khan of the Tartars to withdraw his followers from the Cossack host; and Bogdan, weakened by so vast a desertion, thought it prudent to accept the terms of peace proposed by the king.

This enforced tranquillity did not last. Instead of being grateful for their escape from utter destruction, the Polish nobles felt irritated by the shame of receiving a boon from a people whom the long habit of oppressing had made them despise. The nobles became the aggressors, and the war was renewed. The Poles collected an army of 100,000 men; and the contending forces met near Beresteeko, in Red Russia. Here, it has been observed, was at length decided the conflict between schism and orthodoxy—between slavery and tyranny. An obstinate and furious battle ensued, and terminated in the defeat of Bogdan, accompanied by a terrible slaughter of his followers. Though they retired from the field, it was with a threatening face towards the foe. Several contests took place; and in one of these, a body of nearly 40,000 Poles were almost exterminated by a sudden and sweeping onslaught of the insurgents. The balance of success was thus kept nearly equal; for if Bogdan had been staggered by defeat, Poland was thrown into terror and confusion. It was in this state of things that Bogdan, further incensed by the death of a brave son, applied for assistance to Russia, and offered to become the vassal of the czar Alexis, on condition that 200,000 Muscovites were poured into Lithuania.

Alexis hesitated, for he could not forget how Poland had chastised Russia during the reign of his father Michael. Urged forward, however, by the patriarch, he resolved first to seek the opinion of Heaven,

by means of a strangely superstitious appeal to it. He caused two wild bulls, one of which he named Poland, and the other Russia, to be opposed to each other in an arena, and determined to enter upon the war if the representative of his country should succeed in the strife. He had the mortification to see the brute which represented Poland triumphant; but the patriarch removed his superstitious fears, and represented to him that the interests of religion required that he should declare war against catholic Poland. But the acquisition of the vast territory the czar obtained by the submission of Bogdan, no doubt influenced the Russian potentate more than the pretended interests of the Greek church. Such was the distracted state of Poland, that success against it was a matter of comparative certainty. The Russian triumphs were rapid; and if accomplished at any other time, they might have been deemed brilliant. Smolensk, Witepsk, Polotsk, Mohilof, Severia, and Semigallia were taken by the armies of Alexis, while his Cossack ally was subjugating Haman, Bratslaw, and other fortresses on the Moldavian frontier. The doom of Poland semed at hand; and it appeared that its independence would be crushed beneath the iron heels of the Russian and Cossack armies.

But Poland was saved from the disgrace of conquest by Russia, in consequence of the natural jealousy entertained by Charles Gustavus, king of Sweden, of the power and growth of his great northern neighbour. Charles, at the head of 60,000 Swedes, landed in Pomerania. His march was one triumphant career to the walls, first of Warsaw, and next of Cracow, which submitted without resistance. A panic seized both the nobles and people of Poland; John Casimir fled into Silesia; and the whole country, from the Carpathian mountains to the duchy of Courland, submitted to the conquering Swede.

The czar Alexis paused, and felt that the prey he had hoped to seize was thus wrested from him by another. He accused Charles Gustavus of having hindered the operations of his troops; the accusation ripened into a quarrel, and led to a fierce warfare between the Russians and the Swedes.

The irritated czar next poured his troops into Sweden, where they plundered many villages, and put the unarmed inhabitants to the sword. This was during the absence of the warlike Charles; but the Russians soon found themselves unequal to contend with the experienced Swedish veterans, trained to service amidst the victories of the famous thirty years' war. Alexis obtained neither advantage nor credit; and he withdrew his troops, and concluded a truce for three years. It was signed on the 23rd of April, 1658; and three years after, on the 21st of June, 1661, was converted into a treaty of peace at Karelis, by which their former possessions were mutually secured to each party.

Alexis, satisfied with the military glory he had acquired in Poland, had withdrawn his troops from that distracted country. A revulsion took place in the feelings of the Poles: a resolve to make a great effort to recover their national independence succeeded the fierce religious disputes between catholic and Lutheran, which had made those involved in them almost indifferent to the claims of their country. Thousands flocked into Silesia, and rallied round the standard of their fugitive monarch. The great powers of Europe also showed themselves favourable to the cause of the Poles, from a mixed feeling of commiseration for a gallant people, and a dread of the aspiring views of the Swedish monarch. Poland rose against the king whose foot had been placed upon her neck, and, recovering her ancient spirit, defeated the troops of Charles in several engagements. It is difficult, indeed it is almost impossible, to conquer a people resolved to be free. After some severe contests, Charles thought proper to retire from Poland; his conduct being further influenced by the circumstance that Sweden itself was invaded by the King of Denmark. The war, however, lingered in Pomerania and along the shores of the Baltic until the death of Charles, when a peace was concluded between Poland and Sweden at Oliva. The only state which derived any solid advantages from all these fierce contentions was Russia. By the submission of Bogdan and the Cossacks, Alexis had obtained possession of that portion of the Ukraine which, lying on the left bank of the Dnieper, had hitherto not been included in the empire. This comprised many provinces, together with the important border fortresses. As Poland, in her enfeebled state, saw the hopelessness of attempting to recover this broad territory from the powerful grasp of Russia, the Ukraine became a part of that vast empire, and the Cossacks acknowledged the sway of the czar. Bogdan,

whose wrongs caused this revolution, and whose untiring pursuit of revenge mainly produced it, passed the remainder of his life in tranquillity, and went to his grave in the course of nature—a somewhat remarkable circumstance, when we consider how few public men in these turbulent times escaped a violent death.

Peace was welcome to Russia; for the wounds which anarchy had inflicted upon her were yet scarcely healed. Her commerce was much depressed, and her treasury nearly exhausted. The silver money had almost disappeared from circulation, and Alexis caused copper, of the same nominal value, to be coined and put in circulation. This depreciated money was received with readiness, until the court itself destroyed the confidence of the people in it, by its greedy efforts to secure all the sterling money, and leave only the new coin for the use of commerce. It fell rapidly in public estimation, and great general distress ensued. Distress led to discontent, and in 1662 a rebellion broke out at Moscow. No attempt was made to pacify the poor ignorant people, but the disaffection was extinguished with a severity amounting to savage fury. The rioters who were captured were hanged or drowned by hundreds; and others were punished with torture or mutilation. It is estimated that the number who suffered death, in consequence of this arbitrary alteration of the currency, amounted to upwards of 7,000; while 15,000 more wretched victims were tortured or maimed.

But Alexis, though merciless in his mode of government, was by no means indifferent to the prosperity of the empire. He courted every opportunity which offered itself of forming or strengthening connections with the courts of Europe—a wise policy, which led to the introduction into Russia of foreign arts and manufactures. With a natural and not altogether ungraceful sympathy, he offered kindnesses to the worthless fugitive Charles Stuart, and sent a special ambassador to congratulate him on his accession to the English throne. Charles II. reciprocated these civilities, and proposed a commercial treaty between England and Russia; but this was declined by Alexis, on account of its not being sufficiently favourable to the interests of his nation.

Whether Alexis saw the necessity which his famous son Peter eventually so powerfully felt, of extending the boundaries of Russia until they reached the sea, we are unable to say. It is not an improbable assumption, that he felt convinced that an outlet to the sea and a considerable navy was necessary, not only to the commerce, but also to the greatness of Russia. This idea naturally presents itself to the mind, when we learn that the two first Russian vessels that ever were built, were constructed under the personal superintendence of the czar Alexis. Certainly he was an observant and reflective man, and he strove to excite among his subjects a desire for progress and the arts of civilisation. On all questions of great public interest, he called the states-general together to assist him with their counsels. This circumstance, so adverse to the spirit of despotism, showed a desire to bestow upon the people something approaching to a representative voice in the affairs of state. But the peculiar circumstances of the empire, its vast extent of territory, and the fluctuations to which it was exposed, both from within and without, discouraged this advance in the direction of popular government, and caused it to be abandoned.

Russia was not long permitted to enjoy the repose so requisite to the development of her prosperity. The Cossacks of the Don had been treated with harshness and injustice—a circumstance which led to insubordination amongst them. Several of them were put to death—an act of severity which produced great irritation in the minds of these turbulent men. Stenka Radzin, a brother of one of the victims, instigated his countrymen to revolt, and offered himself as their leader. They placed themselves under his banner, with the avowed objects of revenging the past, and securing their liberties for the future; though no doubt can be entertained that many of them were animated only by a hope of plunder. This was so well known to Radzin, that he lured great numbers, not only of Cossacks, but of discontented Russians, to him by a promise of piratical expeditions on the Caspian, and on the Persian shores of that sea, where it was supposed that great wealth might be gained at the point of the sword. Other Russians were won to join the insurrection by a promise of the immediate redress of all popular grievances. Radzin also denominated the nobles as the enemies of the people; and he even had the audacity to give out, that the czar felt himself so powerless against the factious conduct of the selfish grandees, that he had applied to him for the

means of crushing them. Such was the success of these expedients, that the rebel Cossack found himself the leader of a promiscuous army of 200,000 men.

Radzin commenced operations by seizing a fleet of boats belonging to the czar, while on its way to the city of Astracan; of which province he talked of making himself the sovereign. With these boats he descended into the Caspian, the shores of which were ruthlessly plundered by him and his companions. Though the rebels were rather banditti than soldiers—irregularly armed, and influenced more by a desire for spoil than bound together by anything which deserved the name of a principle—yet they possessed themselves of Astracan in 1670, and became really a formidable body. For three years was Radzin enabled to continue his wild career of insurrection and plunder; during which period he repeatedly defeated the forces sent against him. At length he received so severe a check, that he promised to lay down his arms, on condition that a pardon was given both to himself and his followers. The general who had brought him to bay, knowing that the Cossack was still formidable if driven to desperation, accepted these terms, and they were confirmed by the czar. The Cossacks and other rebels were permitted to return to their homes with the plunder they had acquired, and it seemed as if the insurrection was at an end.

This was not the case. Either in consequence of his own restless nature, or from a suspicion that treachery was intended towards him, Radzin was soon at his piratical employment again, at the head of a great body of his old followers. The banks of the Volga were swept by them with reckless audacity, and numerous instances of infamous cruelty occurred. As before, he raised the cry of liberty and the natural rights of man; and the oppressed and discontented crowded to his aid. Even large numbers of the soldiers murdered their officers, and joined a leader who, to such popular war-cries, combined an unlimited license to plunder. Had Radzin been a man of comprehensive talents, and fitted by nature to be the leader of a great popular movement, he might have revolutionised Russia. He had no such qualities, and was altogether unable to direct the power he raised. In fact, the extent of his own success awed him: he did not understand the next step; and feeling the peril of his own position, feared to perish in the storm which, wizard-like, he had created. In the very height of his power, he was snared by an assurance that the czar desired to see the famous chief of the Don Cossacks in the capital, where he would, in admiration of his boldness, again extend to him a pardon. The delusion would have been seen through by a man of ordinary intelligence; but Radzin, flattered by what he regarded as so great a distinction, was deceived and entrapped by it. His friends urged him not to go; and represented that, even if treachery was not intended, the czar had perhaps not made the promise attributed to him. Regardless of remonstrances, the devoted man pressed thoughtlessly and eagerly forward towards the pit that had been dug to engulf him. As he approached Moscow, he beheld a gallows on a cart, which had been sent forward to meet him as a prognostic of his fate. Whether it was too late to recede, or that he was blinded by infatuation, we can not say; but he still went on, and entered the city. No sooner had he done so, than he was seized, and shortly afterwards expiated his crimes upon the scaffold. After his departure from Astracan, it was invested and taken by the Russian troops: a great number of his followers perished beneath the swords of their assailants; while no less than 12,000 of them were subsequently gibbeted on the high roads of the disturbed districts. This terrible severity struck awe into the rebels; the wild dreams of liberty of some, and the habits of plunder of others, were abandoned; the storm of insurrection subsided, and peace was restored in the district of the Ukraine; but in many places it was the peace of desolation and of the charnel-house.

Another war was impending. Turkey beheld with emotions of jealousy the extending territory and power of Russia. The recent subjugation of the Cossacks placed a barrier between the great northern empire and the dominions of the sultan, which Mohammed IV. considered it expedient to remove. The Saporogian Cossacks, led by their hetman Dorensensky, had revolted against the Poles, and made a treaty of alliance with the sultan. This circumstance naturally led to a dispute between Poland and Turkey; and the haughty Porte, used to conquest, conceived the bold design of first crushing Poland, and then descending upon Russia.

Mohammed poured a Moslem army of

80,000 men into Poland, where he was bravely withstood by the heroic John Sobieski, at the head of a force not amounting to a fourth part of that of the invaders. Yet the ultimate success of Turkey was evident, unless assistance was given to Poland. Alexis was bound, both by treaty and by a wise policy, to assist the Poles against an enemy dreaded by all Christendom. He was further induced to oppose himself to the great representative of Mohammedanism by a haughty message he received from the sultan, requiring him to evacuate his possessions in the Ukraine. The sultan, in his communication, treated Alexis as if he had been only a Christian hospodar, while, with Asiatic vanity, he entitled himself "Most glorious majesty, king of the world." The answer of the czar was a memorable one, and sternly indicative of the growing power as well as reputation of the vast empire he governed. The message he returned was, that "he was above submitting to a Mohammedan dog; but that his sabre was as good as the grand seignor's scimitar."

Not only did Alexis prepare for war, but he endeavoured to create a Christian league against the Turks. With this object he sent ambassadors to the pope and to almost all the great sovereigns in Europe, except France, which was in alliance with Turkey: but the monarchs of Europe were fully occupied with their own quarrels and interests, and were, consequently, not disposed to give anything but their good wishes.

The exertions of the Russians were forestalled by the unexpected and brilliant success of the Poles. Sobieski—now raised to the throne of Poland, after having, at the head of only 10,000 men, opposed the Turks, who had an army, raised by reinforcements to 300,000—at length, on the morning of the 14th of October, 1676, had the audacity to lead his followers from their intrenchments, and offer battle to the overwhelming hosts before them! The Turks were not only astonished, but a superstitious fear fell upon them. They could not believe that ordinary men could be capable of such reckless and seemingly hopeless daring. They declared that the Poles were assisted by magic, that their leader was Sheitan, or the devil, and that it was useless to fight against them. The Turkish pasha, though above this superstition, knew the debilitating influence it would have upon his troops; and knowing, also, that Polish succours were approaching, he offered an honourable peace, which Sobieski was glad enough to accept. Though not victory, it was at least triumph, and won for the brave Polish monarch the admiration of Europe.

Before this event occurred, the czar Alexis was no more. He died on the 10th of February, 1676, in the forty-sixth year of his age, and the thirty-first of his reign. His death was hastened by the ignorance of an old woman, to whose medical skill he trusted in preference to that of his physicians; at least the latter said so, though if he had died while under their treatment, it would have been discovered that nature had succumbed to the resistless force of the disease.

Alexis was mourned for by his subjects, and in some respects he deserved this honourable tribute to his memory. The fault of most of the sovereigns of the house of Romanoff was want of heart, or of that becoming gentleness which, in those who hold the issues of life and death, tempers the severity of justice with the sweetness of mercy. From this Alexis was not exempt; and though not wantonly cruel, yet he crushed opposition and insurrection with a severity that bore an aspect of vindictiveness and brutality. Certainly the barbarous people whom he ruled did not seem to understand any other mode of correction: but it was not tried with them. Yet, setting aside the exercise of an unnecessary severity, which must be regarded as a vice of the times, Alexis was an able and an estimable prince. His prudence and his firmness consolidated the throne of the empire, and bound up deep wounds which, though closing, were far from being healed. Though not deficient in the qualities of the warrior, yet his courage was balanced by a sagacious statesmanship which counselled him to moderation and prudence. One noble point of his character must not be forgotten: he abolished the inhuman custom by which, in Russia, all prisoners taken in war were consigned to slavery. He felt that brave men ought not to be punished for serving their sovereign; and all military captives he sent into the uncultivated parts of the empire, for the purpose of colonising those remote districts. He never lost sight of the improvement of his country, and devoted himself especially to the promotion of agriculture and manufactures. He induced many foreigners of ability to settle in Russia, and treated them with great libe-

rality. In the same spirit, he caused works on mathematics, military science, tactics, fortification, geography, and other valuable subjects, to be translated into the Russian language. He introduced important reforms in the laws, and attempted others in the church. The city of Moscow was enlarged, and two suburbs built by him. His attention was also turned to ship-building; but in this direction he only commenced a work which was left for a greater man to carry out. He was twice married. By his first wife, Maria Iljinishna Miloflafskoi, he had two sons and four daughters; though some writers say six, and others seven: his second wife, Natolia Kirillowna Narishkin, brought him one son and one daughter—the former being Peter Alexeiewitz, afterwards so famous as to acquire the title of Peter the Great. We may briefly sum up the character of Alexis, by quoting the judgment of a distinguished writer concerning him; that is, that he was worthy of being the father of so distinguished a son.

CHAPTER XVII.

ACCESSION OF FEODOR; HE EXECUTES MINOR REFORMS; HIS BENEVOLENCE; HE ABOLISHES THE MESTNICHESTVO; HIS MARRIAGE AND DEATH; AMBITION OF THE PRINCESS SOPHIA, AND REVOLT OF THE STRELITZ; IVAN AND PETER ARE CROWNED AS JOINT SOVEREIGN; SOPHIA BECOMES REGENT; REBELLION OF KOVANSKOI; UNSUCCESSFUL WAR WITH THE TARTARS OF THE CRIMEA; THE BOYHOOD OF PETER; HIS MARRIAGE; SOPHIA ENDEAVOURS TO PROCURE THE ASSASSINATION OF PETER; HE COMPELS HER TO ABDICATE THE REGENCY, AND RETIRE INTO A CONVENT; PETER BECOMES SOLE SOVEREIGN.

Feodor, the eldest son of Alexis, was, at the time of his father's death, only nineteen years of age. Some objections were urged against his succeeding to the throne, on account of the extreme delicacy or feebleness of his constitution. These objections would have had more force if they had not proceeded from the Narishkins, the family of the second wife of the late czar, who were extremely anxious to place the infant Peter, then only three years of age, on the throne instead of Feodor; who, it was pretended, was weak in intellect as well as in bodily frame. Ivan, the brother of Feodor, was undoubtedly almost imbecile; but the subsequent acts of the latter showed him to possess considerable mental power, in conjunction with a resolute will.

Alexis had bequeathed to his successor one dangerous legacy, namely, his dispute with Turkey on the subject of the territory of the Ukraine, and the sovereignty over the Cossacks of that region. Neither empire cared to prolong, or rather to enter upon, an active state of hostilities; and three years after the accession of Feodor, an armistice, which was to last for twenty years, was entered into between the Porte and the czar, by which the contested territory was surrendered to the latter.

Feodor, young as he was, entered with avidity upon the task of promoting the civilisation of the empire. This he forwarded by the minute attention he paid to the administration of its internal affairs. That of justice particularly occupied his attention; and he laboured hard to extirpate the corruption which infected its decisions. Then, and unhappily even now—for the villanous practice has lasted from that time to the present—the verdicts of judges were given, or rather sold, to the litigant who bribed the highest. It is said, in apology for this gigantic evil, that judges and other highly responsible officials are paid so small a sum, that men of high position and irreproachable character will not accept such positions, and that the dishonesty of those who do, is consequently winked at by the imperial government. The statement as to the insufficiency of remuneration is at least correct; for we have already stated, that at the present time, the highest legal functionaries of Russia receive only £160 a-year! Bribery, or the acceptance of presents, as it is termed by the Russians, is therefore almost a necessary consequence among a people where the tone of public morality is by no means a high one. We may be allowed to question

the sincerity, or at least the earnestness, of the government in its endeavours to extinguish this vile trading in that which should be above all price, because it has never adopted the most evident means of putting an end to it; that is, the awarding of such stipends to those who administer the law, as to place them at least beyond the cares of poverty and its accompanying temptations. The Russian peasants have a proverb which expresses their conviction of the difficulty of obtaining justice. They say, "God is in heaven, and the czar is far off." That is, that both are so above them, and so inaccessible to their approach, that they must submit to oppression with patience. Nikolay Gogal, a Russian author of the present century, who has acquired great celebrity, and occupies, in the literature of the northern empire, a position something resembling that of Mr. Charles Dickens in the literature of England, wrote a comedy on the subject of judicial corruption, called *The Revisor*, which not only met with the most brilliant success, but was witnessed more than once by the late emperor Nicholas, who gave it his marked applause. A revisor, in Russia, is the title of a high government officer, dispatched to a province to ascertain and report on the character of its administration. The plot and moral of the play is, that an impostor who makes his appearance at a provincial capital, assuming this title, finds such universal peculation and misconduct among all the government officials, that when he is at last discovered, they are glad to let him off scot-free, and hush up the whole affair.

To return from this momentary digression. The young czar Feodor found the task he had undertaken was too great for him. He did not remove the cause (probably did not recognise it), and the effect remained. The underpaid and crafty judges devised ways to evade his enactments; and all he found it expedient to do, was to punish flagrant cases with severity. The young among the wealthy are seldom thoughtful of the poor; but Feodor gave much of his attention to their sufferings, and the mode of alleviating them. With more of philanthropy, perhaps, than wisdom, he caused the price of provisions to be regulated by what was regarded as an equitable standard, and made enactments with the object of preventing the dealers in such commodities from oppressing the indigent. He even took such a kindly interest in the affairs of the people, as to lend sums of money to small tradesmen and ingenious artisans, to assist them in their business, and received the payment in small instalments. He reformed the police arrangements of Moscow, and gave attention to many matters which, though they generally escape the observation of princes, yet do much towards constituting the contentment and prosperity of a people.

One reform Feodor accomplished which made his name memorable. It was the abolition of a troublesome custom, called Mestnichestvo or placeship, from *Mesto*, place. Every family amongst the nobility kept a book containing its genealogy; and pride of ancestry was carried to an extent that caused many inconveniences and quarrels. No nobleman would serve in a post subordinate to another whose ancestry had stood at any time in an inferior position to his progenitors. As the genealogical books contained an account of all the positions held at any time by those mentioned in them, it was easy for a discontented boyard to find out at once what had been the appointments of the ancestors of any rival who was raised to some position above him. This folly was carried to such lengths, that it seriously interfered with the progress of public business, being a source of incessant discords. A public office had been instituted at Moscow, in which exact copies of the genealogical table and service-register were deposited. Feodor consulted with his minister, Prince Vassili Galitzin, on the best means of putting an end to this pride-engendered confusion; and they soon devised a curious and rather dramatic expedient.

The czar issued a proclamation, requiring that all noble families should deliver into court faithful copies of their service-rolls, that certain errors might be erased from them. The command was obeyed; and at the appointed time the czar, the patriarch, the superior clergy, and the nobles were assembled together. The patriarch, who had been informed concerning the real object of the meeting, first delivered an animated address against the Mestnichestvo and the jealousies and inconveniences caused by it. These prerogatives, said he in conclusion, "are a bitter source of every kind of evil; they render abortive the most useful enterprises, in like manner as the tares stifle the good grain; they have introduced, even into the heart of families, dis-

sensions, confusions, and hatred; but the pontiff comprehends the grand design of his czar. God alone can have inspired it!" The nobles expressed their satisfaction at the yet unrevealed intention, by the utterance of servile acclamations, in the midst of which Feodor proposed, that all the papers relative to the positions they or their ancestors had held, should be at once burnt, in order that the feuds arising from them might be altogether forgotten. The nobles were extremely unwilling; but their assent had been given, and could not readily be recalled. The records were thrown into a fire, prepared in the courtyard of the palace, and soon reduced to ashes. In conclusion, the patriarch pronounced an anathema against every one who presumed to contravene this ordinance of the czar; and the humbled nobles joined the rest of the assembly in a response of "Amen." The importance of this reform, and the difficulties in the way of accomplishing it, may be inferred from the fact, that Ivan the Terrible, who had deluged Russia with blood and decimated its nobility, was unable to abolish the Mestnichestvo. That it might not be supposed that he was inimical to an order of nobility, Feodor ordered a new set of books to be made, in which the names and rank of the noble families were duly inserted; but the old distinctions, arising from the accidental occupation of place, were altogether abolished.

Even in such a circumstance as his marriage, the young czar exhibited his thoughtfulness and his care for the prosperity and enlightenment of the empire. It was the custom for the Russian czars always to marry a subject; as it was said such a practice shut out of the empire the evils of foreign influence. This might be the case; but it also excluded the benefits of foreign alliances, and checked that intercourse between nations so productive of the extension of civilisation, and of which Russia stood so pre-eminently in need. Besides this, a peculiar honour was conferred upon the family from whose circle the consort of the czar was selected, which commonly encouraged ambitious views in it, and excited a feeling of jealous irritation against it on the part of the other nobles. In cases also where the sovereign married twice, it created rival factions, whose animosities might disturb the peace of the country. An incident of the latter kind was observable when Feodor ascended the throne, and the Narishkin family, the relations of the second czarina, endeavoured, on the false plea of his being of feeble intellect, to set him aside in favour of the infant Peter. In the event of their being successful, the Narishkins would have enjoyed the chief offices and emoluments of the state, which, as they failed, were probably to no small extent filled by the members of the house of Miloflafskoi, a daughter of the head of which was the mother of Feodor.

These considerations induced the czar to resolve upon not selecting a consort from the daughters of the Russian nobles, but to look abroad for a partner of his crown and bed. Probably a more personal and immediate motive also influenced him; for he chose a Polish lady for whom, we learn, he had conceived a passionate attachment. The nobles objected to the match; and those who had marriageable daughters were, we may not unfairly presume, decidedly adverse to a departure from old customs. But the chief opposition came from the clergy, who nevertheless uttered remonstrances, warnings, and anathemas in vain. Feodor replied that he should marry the lady of his choice, whether the church approved of it or otherwise; and marry her he did—a circumstance which we are sure that our lady readers, at least, will not censure him for.

Feodor endeavoured to withdraw the people from many prejudices, and pernicious or barbarous habits. His reign was too brief to permit of any great success in this direction; for it takes years, and sometimes even generations, to effect changes in national customs. To vulgar minds it is a sufficient reason for anything, that their fathers and forefathers did it. So strongly does this feeling—a wholesome one under proper restrictions—influence the Russian peasantry, that even to this day they can scarcely be induced to adopt agricultural improvements. Their ancestors followed a plan which, with greater labour, yielded a smaller produce; and they will do as their ancestors did. Inertness of mind and constitutional apathy has much to do in bringing about this obstructive temper in a people; and the Russian peasant was, and is, notoriously idle and unreflective. Feodor tried hard to raise the people from their slothful ways, and to show them the value of intellectual energy. It is very possible that his exertions softened the severity of the subsequent labours of Peter in the same

path; indeed, but for his premature death, he might have accomplished much of what was eventually effected by his illustrious half-brother. It is somewhat remarkable, that he endeavoured to reform the common dress of the people, and to induce them to adopt a costume resembling that worn by the inhabitants of other European nations, instead of one of an Asiatic character.

The reign of this amiable and wise young czar was a very brief one. It extended over a period of six years only; when his feeble constitution sunk under some disorder, and he died early in 1682, at the age of twenty-five. During the time he held the sceptre, he accomplished a considerable amount of good in those small matters which bring more benefit to the people than reputation to the sovereign. His was the work of preparation; and he proved himself a worthy forerunner of the national regenerator who was to effect that which he had laid his hand upon. Reformer as he was, the Russians regretted their young czar, and mourned his death. Though they disapproved of many of his designs, they were conscious that he laboured earnestly in the cause of his country.

Feodor, shortly before his death, appointed his half-brother Peter to succeed to the empire; for he knew that the infirmities of Ivan were such as to prevent the possibility of his discharging the duties of the government. The unhappy boy, besides being of defective intellect, was subject to epileptic fits, and nearly blind. Sensible of his own unfitness for a post of such serious responsibility, Ivan readily consented to the proposition of Feodor, and resigned a crown, the weight of which he had not strength to bear.

The princess Sophia, a sister of Ivan's, distinguished alike for her beauty, her ambition, and her reckless want of principle, was much incensed at this arrangement. It was her desire that Ivan should succeed to the throne, that she might be able to rule through the instrumentality of her feeble brother. The members of the house of Miloflafskoi, or the family of the mother of Ivan, were all ready to second any scheme she might conceive for that purpose; while the Narishkins, the family of Peter, were equally as ready to oppose it. Much excitement was produced by this division in the imperial family; and adherents to both parties arose in every quarter of the city.

The Miloflafskois had the advantage that arose from the possession of authority. The officers of state were in their confidence, the keys of power in their hands, and the bands of the Strelitz under their command, or at least nominally so; for these turbulent and ferocious troops were scarcely to be controlled by any power in the state. The designing Sophia resolved to make these men the instruments of her approach to power. She addressed herself to them even before Feodor had breathed his last, and pleaded in behalf of her brother Ivan; knowing, that if this poor puppet was placed upon the throne, she would have the field to herself, and could do as she pleased. It is said, that her beauty made a great impression upon the Strelitz; but it is more likely that her influence arose solely from the bribes which she scattered amongst them with great liberality. Within two days after the funeral of Feodor, the Strelitz assembled in arms to the number of 14,000, and proceeded in a body to the Kremlin. They had received their instructions; which were, in the tumult of insurrection to assassinate the chief members of the Narishkin family, and to take, if possible, the life of the young prince Peter. To give a false colour to their objects, a report was spread throughout the city, that the Narishkins had poisoned Feodor to make way for Peter; that some foreign physicians had been the guilty agents; and that a similar act of treachery was contemplated towards Ivan.

On arriving at the Kremlin, the Strelitz broke out into insurrection. They began by accusing nine of their colonels of defrauding them of their pay, and demanding the sums that had been taken from them, and that the nine officers should be given up to them. Both demands were complied with, and the defaulters subjected to the punishment of the bastinado. Subordination once broken, furious excesses soon followed. These were encouraged by the princess Sophia, who had given to the chiefs of the Strelitz a list of forty nobles, whom she declared to be enemies of the state, and deserving of death. Forcing their way into the palace, the Strelitz demanded the lives of the Narishkins. The princes Dolgorouki and Maffeof were the first victims. These unfortunate men were thrown out of the windows of the palace by the Strelitz, and received on the pikes of

their comrades beneath. Athanasius Narishkin, a brother of the widow of the czar Alexis, and uncle of Peter, was also murdered, together with most of those denounced by the fierce and ambitious Sophia. Three of the proscribed were dragged from the altar of a neighbouring church, stripped naked, and then cut to pieces. In their fury, the ruffian soldiers murdered a young nobleman, by mistake, for one of the uncles of Peter, of whom they were in search. When the deed was done, they discovered they had slain a member of the house of Soltikof, who, so far from incurring their vengeance, had ever been a great favourite with them. To show their regret, they respectfully carried the body of the young noble to his father, who, influenced by fear, gave them a considerable reward for so doing. The ladies of his household reproached him for his weakness. "Let us wait," responded the bereaved noble, "for an opportunity of being revenged." The retiring soldiers overheard the words, and returning, they dragged the aged man by the hair into the street, and cut his throat at his own door.

A Dutch physician named Daniel Vongad, had been accused of poisoning the czar Feodor—a crime of which the unfortunate man was undoubtedly innocent. While searching for Vongad, they met his son, and murdered him, because he would not inform them where his father was. Shortly afterwards, a German physician fell into their hands, and was instantly put to death by these ruffians; who said to him, "You are a doctor; and if you have not poisoned our master Feodor, you have poisoned others, and therefore you merit death."

Vongad was at length discovered, concealed in the palace in the disguise of a beggar. The princesses (sisters of the remorseless Sophia) implored the soldiers to spare him, assuring them that he was a very skilful man, and had taken great care of their brother Feodor. The wretches, thirsting for blood, replied, that he deserved to be put to death for sorcery; for that they had found the skeleton of a large toad, and the skin of a snake, in his cabinet. Having discovered John Narishkin, another brother of the mother of Peter, they put him and the poor physician to a mock trial, and condemned them to be cut to pieces. After the execution of this savage sentence, the heads, feet, and hands of the two victims were exposed upon the iron points of a balustrade of the palace. Happily the mother of Peter escaped with that young prince from this scene of horror. She fled with her boy in her arms; but the Strelitz were soon upon her track. When almost exhausted, she could hear the yells of her pursuers and the tramp of their feet. She had just time to gain the sanctuary of the convent of the Trinity, and to place her child upon the altar, when two of the ruffians entered. One of them seized the prince, and raised his weapon to dispatch the boy. At this moment, a noise of horsemen, joined, perhaps, to a feeling of superstitious terror, caused him to hesitate. A strange panic had fallen upon his comrades in the other part of the church; it extended itself to him: the ruffian released the prince, and fled; and the future regenerator of Russia was saved.

The result of all this violence was, that the feeble Ivan was declared czar. The poor boy shrunk from a responsibility to which he felt himself unequal, and desired that his half-brother, Peter, might be associated with him in the government. This proposition was considered reasonable, and brought about a compromise. The partisans of the princess Sophia thought it prudent to consent; and on the 6th of May, 1682, Ivan and Peter were crowned as joint sovereign, she herself being appointed as regent. The ambitious princess, though thus in possession of the imperial power, was not satisfied without being recognised as ruler in name as well as in fact. She enjoyed all the honours of sovereignty; her features were stamped upon the public coin, she signed all despatches, had the first seat in the council, and enjoyed an authority which knew no control.

To preserve the power of the sceptre in her own family, she married her brother Ivan to a young lady of the house of Soltikof. The way in which the consort of the czar was selected at this period, was remarkable and romantic. Voltaire observes, that on these occasions it seems as if we were reading the history of Ahasuerus, or that of Theodosius the younger. The ceremony was conducted according to Asiatic precedents. The most beautiful girls of the country were diligently sought for, and when a sufficient number were collected, they were invited to the palace, and dressed in their most costly apparel. Each had an apartment provided for her, but they dined together at a general table.

On these occasions, the czar attended either publicly or *incognito*, and had an opportunity of comparing their beauty, and listening to their conversation. Some authors assert, that he watched them upon other and unsuspected occasions, and even sometimes visited their chambers at night, to see which of them slept quietest. When he had made his selection, he presented the chosen lady with a handkerchief and a ring, as tokens of his affection and acceptance of her. The rest were honourably dismissed with presents, and returned to their respective homes. The chosen beauty was then declared in public, and had the title of grand princess conferred upon her.

Having induced her brother Ivan to marry, Sophia sent Peter to an obscure village, where, by causing his education to be neglected, and surrounding him with low companions, she trusted to render him unfit to attain and direct the powers of the state. Thus, with two czars upon the throne, the one almost an idiot, the other a mere child, the regent Sophia might have been an absolute sovereign but for other difficulties which arose in her path. Men's minds were unsettled, and a fresh insurrection broke out. The Strelitz were especially turbulent. They first broke into rebellion on the subject of religion; and, in defence of some new doctrine, drove the patriarch and his clergy from the cathedral with stones. After much confusion this outbreak was subdued, the leaders beheaded, and the soldiers pacified or intimidated.

But the Strelitz did not long remain quiet; they felt that they had given the sceptre into the hands of Sophia, and that she could not sufficiently repay them for such an important service. Like the prætorian guards of the Roman emperors, they assumed the right of dethroning as well as enthroning; and the regent soon became sensible that she must awe them into submission, or become merely a slavish instrument of their desires. Prince Kovanskoi, their commander, had been the confidant of the ambitious princess, and was necessarily in possession of dangerous secrets. At first he appears to have been merely jealous of the superior ascendancy of Prince Basil Galatzin, the favourite and lover of the princess, whom she had created generalissimo, minister of state, and lord-keeper. Soon, however, he enlarged the horizon of his ambition, and even aimed at the imperial dignity. With this view he proposed to the regent, that she should marry one of her sisters to his son. The acute princess suspected the design of Kovanskoi, and returned a haughty refusal. Irritated by her reply, he resolved on revenge, and determined to clear a path to the throne by the murder of the two czars, Sophia, and all who were attached to the imperial family.

At the instigation of Kovanskoi, the turbulent Strelitz again broke out into insurrection. On this occasion, also, the name of religion was perverted into an excuse for outrage. The soldiers demanded certain changes, but the object of their chief was merely ambitious. Moscow was thrown into a state of confusion; and the czars and the princesses having no power at hand to oppose the insurgents, fled to the fortified monastery of the Trinity, within twelve leagues of the capital. This retreat was at once a convent, a palace, and a fortress; and was encompassed with deep ditches and brick ramparts, on which were planted a numerous artillery. Ensconced within these walls, the imperial party prepared to defend themselves to the last extremity.

Prince Kovanskoi possessed far more ambition than talent; and he soon showed that he was no match for the crafty princess against whom he had conspired. She opened a negotiation, and having prevailed upon him to meet her half-way, she came to the spot with a considerable body of soldiers, and seizing Kovanskoi and the thirty-seven Strelitz who attended him, caused them to be instantly beheaded. The rebels were furious on learning the fate of their leader, and advanced upon the monastery, threatening death to everyone within it. While they were approaching, they received information that troops were marching on all sides against them; and their fury was succeeded, first by fear, and next by an absolute panic. Taking advantage of this, the regent, reassured by the assistance that was at hand, demanded that all the ringleaders should be delivered up to her, and that every tenth man in each regiment should also be surrendered as a security for the behaviour of the rest. The dispirited rebels at once complied, and the selected victims having taken leave of their wives and families, went in a long melancholy procession to the monastery. Two-thirds of the number carried blocks; while the remainder bore axes—the intended instruments of their own execution. On arriving at the open space in front of the building,

they laid their heads upon the blocks they had brought with them, and passively awaited their doom. The court and the spectators were touched by this exhibition of abject submission. The most guilty only were put to death; while the rest were pardoned and distributed among the frontier regiments.

This last was the act of the prince Galitzin, who sent the most mutinous corps of the Strelitz into the Ukraine, Kasan, and Siberia. Sophia, who now recovered the regal power, was fortunate in the possession of this man as her minister. The Polish envoy then in Russia described him as superior, in every respect, to any other person in that tempestuous court—as being not only polite, but magnificent; full of grand designs, and learned beyond any of his countrymen; being a master of the Latin tongue, at that time almost unknown in Russia—a man of an active spirit, of indefatigable application; in short, a genius superior to the times he lived in, and capable, had he leisure and power as he had inclination, of reforming the manners of Russia.

The partisans of the young czar Peter, discerning in him some touches of mental vigour, lived in hopes of eventually securing for him the sole power of the state. With this object they watched anxiously for an opportunity of weakening the regent Sophia, and of bringing her minister, Galitzin, into disgrace.

It was known that Galitzin had more talent for the cabinet than for the field; and for this reason his enemies clamoured for a war with the Tartars of the Crimea, who still exacted from Russia an annual tribute of 60,000 roubles. Such a condition was very humiliating to Russia; but, under the circumstances, with an unsettled government, and an almost exhausted treasury, it was not prudent to enter upon a war. Yet the Narishkin faction induced Galitzin to take the field, in the year 1687, at the head of the army, with the hope that a disaster might prove his ruin; or that, at least during his absence, they might more effectually advance the claims of Peter.

The army is said to have amounted to 300,000 men; but they were undisciplined and ill-armed. Galitzin was, moreover, encumbered with an enormous quantity of baggage, and he wasted the strength of his men in marches and counter-marches, which failed to produce any equivalent results. The war was prolonged over two campaigns, attended with a loss of 40,000 soldiers, and ended without victory. The enemies of Galitzin had calculated correctly: the unsuccessful general incurred general odium, from which the regent Sophia by no means escaped.

In the meantime Peter grew up towards manhood in his retirement. Left as far as possible without education, the regent had placed around him a number of dissolute young Russians, many of whom were mere adventurers, who, though but lads in years, possessed the vices of men, and had become reckless of honour, and even of reputation. Sophia naturally supposed that Peter would sink to the level of this depraved set, and never afterwards rise above it. She was both right and wrong: partly right, because Peter imbibed from these dissolute lads evil habits which never left him; and partly wrong, because she had not recognised in her half-brother the originality of character and firmness of will that led him to attain an ascendancy over them. He acquired their vices; but he attracted both their affection and esteem. Much of their time was passed in those profligate amusements to which Peter ever remained attached; but the military taste of the young czar soon became apparent, and he formed his companions into a corps of soldiers. In this mimic military community he set an example of discipline himself, by entering the ranks first as a drummer, and becoming successively a private soldier, an officer, and, finally, commander of the troop. While engaged in these instructive sports, Peter erected fortifications, and himself wheeled the earth from the trenches in a barrow constructed by his own hands. The spirit of the thing was contagious, and in a short time the whole village became a sort of military school. But the time of the young czar was not wholly occupied in this manner. Amongst his companions was a young Genevese, named François Lefort, who, having quitted his father's house at the age of fourteen, had, after many vicissitudes, entered the military service of Russia during the reign of the czar Feodor, and greatly distinguished himself against the Tartars. At length he obtained an introduction to the czar Peter, who took a liking to him, and engaged him to be one of his companions, or amusers, as they were called. Lefort was a self-educated man, and not deeply versed in literature, the arts, or the military sciences. But young as he was, he had seen the world,

and profited by what he had seen. Though not deep, he was versatile, and possessed very agreeable manners. He was something of a linguist also, and not unacquainted with mathematics; and it was under his instructions that Peter made a rapid progress in the elementary branches of literature and science. Probably the irregular genius of the young czar would have revolted against the drudgery of a systematic education; but information thus acquired by snatches, and to some extent by stealth, possessed an air of fascination extremely attractive to him.

Sophia beheld with pleasure her half-brother occupied with dissipated and seemingly boyish pursuits. The military displays of his troops she regarded as the idle frolics of boys, and fancied that the midnight carousals and premature habits of the young czar, would, in a few years, induce a bodily and mental weakness which would render him incapable of governing. She was deceived. Peter, though dissolute, was not wholly so: though his education had been purposely neglected, his great natural capacity enabled him to acquire and digest every useful information that came in his way. A sense of the dignity and responsibility of the position that was withheld from him, crossed his mind, or rather penetrated it, and dwelt there. Though his position was such as a boy might submit to, yet a man could not endure it without shame. Animated by a hope of obtaining the reality of that sceptre of which he and Ivan scarcely touched the shadow, and encouraged by his friends, he made his appearance occasionally in the city of Moscow, and also in the senate, where he took his seat by the side of his feeble-minded brother. Such was the state of affairs, when, in the June of 1689, the friends of Peter brought about a marriage between him and Eudoxia Federowna Lapuchin, the daughter of a Russian noble. This union was intended not only to allure Peter from the dissipation to which he was so much addicted, but also to defeat the scheme of the princess Sophia with respect to Ivan's wife, who was supposed to have sullied the purity of the marriage bed, and to be in a state of criminal pregnancy.

The decided bearing of Peter in the senate startled Sophia, who saw that she had been deceived in her estimate of his mental powers. Several contentions took place between them; and each recognised in the other an enemy whom it was necessary to remove. Accounts of the promising character of Peter had gone abroad, and he was gaining ground in popular favour. Sophia felt that her choice lay between some immediate and desperate step, and her speedy removal from the power she had usurped. So remorseless a woman probably felt no compunction in consequence of the resolution at which she arrived, which was, to procure the assassination of her rival. She appears to have been steeled to this base purpose by an open quarrel, of a serious kind, which took place between them. On the occasion of some religious festival, Sophia insisted on attending as regent, or, according to some authorities, as czarina. We should presume the latter to be the case, as the regency of the princess had been long admitted, and Peter had never questioned it. On this occasion he vehemently denied her claim, and an angry altercation was the result. The imperious Sophia, accustomed to command, and more irritated than convinced by the expostulations of the young czar, persisted in her pretensions. As there was no umpire to whom the quarrel could be referred for decision, Peter withdrew from the ceremony, and protested, in the name of the sovereign power, against an act of assumption on the part of the princess, which he regarded as an usurpation.

Once again Sophia resorted to the Strelitz as the instruments of her vengeance; and a body of 600 of these desperate men was sent during the night to the residence of Peter, with orders to seize or dispatch him. The friends of the young czar were on the alert: he had received information of the murderous design against him, and had secretly left the city, and retired to the fortified monastery of the Trinity. There he summoned all the nobles of his party and the friends of Russia, and entreated their assistance to set aside an oppressive usurpation. His call was generally responded to, for the Russians are remarkably "orthodox" in their devotion to the true sovereign; and Sophia, if she had not excited disgust by her assumption of imperial power, had at least failed to attract the affections of the people.

Peter soon had a considerable force at his command; and the Strelitz, disappointed in their attempt on his life, were alarmed at the danger they had incurred, and abandoned an enterprise which gave no promise

of success. The princess Sophia, feeling herself deserted, sent commissioners to her half-brother, to propose terms of accommodation, and express a hope that their differences might be amicably adjusted. Hesitation at this time, on the part of the young czar, would probably have had an evil influence on the whole of his life. But he felt himself master of the position, and refused all terms except those he dictated, which were, the immediate and entire abandonment, by the princess, of her authority as regent. The commissioners themselves, on hearing Peter's statement of the misconduct and treachery of Sophia, abandoned their trust, and attached themselves to his cause. The princess then left Moscow at the head of a considerable guard, and proceeded towards the convent of the Trinity, with the hope of being able to soften Peter, or, by her beauty and intrigues, regain her lost influence over the soldiery.

She was met by messengers from the czar, who forbade her approach, and demanded, in the name of the czar, the surrender of Scheglovitoï (the commander of the Strelitz), the banishment of her minister, Prince Galitzin, and her full resignation of all right and title to the throne of Russia. These terms were a death-blow to the ambition of the princess; but she was helpless, and compelled to submit to them. Not only was she deserted by her former supporters, but the anger of the people was excited against her on account of her recent attempt on the life of Peter. Galitzin was banished, his wealth confiscated, and an allowance made to him scarcely sufficient for the support of life. The chief of the Strelitz, together with many of his followers, suffered the punishment of the knout, and were then beheaded. Nor did the princess escape with the forfeiture of her power; for Peter compelled her to enter a convent, where she was confined during the remainder of her life. This was in September, 1689, in which month, the young czar issued a proclamation, stating, that the name of the late regent would no longer be mentioned in any public document: at the same time, her image was struck from the coinage, and her favourites and servants dismissed from the Kremlin.

Peter and his supporters then made a solemn entrance into Moscow, where, in the sight of the assembled people, he embraced his brother Ivan, who left all the power in his hands. From this period Peter reigned alone; for his brother had no share in the regal authority. Sensible of his unfitness for the duties of his high position, Ivan led a retired life, and died in the year 1696.

CHAPTER XVIII

NEW ERA IN RUSSIAN HISTORY; PETER THE SOLE RULER; HE RAISES AN ARMY ON THE EUROPEAN PRINCIPLE; ADDRESSES HIMSELF TO THE CREATION OF A NAVY; PETER DECLARES WAR AGAINST TURKEY; AFTER BEING REPULSED FROM AZOFF, HE SUCCEEDS IN TAKING IT; HIS TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO MOSCOW; THE CZAR RESOLVES TO TRAVEL, THAT HE MAY CIVILISE RUSSIA BY TRANSPLANTING INTO IT THE ARTS OF OTHER NATIONS; CONSPIRACY TO MURDER PETER; HIS FEROCIOUS REVENGE ON THE BAFFLED ASSASSINS.

We commence a new era in Russian history. At this point there is a gulph placed between the past and the future of the empire. The past is Asiatic, the future European: the past is a blind, unsteady struggle from barbarism; the future a progress—slow, but full of purpose—towards civilisation. Russia had gone through a long probationary period of political discord and social abasement; a period necessarily long, in consequence of the barbarism of her people, and the numerous races from which they sprung; but she was now ready for the iron hand that was to break the chains of the past, and mould her into a better and a softer future. The wild races of which that scattered population was composed, had become an empire. They had been bound together into a people, and become a bulwark, which broke off from Europe the savage inundations of the robber-hosts of Asia. The Tartars had exhausted their dangerous

power by dashing themselves blindly against the territories and cities of the north: the time was coming when the Turks were to do the same. The Russian empire both was, and is, an imperious necessity. Her supposed dream of European conquest was a delusion, which would have led to her ruin and probable partition; but her natural work is in the East. In that direction she has much of inert barbarism to crush beneath her iron feet. Imperfect as her own civilisation is even to this hour, she is yet the pioneer of progress, and will share with England the gigantic labour of regenerating the Asiatic world. It is the very similarity of the destiny of these two great empires that created a jealousy between them, and at length led to war. But the governments of England and Russia had very little intention of permanently injuring each other; they know that the decrepid Eastern world has spoil enough for each of them, and that they were wasting their efforts by attacking each other.

During the remarkable reign of Peter, Russia was, to speak metaphorically, reborn; and from this period dates her greatness, and, indeed, her history, as a European state. Empires must progress or decay. It has been well observed, that policy would have drawn Russia into an intercourse with Europe, even if necessity had not compelled her to advance. A writer whom we have frequently quoted, says—"What appeared at this crisis to be wanted, was a master mind that should break up old customs, and enlighten the empire against its will. Bound on all sides by mountains and arid plains, except where a wild sea, that for three-fourths of the year was locked up in ice, interrupted the monotonous girth with a no less repulsive barrier, Russia presented a spectacle of moral and physical exclusion, which could not be made to yield unless before some gigantic power that should be capable of creating a new people out of the sturdy and hitherto changeless elements of the old. The man who should effect this mighty revolution required many qualities, as rare in their separate existence as they are almost unknown in their combination: a mind springing far beyond its age; a judgment sound and rapid; a spirit of self-devotion to the interests of humanity; herculean bodily strength; firmness of purpose; and indomitable energy. All these qualities were comprehended in Peter, and, fortunately, he dedicated them with inflexible zeal to the benefit of his country."

When, in 1689, Peter obtained the government, and really commenced his chequered but brilliant reign, he was but in his eighteenth year. In person he was tall and well made. He had a robust constitution, and a countenance which regular features and eyes that sparkled with vivacity, gave some claim to the term handsome. When grave, the expression of his face often indicated great severity; but at other times he was lively and sociable, and always full of energy and activity.

Young as Peter was, he immediately addressed himself to the task of reforming the entire government of the country and the manners of the people. He began with the army; for the art of war, as practised by the more civilised nations of Europe, was almost unknown in Russia. The empire had no regular army, nor any regular troops except the Strelitz; and they were turbulent in times of peace, and little to be depended on in those of war. Having devoted himself assiduously to a study of the principles of military science, Peter resolved to raise a standing army on the European principle. With this object, he appointed two of his early companions (Lefort the Genevan, and General Patrick Gordon, a Scotchman) to raise and drill some regiments of foreign troops. They were readily enabled to execute their commission, on account of the troubles which at that time agitated both France and Scotland. Lefort raised a regiment of 12,000 men, of which force he was made the general, and five colonels were appointed to serve under him. The troops raised by General Gordon increased this force to 20,000 men, who were intended to balance the power of the Strelitz, and, if necessary, extinguish them as enemies to the state.

While thus surrounding himself with a well-organised army, Peter did not lose sight of the great necessity of Russia—a navy, and outlets to the sea. Without them the empire would be a lonely giant dwelling in the midst of deserts, and shut out from communication with the rest of the world. To speak without a metaphor, Russia, without ships and sea-coasts, would be without commerce and civilisation. Her people were isolated to an extent that made them barbarous and unsocial. An ancient law had prohibited them from leaving the country; and, in their ignorance, they despised

the inhabitants of other lands. This isolation not only kept them ignorant and boorish, but was an almost insurmountable obstacle in the path of national improvement. Peter resolved this should be changed—that Russia should have ships and harbours, commerce and intercourse with nations of more enlarged ideas and polished manners—that his country should take her place amongst the greatest empires of the earth, and become all that her vast territory and immense natural resources would permit!

The creation of a navy in such a country as Russia, whose only outlets were, at that time, into the two inland seas—the Euxine and the Caspian, and the inclement waters of the Arctic ocean—was a work of almost insuperable difficulty; the more so to a man who, it is said, on account of some accident which occurred in his infancy, entertained such a dread of the water as to be seized with a shuddering, and sometimes with convulsions, even if obliged to pass over a brook. The authenticity of the story has been questioned; but if it is true, the future reformer utterly subdued, if he did not altogether extinguish, this antipathy.

It has been said that, in every task, nothing is so difficult as the beginning. One day Peter was walking in the gardens of Ismaelof, a summer palace built by his grandfather, when he saw the wreck of a small English sailing-boat lying rotting in the grounds. Turning to Timmerman, his master of mathematics and a native of Germany, he inquired how that little boat came to be of a different construction from those which he had seen on the Moska? The mathematician explained that it was made to go with sails, the use of which was not then known in Russia. The czar desired to make a trial of it, and directed that the boat should be repaired and rendered fit for service. Here lay a difficulty: where was a workman to be found able to undertake the task? Peter's father, Alexis, had imported a ship-builder and a number of carpenters from Holland, for the purpose of building vessels to trade down the river Volga to the Caspian Sea; but the piracies of Stenka Radzin and his followers extinguished this budding commerce. The Dutch artisans left the country—all except one, named Brandt, a master-carpenter and very good ship-builder. After a considerable search, this man was discovered in obscurity at Moscow, and employed to restore the wreck. This he did so successfully, that Peter ordered him to build two frigates and three yachts, which, when completed, were placed on a large lake, and occasionally navigated by the czar himself, who soon acquired a knowledge of the duties of a pilot. Here, then, was the beginning small enough, it is true, but one which led to great results nevertheless. In all remarkable projects, it is not the bulk of the germ we have to consider, but the capacity of growth.

A few years later—that is, in 1694—Peter visited Archangel, the chief town on the shores of the White Sea. He took Brandt with him; and, after inspecting the merchant vessels that lay in the harbour, ordered the Dutchman to build him another vessel larger than the previous ones. Peter carefully inspected the progress, and frequently assisted the workmen. When his ship was built, he embarked in it upon the White Sea, and acted in the capacity of steersman. Peter had, no doubt, visited Archangel with the object of personally observing how far it was adapted by nature for becoming a great commercial port. He soon became convinced that it was too remote from the centre of Russia, and also from the chief ports of other countries, to command any great trade, or be a convenient outlet for the commerce or fleets of the empire. His thoughts, therefore, naturally reverted to the Black Sea, the Caspian, and also to the Baltic. Then it was that he saw the policy of Ivan the Terrible in his constant endeavours to obtain possession of Livonia, which necessarily gave to those who held it an outlet to the Baltic. Probably from this time dates the conception of those gigantic projects of territorial extension which Peter afterwards so steadily pursued, and even bequeathed to his successors.

The czar left Archangel to put a part of his views into immediate execution. Turkey and Poland were still at war, and the sultan was also engaged with other formidable enemies. Taking advantage of these circumstances, Peter declared war upon the Ottoman Porte. This was not from caprice, or love of military glory: war with this remarkable man was not an exciting pastime, but always a means to some definite end which could not be obtained without it. In this instance he desired to extend his southern frontier to the shores of the Black Sea; and for this purpose he desired to obtain possession of Azoff, which was then an important fortress in the hands of the Turks.

It will be seen, by referring to a map of

Russia, that Azoff stands at the mouth of the Don, where that river pours its waters into the little sea which bears the same name as the town. Peter had ordered vessels to be constructed, with which he intended to sail down the river and attack Azoff by water, while his troops assailed it by land. Many difficulties necessarily lay in the way of projects to which his people were so unused, and the vessels could not be got ready in time. The czar, therefore, was compelled to conduct this his first campaign by land only.

The Russian army commenced its march in the summer of 1695. Conscious of his own inexperience in military matters, and desirous of setting an example of subordination to his nobility, Peter served in the army as a volunteer, and gave the command to Generals Lefort, Gordon, Scheremetof and Schein. The fortress of Azoff was very strong, and defended by a powerful garrison. After a long encampment before the walls, and a vain attempt to storm them, the Russians were compelled to raise the siege. This circumstance was largely attributable to the conduct of a native of Dantzic, named Jacob, who had the direction of the artillery under the command of General Schein. The latter had condemned Jacob to the terrible and disgraceful punishment of the knout. The Russians submitted to this humiliation, and remained in the service; but Jacob resolved to be revenged. Accordingly he spiked the Russian cannon, deserted to the Turks, turned Mohammedan, and defended the town with great success.

Though baffled in this attempt upon Azoff, Peter renewed it in the spring of the following year, 1696. By that time his little fleet, consisting of twelve armed vessels, was ready; and he had remedied many defects which action had rendered apparent in his army. Instead of separating it into divisions independent of each other, he placed it under the sole command of General Schein. Its numerical strength, also, was increased, and several foreign engineers employed to give greater effect to the artillery department. This time Peter was more fortunate; his vessels defeated the Turkish saicks that had been sent from Constantinople; the fire of his cannon also proved superior to that of the enemy; and on the 28th of July the Turks surrendered the town to the victors, and even complied with Peter's demand that they should deliver up the traitor Jacob.

Azoff once in the hands of the czar, he made preparations for keeping it there. With this view he improved the fortifications, erected a large harbour, and prepared to augment his fleet. His design was to fit out a fleet to act against the Turks, consisting of nine 60-gun ships, and of forty-one more, carrying each from thirty to fifty pieces of cannon. The principal nobility and the wealthiest merchants were obliged to contribute to the fitting-out of this fleet; and as Peter thought that the estates of the clergy ought to bear a proportion in the service of the common cause, orders were issued that the patriarch, the bishops, and heads of the church, should find money to forward this new expedition, in honour of their country, and for the general advantage of Christendom. He also obliged the Cossacks to build a number of light boats, such as they were in the habit of using, with which they might easily infest the whole coast of the Crimea. His object was, to drive both Tartars and Turks from this fertile peninsula—the present Italy of Russia—and to establish, through Georgia, a trade with Persia.

The changes Peter had made, notwithstanding their evidently beneficial nature, had excited some uneasiness, if not discontent, among the slothful and superstitious people. This was not unobserved by the czar, who endeavoured to counteract it by deeds of a benevolent and parental kind. He had already mitigated the suffering resulting from a season of great scarcity, by his exertions in procuring such a supply of corn as sufficed for the most urgent wants of the people. He now resolved, on his return to Moscow, to gratify the national vanity and the love of amusement of his subjects, by making a magnificent triumphal entry into the capital, after the manner of the ancient Romans. If something of personal pride and ostentation was mingled with the motives that actuated him in taking this step, we may yet believe the assertion of his biographers, that it was intended less as a memorial of his own triumph, than to reward the soldiers by a public token of admiration, and to inspire the spectators with patriotic enthusiasm. Peter gave the foremost places in the procession to General Schein and to Lefort, whom he had created admiral of the fleet. He himself mingled with the other officers, endeavouring by this example to convince the nobility that merit ought to be the only

road to military preferment. Jacob, the artillery officer who had deserted to the Turks, was drawn along in the procession in a cart, together with the gibbet to which his body had been fastened after he had been broken upon the wheel. Fireworks and other rejoicings attended this military festival, and a medal was struck to commemorate it. On one side it bore the inscription, "Peter I., the august Emperor of Muscovy;" on the reverse was a representation of Azoff, and the words, "Victorious by fire and water."

Peter was not the monarch to rest satisfied with military triumphs and the applauses of his people. The entrance he had obtained into the Black Sea was useful, but insufficient as an outlet for commerce and an opening for civilisation. The Euxine did not make a passage to the arts and commerce of Europe. Savage and uncultivated Asia lay stretched along its shores, and the cannon of Constantinople closed up the mouth of the Bosphorus to all but friendly vessels. The thoughts of the czar reverted to the Baltic—it alone could connect Russia with the rest of Europe; but the way to its indurated coasts lay through a country then in the possession of the warlike Swedes, and thickly studded with strong fortresses. Yet the end to be accomplished balanced the dangers to be encountered, and Peter resolved to overcome all obstacles that shut out his country from intercourse with those European nations which, in manners, knowledge, and the arts, were so much beyond it.

Matters were not yet ripe for the daring experiments he contemplated. Suppose that he was master of Livonia, the Baltic would be almost valueless to him till he was well prepared to turn its advantages to account. Unless he could cover its waters with an efficient fleet, they were but as a thunderbolt in the hands of a child. Truly great minds are ever patient, and recognise the fact that haste and rashness are weakness. Peter resolved first to gain from other countries that information on naval and other topics which did not exist in his own. With this object he sent, in the year 1697, sixty young Russians of Lefort's regiment to Venice and Leghorn, to learn the art of navigation. Forty more he sent to Holland, to instruct themselves in the art of building and working large vessels; while he dispatched others to Germany, to become acquainted with the military discipline of that nation. The expense attending upon these circumstances he provided for by raising the custom-house duties from five to ten per cent.

Peter was not yet satisfied with his efforts to obtain a knowledge of the arts of other nations. He desired to see with his own eyes that civilisation he longed to introduce into Russia. He was now four-and-twenty years of age—one admirably fitted for the endurance of fatigue and the habit of observation. "The period," says an interesting writer, "was one when popular opinion had revolutionised nearly the whole surface of the civilised world. It was admirably adapted to his purposes. In England, the people had just deposed a weak and bigoted monarch, who attempted to arrest the progress of mind; and William III., the intrepid stadtholder of the house of Orange, filled the throne. In France, Louis XIV. was on the point of closing the memorable treaty of Ryswick; Charles XII. had just ascended the throne of Sweden, and the elector of Brandenburg had assumed the regal honours. In Poland, the death of Sobieski opened a contest for the sovereignty, which lay between the Prince of Conti and Augustus of Saxony; the latter of whom, for politic reasons, was favoured by Peter; while Mustapha II., quailing before mightier arms, was overthrown by the emperor Leopold. At this juncture, while other powers were engrossed in the agitations consequent upon improved civilisation, Peter the Great left Moscow to go forth into Europe, and glean the ripe ears of the harvest for his own empire."

Before the czar's departure, an alarming outbreak occurred, in which Peter narrowly escaped with his life. Notwithstanding his recent triumph at Azoff, he was unable to win the affections of the people. Ignorant, bigoted, and slavish, there was scarcely an act of his life that did not grate against some of their prejudices. He had brought foreign artisans, and even foreign troops, into Russia; sent young men out of the country—an act which the clergy regarded as both dangerous and profane; and had even resolved to travel abroad himself. His manners, also, were displeasing to his dull-minded subjects, and quite inconsistent with those which they thought becoming in a czar. The solemn pomp and ostentatious haughtiness to which they were accustomed, were not to be seen in Peter. His manners were familiar even to vulgarity. Instead of

appearing but seldom in public, and then surrounded by guards, he was to be seen almost every day in the square of the Kremlin, exercising the troops; or to be met with, in the plainest dress, in the streets, on his way to visit some private citizen; or in the workshops of the artisans, where he passed a great deal of his time.

It might be supposed that the unpopularity produced by such inoffensive acts as these, would be but slight and transient. It was not so. The nobles felt their dignity lessened by a novel system which made rank dependent upon intellectual strength; and the clergy were vehemently opposed to Peter's innovations, because they knew their power was based upon the ignorance of the multitude, and it therefore became their interest to keep down the spirit of inquiry. As for the people themselves, generations of barbarism and ignorance, added to their constitutional indolence, made them regard all improvement with detestation. The comprehensive mind of the czar perceived and understood all this. He knew that he should have much opposition to overcome, and he resolved to overcome it, even though it was necessary to crush those who offered it. He saw that it was imperative that he should grasp and wield all the power of the empire, for that the state of Russia required a wise despot for its regeneration. He saw that a mild exercise of power would not always serve; and he resolved, if necessary, to terrify the people into submission by deeds of appalling severity.

Influenced by the prevailing discontent, the turbulent Strelitz, who had been supplanted by the regiments disciplined after the European fashion, entered into a conspiracy to murder the czar. Tsikler and Sukanim, two leaders of the Strelitz, were at the head of the plot. The design of these men was, to set the city on fire at night, and when Peter hastened to assist in extinguishing it, as they were convinced he would, to murder him in the confusion. After this, they intended to massacre all the foreign soldiers, release the princess Sophia from her convent, and place her upon the throne.

On the evening of the night appointed for this sanguinary outbreak, the principal conspirators assembled at a banquet held at the house of Sukanim. Here they stimulated their courage with large draughts of wine, and prepared themselves by this means for the work of slaughter that was to follow. Two of the number, however, quailed before a contemplation of the approaching massacre. On the plea of having drank too much, they obtained permission to return home and sleep until midnight; but on leaving the place of rendezvous, they hurried to the czar, and revealed the particulars of the conspiracy. Peter immediately sent an order to the captain of one of his regiments, to proceed with his troop to Sukanim's house, and silently surround it exactly at the hour of ten;—that is, ten was the hour Peter intended to write, and believed he had written; but in the confusion of the moment he wrote eleven.

Shortly after ten, Peter went alone to the dwelling of Sukanim, expecting to find the conspirators already in the hands of his guards. The soldiers were not to be seen; but the doors of the house were open, and a considerable noise was heard from within. Peter supposed that this proceeded from the struggle and confusion attending the arrest of the rebels; and acting on the impulse of the moment, he at once entered. To his astonishment, he found himself alone in the midst of the men who, in an excited and half-intoxicated state, were at that moment vociferating an oath that they would put him to death. At his unexpected entrance they rose in confusion, and would probably have rushed upon him at once, in the belief that they had been betrayed; but Peter's presence of mind saved him. Though surprised and angry that his commands had not been obeyed, he assumed a cheerful air, and advancing unhesitatingly among the throng of conspirators, greeted them with familiarity. Having, he said, seen a light in the house as he was passing by, and hearing the sounds of revelry, he entered with a view of sharing in their pleasures, and begged leave to join them at their table.

The intended assassins, deceived by the cordiality and apparent unsuspiciousness of his manners, returned his greeting, and gave him as unconstrained a welcome as they could. Putting the wine about, they drank his health; but soon the leaders amongst them began to exchange looks and signals concerning the expediency of dispatching him at once. Peter saw his danger, and kept his eyes fixed upon their movements, though without seeming to do so. The restraint which each party felt, soon produced an uneasiness in the com

pany; and one of the conspirators, leaning over the table to Sukanim, whispered, "Brother, it is time?" The latter hesitated, and muttered, "Not yet!" feeling, no doubt, an additional responsibility as master of the house, and perhaps some sense of shame that one who had entered beneath his roof as a guest, should be inhospitably murdered there. Peter heard the whisper; but fortunately, at the same time, he caught the tramp of his approaching guards. Starting from his seat, he felled the traitor to the ground with a blow upon the face, and shouted, "Not yet, villain; if it is not yet time for you, scoundrel, it is for me!" At the same moment the guards entered the apartment, and the startled conspirators fell upon their knees and implored pardon. Peter was immovable, and ordered them all to be instantly put in chains. Then turning sternly to the captain of the guards, he struck him on the face, and reproached him for his want of punctuality. The officer, who was exact to the time he had been commanded, produced his written order, and the czar found the error was his own. He at once acknowledged it, proclaimed the fidelity of the officer, and endeavoured to atone for the blow he had inflicted by kissing him upon the forehead, and embracing him in his arms.

Peter's vengeance might have been politic, but it was barbarous and revolting. He sometimes expressed an admiration for the imperial savage, Ivan the Terrible; and on this occasion he rivalled him in the exercise of a merciless administration of justice. The wretches first had their limbs dislocated upon the rack; then separately severed from their bodies; after which, the maimed and mostly lifeless trunks were decapitated. The heads were subsequently exposed on the summit of a column, around the base of which the limbs of the traitors were piled with disgusting symmetry. With all Peter's greatness of mind, he had, when provoked, a ferocious love of cruelty, even for its own sake. When he surrendered himself for a time to the savage instincts of his nature, he actually experienced gratification from the sight of humanity writhing in torture, or pouring out its life-blood on the scaffold. Much he did in aftertimes that was utterly indefensible; but for this exhibition of revengeful justice some excuse may be offered. It was his first stern lesson to a people who would not be governed except by the sword; his first intimation, that if mildness could not win them to submit to beneficial changes, severity should coerce them into doing so—a sad but inevitable necessity.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CZAR TRAVELS; VISITS THE DOCKYARD OF SARDAM; ENGAGES HIMSELF AS A COMMON CARPENTER; HE VISITS ENGLAND, AND IS RECEIVED WITH GREAT COURTESY BY WILLIAM III.; PETER RETURNS TO HOLLAND, AND THEN VISITS VIENNA; HE RETURNS TO RUSSIA ON ACCOUNT OF A REBELLION OF THE STRELITZ; FRIGHTFUL SEVERITIES OF PETER; DEATH OF LEFORT; SOCIAL AND LEGISLATIVE REFORMS OF PETER HE TOLERATES ALL DENOMINATIONS OF CHRISTIANS IN RUSSIA; ALTERS THE CALENDAR; PROGRESS OF REFORM.

HAVING struck terror into the discontented people, and appalled the turbulent Strelitz by the fearful example he had made of their traitorous leaders, the czar commenced his journey in the month of April, 1697. He travelled *incognito* in the train of General Lefort and the boyards Mentschikoff and Golowin, whom he appointed ambassadors to the countries he intended to visit. An old boyard, of iron resolution and inflexible honesty, named Romodanovsky, together with another, were entrusted with the government during the absence of the czar, who directed them to consult with the rest of the nobility in matters of importance. General Gordon also remained at Moscow with Peter's foreign troops, whose very lives depended upon their fidelity to their master. Hated as they were by the nobles, the Strelitz, and the people, they could only repose in security under the shelter of his favour.

Peter and his ambassadors left Russia by the way of Novgorod, and proceeded from thence through Esthonia and Livonia, which were at that time in the possession of Sweden. At Livonia he desired to see the fortifications of Riga, its capital—a wish the governor of them refused to grant; which slight Peter did not readily forget. Indeed, from that time he resolved to annex Livonia to his dominions. He then proceeded to Prussia, the alliance of which growing power he thought it prudent to cultivate. The elector, Frederic, who afterwards assumed the title of king, received the czar with an ostentatious magnificence; and the most costly presents were exchanged on both sides. Peter dressed in the German fashion; but the contrast between the French costume, which prevailed at the court of Berlin, and the long Asiatic robes of the Russians, with their caps adorned with pearls and diamonds, and their scimitars hanging by their sides, had a remarkable effect. During his stay at Berlin, Peter, in a fit of intoxication, drew his sword upon his favourite general, Lefort; but, happily, he was pacified before mischief ensued.

At length the Russian party arrived at Amsterdam, where Peter assumed the disguise of a Dutch skipper, and went to the great ship-building village of Sardam. He was much surprised at the number of workmen constantly employed, the order and exactness observed in their several departments, the dispatch with which they built and fitted out ships, the quantity of stores, and the various machines for the purpose of economising labour. He was incessant in his inquiries and observations, and sometimes placed himself in positions of danger; as, in order to see everything himself, he climbed the rigging of vessels, and inspected those parts of them where only an experienced sailor could expect to be secure. On these occasions he was greatly annoyed by the vulgar curiosity of the people, who not only came in crowds to see a powerful sovereign in the habit of a seaman, but impeded his progress by thronging upon him, and even frequently subjected him to rude exclamations and remarks. At times he was so irritated by this annoyance, that his rage brought on one of those epileptic fits to which it is said he was subject from infancy. They were sometimes even excited by the sight of any object to which he entertained an antipathy, such as blackbeetles, and certain reptiles which he held in abhorrence.

The czar purchased a boat, made a mast for it himself, worked at the forges, the rope-yards, the mills for timber-sawing, and, by degrees, educated himself as a working ship-builder. Then he engaged himself as a common carpenter, that he might have an opportunity of impressing upon his mind all he had learnt. He took the name of Peter Timmerman, though his fellow-workmen generally called him Master Peter, or Peterbas. While in this strange position, he scrupulously attended his work at the required hours, prepared his own meals, worked hard from morning till night, and received his wages like the rest of the workmen. The latter were at first greatly astonished to see a sovereign their companion, but they gradually got used to it. Here, for seven weeks, the ruler of a vast empire lived in a little shingle-hut, on the proceeds of his own labour, in the intervals of which he corresponded with his ministers at home. During this period, the famous English warrior, the Duke of Marlborough, visited Sardam, and put himself in the way of Peter. The great soldier, who was proud of his handsome person, and almost a dandy in the matter of dress, beheld the czar habited in a red woollen shirt, duck trowsers, and a sailor's hat; and seated, adze in hand, on a rough log of timber, which lay on the ground. His dark-brown hair fell in natural curls about his bare neck, while his keen eyes glanced from one object to another with singular rapidity, as he conversed with great earnestness and much gesticulation with some strangers. Marlborough approached, and contrived, in some measure, to engage the czar's attention by some remarks on ship-building. They were interrupted by the appearance of a stranger in a foreign costume, who respectfully presented an official letter to the seeming workman. Peter rose instantly, snatched the letter, tore off the seals, and read it eagerly. The duke, who had achieved so great a military reputation in Europe, and exercised almost more political influence than any man not seated on a throne, walked unregarded away. It was from his miserable hut at Sardam that Peter issued instructions to his army in the Ukraine, under the command of General Schein and Prince Dolgorouki, then acting against the Turks, which resulted in a victory over the latter, and the conquest of the town of Perekop.

Peter desired Lefort and the other ambassadors to disguise themselves also as working-men, and follow his example; but they by no means relished the scheme, and contrived to evade partaking the severe and unromantic toils of their master. Treating his desire as a royal jest, they dwelt in a comfortable house, and enjoyed all the luxuries of their station; while he lived in a hovel, and subsisted upon fare of the coarsest description. During this period, he went frequently from Sardam to Amsterdam, to hear the anatomical lectures of the celebrated Ruish, from which he derived so much benefit, as to be able to perform some surgical operations in case of necessity. He also studied natural philosophy, under Vitsen, a man celebrated for his patriotic virtue, and for the noble use he made of his immense fortune. In addition to this, the indefatigable czar attended the hospitals, where he learned to bleed and draw teeth; visited nearly every literary, scientific, or charitable institution; together with all extensive manufacturing establishments, which he examined carefully, with the intention of introducing similar ones into Russia. Whenever he beheld anything new, he made inquiries concerning its nature and use, and his active mind did not rest until he obtained an explanation.

Having passed about nine months in Holland, Peter left that country, and proceeded to England, where he was very hospitably received by William III. These two remarkable men appear to have had a generous and enlarged estimation of each other. The czar arrived in this country in the January of 1698; his object being to learn the theory of ship-building, and to visit the dockyards of Deptford, Woolwich, and Chatham. King William appointed the Marquis of Carmarthen to attend upon him, who agreed so well with the whims of the autocrat, that they are reported to have sat up together late into the nights, drinking brandy and pepper. William also placed two vessels at the command of the czar whenever he should think proper to sail on the Thames.

Having lodged for a short time in London, he hired the house at Deptford of the famous John Evelyn, who bitterly complained of the havoc which the czar and his attendants made in his elegantly laid-out garden. One of Peter's favourite amusements was to be driven in a wheelbarrow through a holly-hedge of which Evelyn was very proud. The dirtiness of the czar's habits were such as to excite the disgust of the gentlemanly and gossiping old royalist. Peter spent much of his time at Rotherhithe, where a ship was building for him. He often went out on the Thames in a small-necked boat, accompanied only by Mentschikoff and three or four others of his suite, who worked the vessel, while he steered it. His object in these excursions was to teach his companions how to command ships when they returned home. In the evening they usually went to a tavern in Great Tower-street, near Tower-hill, where they smoked their pipes, and drank beer and brandy. During his sojourn in this country, Peter went to Portsmouth, and visited a grand naval review and sham fight. The university of Oxford complimented him by conferring upon him a doctor's degree. In England, as in Holland, the czar visited the public institutions and great manufactories, and seemed ever intent upon acquiring such information as would tend to the promotion of the civilisation of his people. His attention was particularly attracted to the art of engineering, and he took into his service upwards of five hundred persons, comprising engineers, officers, surgeons, and artisans. Amongst the former was Captain Perry, who afterwards wrote a life of the czar; in which the author asserts that there was not so much as a single article belonging to a ship, from the casting of cannon to the making of cables, but what Peter minutely observed and set his hands to. Mr. Ferguson, a mathematician and astronomer of some distinction, also accompanied the Russian reformer back to his own country. Ferguson introduced the arithmetical mode of keeping accounts into the Russian exchequer, where, before that time, they had made use only of the Tartar method of reckoning with balls strung upon a wire; a method which its primitive simplicity made extremely imperfect and perplexing.

The czar left England in April; but before doing so, he was presented by William with a beautiful yacht. Peter returned the compliment by making William a present of a ruby of the value of £10,000, which, in a thoroughly characteristic manner, he took from his waistcoat pocket, wrapped up in a bit of brown paper. He also conferred a valuable privilege on the Marquis of Carmarthen, by granting him a right to license every hogshead of

tobacco exported to Russia. The habit of smoking had hitherto been condemned in Russia by the patriarch, on the ground that it was unclean and sinful. Peter thought otherwise, and resolved on its introduction into the country.* During his stay, he was much struck by that magnificent building which a generous nation has erected at Greenwich for its superannuated seamen. Until Peter had actually visited it, and seen the pensioners, he could scarcely be persuaded but that it was a royal palace. William having one day asked him how he liked his hospital for decayed seamen, the czar replied, "If I were the adviser of your majesty, I should counsel you to remove your court to Greenwich, and convert St. James's into a hospital."

Leaving England, Peter returned to Holland; from whence, after a brief stay, he proceeded to Vienna, with the object of making himself acquainted with the dress, discipline, and tactics of the emperor's army, then considered the best in Europe. "During his stay at Vienna," observes his biographer Voltaire, "there happened nothing remarkable except the celebration of the ancient feast of 'Landlord and Landlady,' which Leopold thought proper to revive upon the czar's account, after it had been disused during his whole reign. The manner of making this entertainment, to which the Germans give the name of *wirthschaft*, was as follows:—The emperor is landlord and the empress landlady, while the king of the Romans, the archdukes and the archduchesses, are generally their assistants. They entertain people of all nations, dressed after the most ancient fashion of their respective countries. Those who are invited as guests draw lots for tickets, on each of which is written the name of the nation and the character they are to represent. One has a ticket for a Chinese mandarin; another for a Tartarian mirza; another for a Persian satrap, or a Roman senator. A princess may happen to draw lots for a gardener's wife, or for a milkwoman, and a prince may act the peasant or soldier. They have dances suited to these different characters; and the landlord and landlady, with their family, wait at table. Such was the old custom; but on this occasion, Joseph, king of the Romans, and the Countess of Traun, represented the ancient Egyptians; the Archduke Charles and the Countess of Walstein were dressed like the Flemings in the reign of Charles V.; the Archduchess Mary Elizabeth and Count Traun were in the habit of Tartars; the Archduchess Josephine and the Count of Vorkla appeared in a Persian dress; the Archduchess Mariamme and Prince Maximilian of Hanover, acted the character of North Holland peasants. Peter assumed the habit of a Friesland boor, and in this character was addressed by everybody; at the same time that they talked to him of the great czar of Muscovy. These are indeed minutenesses; but whatever revives the memory of ancient customs, is, in some measure, worthy of being recorded."

The czar intended to pass through Italy homewards; but just as he was about to leave Vienna, he received information from Moscow that the Strelitz had again broken out into rebellion. He instantly departed in secret, and, passing through Poland, arrived at Moscow in September, 1698, before any one there knew of his having left Germany.

During the absence of Peter, the discontented had recovered their courage; and the clergy, together with some of the old nobles, longed for the destruction of a prince whose reforming spirit they detested. During the czar's stay in Holland, he signed an edict commanding a body of Strelitz to proceed to the frontiers of Poland, to be ready, if necessary, to support the claims of Augustus, the elector of Saxony, against those of the French prince de Conti, both of whom had been chosen to fill the throne of Poland. The Strelitz were averse to this duty; and, instead of discharging it, they proceeded in the direction of Moscow, under the pretence that the czar had died abroad, and that it was necessary for them to secure the succession to his son Alexis. Their real object, however, was to place the plotting princess Sophia on the throne, and to exclude Peter, who they considered had violated the laws and customs of his country by daring to travel for instruction among foreign nations. Prince Romodanovsky, the regent, dispatched General Gordon with his

* Voltaire, in his *Life of Charles XII.*, while speaking of Russia at this period, observes—"A person of undoubted veracity, assured me, he was present at a public disputation where the question was, 'Whether the practice of smoking tobacco was a sin?' The respondent maintained that it was lawful to get drunk with brandy, but not to smoke, because the Holy Scriptures saith, 'That which proceedeth out of the mouth of a man defileth him, and that which entereth into it doth not defile him.'"

foreign troops, with directions to crush this insubordination at once. The latter tried to persuade the rebels to return to their duty, but they were secretly urged on by the priests, who infamously pronounced their cause to be sacred. Gordon, finding mildness to be useless, gave battle to the Strelitz, and vanquished them, after a short contest. The prisoners were immediately chained and thrown into dungeons, to abide the judgment of the czar.

Thus, on Peter's arrival at Moscow, he found the rebellion extinguished, and himself welcomed by a people who had been taught to stand in awe of his commanding intellect and his relentless severity. He first rewarded the foreign troops, and then addressed himself to take such a ferocious revenge upon the rebels, as should for the future effectually intimidate the discontented among his subjects. The accounts existing of some of the details which followed have been disputed, and no doubt many exaggerated statements concerning the savage severity of the czar, obtained a currency throughout Europe. Still enough is known with certainty to warrant us in the expression of emotions of wonder and horror. Strange is it, that so great a man should have been actuated by the wildest excesses of brutality, and have derived the ferocious pleasure of an infuriated tiger, in rending and crushing those who had offended him. The only excuse that can be framed for him, is the necessity he was under of reducing to obedience the insolent barbarity of the Strelitz, and of intimidating the factious and ignorant priesthood and their dull followers, who hated and opposed the reforms he had resolved to effect.

The czar did not satisfy himself with putting the offenders to death, but he spared no torture that could prolong their dying agonies. An immense number were put to the rack in his presence, and the cries and moans of the unhappy wretches were mingled with his questions and reproaches. Several were put to death by the horrible process of being broken upon the wheel; and two women, who had played an active part in the conspiracy, were buried alive. As to the common offenders, it is said that no less than 7,000 of them were executed over a period of several months. Of these, 2,000 were hanged by his guards, and the rest beheaded, kneeling in rows of fifties, before trunks of trees laid on the ground. At these frightful scenes Peter was also present, and sometimes assisted at them himself, being proud of the dexterity with which he could strike off the head of the victim. Occasionally he was maddened with wine, as well as with blood; and he is reported to have struck off twenty heads within an hour, and drank a draught of wine between each blow. This anecdote is related on the authority of M. Printz, the Prussian ambassador, who states that he was present, and that the czar invited him to try his skill—a proposal which, of course, he declined.

The executions lasted during a period of five months, and the whole empire was struck with terror. Hundreds of bodies were left to moulder and drop from their gibbets, and the rest remained unburied on the spot where they had been decapitated. Stone monuments were afterwards erected, with inscriptions, describing the punishment and the crime that led to it. In consequence of the connection of the princess Sophia with the insurrection, the czar had a number of the rebels hanged around the convent in which she was confined. The Strelitz had deputed three of their number to present an address, soliciting her to accept the crown. These three were gibbeted before the single grated window of her cell, and the fatal document was held out to her by the stiffened arm of one of the dead men. This cruel punishment crushed the hopes and shortened the life of this ambitious and worthless woman; whom a sense of justice forbids us to pity. She became a nun; changed her name to that of Morpha; and died in 1704. The widows and children of the victims of the czar's anger were sent to wild and remote spots, where a certain extent of land was assigned to them, out of which they and their descendants were never to pass.

Peter now wisely resolved utterly to abolish a body of men who were ever ready to break out into disorder and insurrection. From this time the Strelitz ceased to exist as a military body, and their place was supplied by regular regiments, clothed and disciplined after the fashion of other European nations. Within three months twenty-seven new regiments of infantry and two of cavalry were disciplined and brought into marching order.

The severity of the czar, though it generally produced its designed effect of intimidating the disaffected, yet produced some amount of rebellious reaction. A number

of the Strelitz had escaped, after their body had been defeated by General Gordon, and dispersed in different directions. Peter forbade any one, on pain of death, to harbour one of them, or render him the slightest assistance. This severity was ill-judged; for it made the fugitives desperate, and ready for any extremities. Besides, it excited sympathy in their favour; and in the following year (1699), fresh insurrections broke out in distant parts of the empire. Peter had resolved to crush this rebellious temper, even at the cost of his throne itself. Eighty of the Strelitz, who had been taken prisoners, were brought to Moscow and beheaded; it is said by the hands of the czar himself; assisted in this repulsive work by one of his boyards, who held the victims by their hair.

This terrible severity was not without its effect: the superstitious and ignorant obstinacy of the people was broken; they were sooner wearied of rebellion than Peter was of remorselessly punishing it. He appears to have been convinced that the life of a great reformer must be a prolonged struggle against open opposition and secret enemies. Expecting resistance, he was prepared for it; and even persevered in forcing upon Russia the civilisation she vainly strove to reject. That civilisation has been denounced as a spurious one; and it is said, that while he promoted the material interests of his country, he neglected the moral progress of his people. Perhaps he did; but he was not indifferent to it; and no doubt he felt that it was not the sort of work he was most fitted for. Peter addressed himself to the accomplishment of that which he could do best; and though, perhaps, his reforms might have been effected too rapidly, we think he began at the right end. He broke up the apathy of the people by the material benefits and changes he forced upon them. This was more likely to create a tendency to thoughtfulness, and a teachable temper, in the people, than all the moral influence in the world. Indeed, with an ignorant priesthood, fanatically opposed to the new order of things, reform could not have made any perceptible progress through the door of moral teaching. The people would have viewed it with suspicion, and closed their ears and hearts against it.

It was at this period that Peter lost his early friend, Lefort, who, after having been for some time in a declining state, died on the 12th of March, 1699, at the age of forty-six. The czar bestowed a magnificent funeral upon the man who had been his early instructor, and his faithful assistant in the regeneration of the empire. Peter lamented him as a brother, and walked in the procession, with his pike in his hand, behind the captains, and in the rank of a lieutenant, which, for the purpose of setting an example of subordination to the nobles, he had held in the late general's regiment. Though as a foreigner and a reformer it is not to be expected that Lefort was popular, yet the excellence of his character won him a certain amount of respect. Considerations of self-interest were always sacrificed by him to the public good and the glory of his sovereign, and his whole career was marked by a noble contempt of everything mean or mercenary.

The death of Lefort did not suspend the reforms which the active-minded czar had resolved to carry into effect. Having passed through the lowest degrees in the army himself, he commanded that the sons of the nobility should serve in the capacity of common soldiers before they became officers. Other young nobles he sent on board his ships, and compelled them to serve an apprenticeship to the navy. These commands were extremely arbitrary; but such was the awe with which the czar was regarded, that none dared refuse to obey them.

But Peter did not confine his reforms to the army, and to the creation of a navy; he resolved to modify the government, the church, and to change even the costume and customs of the people. The dress of the Russians was of an Asiatic kind, consisting of a long robe or petticoat, which, together with the practice of wearing long beards, gave them an Eastern look. The beards were a convenience, if not almost a necessity, on account of the severity of the climate; but Peter set himself against both beard and robe, as being associated with, and likely to preserve, the barbarous manners he desired to polish. Certainly the dresses worn in other European countries admitted a freer exercise of the limbs, and tended to the introduction of variety and elegance of costume. Yet the people had the greatest objection to abandon their loose and graceless style of dress, and opposed a passive resistance to the will of the czar. Peter would not suffer his decisions to be evaded, and he laid a heavy tax upon wearing beards and long petticoats. Many parted with their money sooner than conform, but poverty

compelled others to submit. As the people fell in very slowly with the czar's regulations in this respect, he began to quicken their progress after his own eccentric but very decisive fashion. He placed tailors and barbers at each of the gates of Moscow, with directions to cut off the beard, and shorten the dress, of every man who entered. The tenacity with which many of the people, especially the aged, clung to their old costumes, had something of superstition in it. It is related that, on one occasion, the czar met an old citizen coming from the barber's, and, addressing him, observed that he looked quite like a young man, now that he had lost his beard. With a mournful look, the aged man drew from his bosom the beard which had been cut off, and with tears in his eyes told the czar he should preserve it during life, and have it placed in his coffin after death, that he might be able to produce it to St. Nicholas in the next world.

One reason why the czar insisted so earnestly in an endeavour to make his subjects dress themselves like Europeans, instead of Asiatics, was to abolish the fanatical odium in which foreigners were held. As the priests pronounced it to be an act of profanation for strangers to wear the native garb, foreigners were instantly recognised as such by their dress, and, consequently, compelled to have a quarter of the city appropriated to themselves, as a protection against the dislike with which the Russians regarded them. Peter's cosmopolitan mind had, therefore, another cause for putting an end to an external and odious distinction. The czar himself dressed plainly, even to eccentricity and slovenliness. A diplomatic agent at his court gave the following description of this peculiarity, which, though it refers to a later period of his reign, may be quoted here as illustrative of his general habits:—"On all the solemn festivals," observes the writer, "he only wore the uniform of the Presbrazinski regiment of guards. * I saw him, in 1721, give a public audience to the ambassador of Persia. He entered the hall of audience in nothing more than a surtout of coarse brown cloth. When he was seated on the throne, the attendants brought him a coat of gros-de-Naples, embroidered with silver, which he put on with great precipitation, because the ambassadors were waiting for admittance. During this, he turned his eyes towards a window, where the czarina had placed herself to observe the ceremony. Catherine was heard repeatedly to burst into loud fits of laughter, as the czar seemed to her to be astonished at seeing himself so finely dressed; and the czar laughed at it himself, as also did all the spectators. As soon as the ambassadors were gone, Peter threw off his embroidered coat, and put on his surtout."

The system of the government, and the collection of the revenue, were placed upon quite a new basis. Hitherto every boyard paid a stipulated sum for his lands, and raised it from his dependents and bondsmen. Sensible that he was greatly defrauded by this means, the czar appointed citizens as his collectors; men who were not powerful enough to claim the privilege of paying into the public treasury only just what they pleased. Rank he resolved to build upon merit, and title upon desert. He abolished the old council of boyards, which had frequently acted with a despotism that enthralled even the sovereign, and established a senate instead. He also suppressed the titles of boyards, of okolnitchi, and of dumnie-diaki; substituting the modern and more expressive titles of presidents, counsellors, and senators. All persons holding any office, civil or military, under the crown, he divided into fourteen distinct classes, which prevail to the present time.

An attempt to reform the priesthood has been an effort fatal to many sovereigns; but such was the resolution of Peter, and the terror that he had inspired, that he was enabled to accomplish this dangerous task with comparative ease. The patriarchs had divided and frequently opposed the imperial authority, while the bishops assumed the right of condemning people even to death. Peter resolved to limit the power of both, as occasion offered; but, at first, he struck only at those prejudices which obstructed intellectual improvement, and poisoned the social intercourse of the people. Only those Christians who adopted the Greek church were permitted to reside in Russia; nor were the Russians allowed to marry with persons of a different communion. Peter abolished these interdicts, and established a perfect toleration to all denominations of Christians—Jesuits only excepted, as he had seen so much of their mischievous activity during his travels, as to cause him to entertain an aversion towards them. Strangers he permitted to build churches, and contract

* So called from the body of soldiers which the czar had raised during boyhood, in his retreat at Presbrazinski, during the regency of his sister Sophia.

marriages with the native Russians. To enlighten the obtuse ignorance of both priests and people, the czar also caused the Bible to be translated into the Russian language, and diffused among the people. The clergy were furious: they resorted both to maledictions and prophecies; but Peter was unmoved.

At the commencement of the year 1700, the first of a new century, the czar altered the calendar, in order to assimilate it to that of modern Europe. Before that time, the Russians began their year on the 1st of September, because they considered the world was no doubt created in autumn, the season when the fruits of the earth were in their full maturity; never suspecting, as has been observed, that the autumn of one part of the world might be the spring of another. Peter ordained that in future the year should commence, as in other parts of Europe, on the 1st of January. He did not introduce the Gregorian calendar, because it was at that day rejected by the English mathematicians, but adopted instead the old Julian one; an unfortunate circumstance, by which a disparity of eleven days now exists between Russian dates and those of other European nations. Peter celebrated this alteration by some public festivities and solemnities. The people, however, were averse to it, as, for a time, it introduced confusion into their calculations and commercial accounts. The peasantry were astonished at the power of the czar, who they fancied had, in some inexplicable way, altered the course of the sun; and some old-fashioned folks obstinately adhered to the former mode of computing; but, at length, a uniformity was attained.

The Russians were a heavy and unsocial people. In conformity with the Asiatic custom, they kept their wives and daughters in a state of complete seclusion. Married women were not permitted to appear in public without their husbands; while at home they were shut up in the back part of the house. Necessarily, women degenerated, both morally and intellectually; and the softening influence which in other countries they shed upon society, was altogether lost. Indeed, in Russia, at this period, social intercourse may be said to have had no existence. The marriage customs of the people, also, were remarkably barbarous and Asiatic. Young people were married without any previous acquaintance with each other; and the bridegroom was not even allowed to see his bride until the ceremony was over. Mutual affection was, of course, rendered an impossibility before marriage, and merely a chance after it. The parties had been united from convenience, and in accordance with the will of the parents, who sometimes even sold the bride to her future husband. The many small sweet courtesies which, in civilised society, form the current coin between the sexes, and exert an immense influence in the way of humanising and elevating them, had no place in such a system. In fact, marriage could only have been regarded as a license for the gratification of those passions which the young had hitherto been taught to restrain.

The czar abolished this uncouth and unreasonable custom, and decreed that marriages should not take place without a previous acquaintance of at least six weeks between the bride and bridegroom. But little opposition was offered to this change, and the young people were highly pleased with it. It gave them a choice where, hitherto, none existed, and raised them in the social scale. It was now necessary to give the opposite sexes an opportunity of meeting and becoming acquainted with each other. For this purpose, Peter established regular evening assemblies amongst the families of the aristocracy and the wealthy, knowing that the custom once introduced, would find its way, in some form, down even to the lowest circles of society. For the government of these, Peter issued a code of regulations. The assemblies were to commence at four in the afternoon, and close at ten at night; and to be free, not only to all persons of rank and respectability, but also to their wives and daughters. The guests were at liberty to come and go as they pleased; but the host was not obliged to receive or wait upon them. Still he was to provide them with chairs, lights, and refreshments. One apartment was to be set aside for dancing; another for cards, chess, and draughts; and a third for smoking. The code also instructed the visitors to bow on entering or leaving the room, and many minute directions were given on the subject of personal behaviour. The penalty for violating any of these was a boorish one, the offender being compelled to drink the contents of a large tumbler of brandy, called the "great eagle." These changes won over the women, who from that time exerted themselves to bring the czar's innovations into favour.

The mind of Peter was a comprehensive one, and few things escaped his observation. Anything which he felt would tend to the improvement of the people, he introduced into the country. He established an observatory and a public theatre at Moscow; for, prior to his time, nothing but the puerile and vulgar miracle plays were performed in Russia. He improved the roads, and caused posts, marking the distances, to be placed on them at stated intervals. He erected hospitals, almshouses, and other humanising institutions; and reforms came so rapidly, that the slow Russian mind was almost in a state of bewilderment. The people hardly knew what was right and what was wrong; but, though they parted from their old customs with regret, they gradually perceived that the new ones were calculated to add both to their social happiness and commercial prosperity. The clergy were the most strenuous opponents of this great social reformation, and preached and argued vehemently against it; but Peter exposed the shallowness of their reasoning, and turned them into ridicule. He afterwards retaliated in another way; but of his great church reforms we shall speak presently.

CHAPTER XX.

PETER ENTERS INTO AN UNJUST LEAGUE AGAINST CHARLES XII. OF SWEDEN; CHARLES INFLICTS A TERRIBLE DEFEAT ON THE RUSSIANS AT NARVA; THE CZAR IMPROVES THE DISCIPLINE OF HIS TROOPS; THE RUSSIANS OBTAIN A VICTORY OVER THE SWEDES; SACK OF MARIENBURG; MARTHA THE ORPHAN, WHO AFTERWARDS BECAME THE EMPRESS CATHERINE; MENTSCHIKOFF; CAPTURE OF ROTTEBURG AND NIENTSCHANTZ; THE CZAR FOUNDS ST. PETERSBURG; HE FORTIFIES OTHER CITIES; DORPT AND NARVA ARE TAKEN BY THE RUSSIANS.

To a period of social reform succeeded one of warlike struggle. Peter had concluded a truce of thirty years with the Turks, and he was thus left free to pursue his ambitious views in reference to extending his dominions to the shores of the Baltic. At this time, certain events were in progress which afforded the czar some shadowy sort of excuse for aggression.

In the year 1697, Charles XII., then only in his fifteenth year, and not suspected of possessing those great military talents, and that fearless audacity, by which he for so long kept the north of Europe in a state of tumult, ascended the throne of Sweden. On his accession, he found himself not only the absolute and undisturbed master of Sweden and Finland, but also of Livonia, Carelia, Ingria, Wismar, Wibourg, the islands of Rugen and Oesal, and the finest part of Pomerania, together with the duchy of Bremen and Verdun—all of them the conquests of his ancestors, secured to the crown by the fact of possession, by the treaties of Munster and Oliva, and supported by the terror of the Swedish arms. All this in the hands of a mere boy! and one who had revealed so little of his real character, that he was presumed to be indolent and of a mean capacity. The temptation was great to surrounding sovereigns; for princes seldom consider the injustice of an act which enriches them at the expense of their neighbours. By the time Charles had reached his eighteenth year, a league was formed against him by Frederick IV., king of Denmark; Augustus, elector of Saxony and king of Poland; and the czar Peter of Russia; their object being to dismember Sweden, and to take back from that country all that had been obtained from them by conquest or ceded by capitulation. Poland wanted Livonia and Esthonia; Denmark, the provinces of Holstein and Schleswig; while the czar desired to obtain possession of Ingria and Carelia, which lay in his way to the Baltic.

This triple confederacy was entered into in the year 1700. The Swedes were an eminently courageous people; but so formidable a league against them, created alarm in the council and the nation, the more so as all their distinguished generals who had attained celebrity under Gustavus Adolphus were since dead. One day, when the council were deliberating on their dangerous situation, the young king Charles rose, and observed, with a grave and assured

air—"Gentlemen, I am resolved never to begin an unjust war; but never to finish an unjust war but with the destruction of my enemies. My resolution is fixed; I will march and attack the first who shall declare war; and when I have conquered him, I hope to strike terror into the rest."

Charles more than fulfilled this proud assertion: he first turned his arms against Denmark, besieged Copenhagen, and within six weeks compelled Frederick to sue for peace. At the same time, Augustus of Poland laid siege to the town of Riga, the capital of Livonia; but was so vigorously opposed, that he caught eagerly at a transparent pretext for retiring. The struggle, therefore, lay chiefly between Charles and Peter, the two most remarkable men in Europe.

The czar led an army of 60,000 men into Ingria, and laid siege to the small town of Narva. The time was ill-chosen, for it was during the month of October, in a climate of remarkable severity, within thirty degrees of the Pole. Notwithstanding the apparent strength of Peter's army, it contained but 12,000 disciplined soldiers, who, though robust and personally brave, were far inferior to the Swedes in all those matters which distinguish veteran troops. In fact, they were untried on the field, and had been used chiefly as a military police. The rest were mere barbarians, drawn from forest villages, clothed with the skins of wild beasts, and many of them armed only with bows and arrows, or with clubs. The czar's army was also attended by 150 pieces of cannon; but there was not one person who well understood artillery to direct it. Thus, though Narva was almost without fortifications, and contained only a garrison of 1,000 men, it successfully resisted the attacks of the barbarian host which lay intrenched before it.

Ten weeks passed away, and then the czar learned that Charles was approaching to the relief of the town. The young Swedish monarch was followed only by 8,000 men; but they were veteran soldiers, and flushed with recent victory. Notwithstanding his immense numerical superiority, Peter exhibited more prudence than was quite consistent with the natural fearlessness of his nature. Not satisfied with the forces he had already with him, he ordered the advance of another considerable body of troops, then stationed at Novgorod. As they did not arrive so soon as he desired, he left the camp to hasten their movements, resigning the command to the Duke de Croi (a Flemish officer) and Prince Dolgorouki. Perhaps he was satisfied that he might leave the progress of the siege with perfect safety, as Charles would have to cut his way through three small Russian armies before he could arrive at Narva. Be this as it may, his absence assisted to bring defeat and—considering the nature of the defeat—disgrace upon his troops and nation.

Charles and his 8,000 Swedes dispersed the first of Peter's advanced posts, consisting of 5,000 men, who, falling back in confusion, threw the others into a panic, and all fled precipitately to the intrenched camp. Charles, immediately on his arrival, notwithstanding the fatigue of his troops, gave orders for the attack of a camp consisting of more than 60,000 Russians, and defended by 150 pieces of cannon. The famous battle of Narva occurred on the 30th of November. It was commenced during a blinding snowstorm, which blew directly in the faces of the Russians, and effectually concealed the smallness of the Swedish force. Jealousies existed between the Russian commanders: the Duke de Croi issued orders which Prince Dolgorouki refused to execute; and their troops were in a state of confusion before the conflict began. To such an extent was this carried, that the Russians rose against the German officers, and massacred several of them. No man was at his post, and the Russian army became little more than an armed mob. The Swedes opened the battle with a furious cannonade, and soon succeeded in making a breach in the Russian intrenchments. They charged with their bayonets; and for half-an-hour the Russians fought from behind their trenches; but then they began to yield. Charles was struck in the neck by a spent bullet, and had his horse killed under him—incidents which in no way disturbed his composure. The engagement lasted for about three hours, when the intrenchments were forced upon every side, and the Russians, seized with panic, fell into irredeemable confusion. Many threw themselves into the river Narva, where great numbers were drowned; others flung away their arms and begged for quarter upon their knees. The Duke de Croi and the German officers, as much afraid of the mutinous Russians as they were of the Swedes, surrendered themselves to Charles. Prince Dolgorouki and the principal Russian offi-

cers did the same. Charles received them with politeness; and with an affected disdain of the power of Russia, only detained the generals as his prisoners. The subaltern officers and soldiers were disarmed, conducted to the banks of the Narva, and directed to return into their own country. This was an error which it is probable that Charles afterwards repented of: the Russians, whom he now so contemptuously dismissed, afterwards became disciplined and formidable troops. The Swedish victor captured all the Russian artillery and magazines, together with 120 transports laden with provisions. The Russians lost 6,000 men, the Swedes but 1,200. Narva was delivered, and Charles entered it in triumph. The shattered remains of the recently confident army of the czar dared no longer show themselves.

Charles, instead of pursuing his advantage, which might have led him as a victor even to the gates of Moscow, where he could have dictated any peace he pleased, turned off into Poland to punish Augustus for the part that monarch had taken in the confederacy against him. The news of the Russian defeat reached Peter as he was approaching to Narva with the additional forces—amounting to 40,000 men—that he had been in quest of. He would not risk the loss of this army also, but resolved on returning to Moscow. He bore his reverse as great minds almost always bear calamity—with fortitude. He had been defeated, but not necessarily ruined; and he resolved to persevere incessantly in raising his troops to a higher state of discipline. His designs on Ingria were not altered by the severe check he had received. "I know very well," he observed, "that the Swedes will beat us for a long time; but, in the end, they themselves will teach us to beat them."

The inhabitants of Moscow did not receive this national chastisement with so much dignity and resignation. Such was the ignorant vanity of the people, that they supposed that those who conquered them must have been assisted by diabolical agency, and that the Swedes were magicians. So general was this opinion, that a Russian bishop composed a form of prayer to St. Nicholas, imploring him to baffle the infernal arts of their enemies. This document was read in all the churches; and we introduce it here as an instance of the ignorance and superstition of the Russian people and clergy at the commencement of the seventeenth century:—"O Thou! who art our perpetual consoler in all our adversities, great St. Nicholas! infinitely powerful! by what sin have we offended thee in our sacrifices, kneelings, bowings, and thanksgivings, that thou hast thus abandoned us? We have implored thy assistance against these terrible, insolent, enraged, dreadful, and unconquerable destroyers; when, like lions and bears who have lost their young, they have attacked, terrified, wounded, and killed by thousands, us thy people. As it is impossible that this can be done without sorcery and enchantment, we beseech thee, O great St. Nicholas! to be our champion and our standard-bearer, to deliver us from this tribe of sorcerers, and to drive them far from our frontiers, with the recompense that is their due." The Russians have made some progress during the last century and a-half. They would no longer write such barbarous stuff as the preceding.

Charles's expedition into Poland gave Peter time to recover himself, and repair the losses he had experienced. Returning to Moscow, he occupied himself during the winter in raising and drilling troops. He also had 143 pieces of cannon cast, to replace those which were lost at Narva. Metal was requisite to furnish this new artillery; and, to obtain it, he ordered a number of the bells of churches and monasteries to be melted down, and converted into instruments of war. Such was his activity in this direction, that in the spring of 1701 he had an artillery consisting of 100 pieces of cannon, 142 field-pieces, twelve mortars, and thirteen howitzers. All these preparations for renewing the war he superintended in person; and the most industrious man in the empire was the czar. But this military activity did not withdraw Peter's attention from those arts which seldom flourish except in times of peace. At the same time he imported sheep and shepherds from Saxony, erected establishments for the manufacture of linen and paper, fostered the civilising art of printing, and invited to Russia many foreign artisans, consisting of smiths, braziers, and artificers of every description. He also employed workmen to explore the mines of Siberia. Thus, at the same time, endeavouring both to enrich and defend his dominions.

During this period, Peter entered into a further treaty with the King of Denmark, who engaged to assist him with three regi-

ments of foot and three of cavalry—an undertaking which his fear of Charles XII. never permitted him to fulfil. As soon as this treaty was signed, the czar hurried to Birzen, on the frontiers of Courland and Lithuania, where he had an interview with Augustus, king of Poland. It was conducted without any of those formalities which usually interrupt the intercourse of monarchs, and prolong the business to be settled between them. Engagements for mutual assistance were entered into; but such was the precarious position of Augustus, that he was unable to fulfil his part of the contract. The Polish diet, jealous both of the Saxon troops of Augustus and the Russian troops of the czar, refused to sanction a league that they felt must involve them in difficulties. Peter soon saw that he must depend upon himself alone, and he resolved to do so. After five days passed in revelry (for the czar could never overcome his tendency to excess and debauchery), the monarchs parted. The king of Sweden, having left a body of forces on the Russian frontiers of his dominions to preserve them from attack, pursued a course of victory and intrigue in Poland, where he had resolved to dethrone King Augustus, and then push his way to Moscow, and punish the czar.

While Charles was occupied in ravaging Poland, Peter was employed in strengthening Russia. During the year 1701, the czar caused 150 half-galleys, each carrying about fifty men, to be built on the great lake Peipus, in order to prevent Swedish vessels from insulting the province of Novgorod, and to be within a proper distance for making a descent upon the Swedish coasts. These vessels were also intended as a nursery for seamen—a service in which they were exceedingly useful. The year 1701 was a time of preparation with Peter: his troops were learning war as an art; and they made so great a progress, that in some border skirmishes which took place between them and the Swedes, they sometimes had the advantage. The czar himself was indefatigable. He travelled constantly between Pleskow, Moscow, and Archangel, and succeeded in imparting to his recently-defeated troops a spirit of enthusiasm.

In the following year (1702) the war was actively renewed; for on the 1st of January a battle took place near Dorpt, on the borders of Livonia; when the Russians, after a conflict of four hours, obtained a victory over the Swedes. It is said that 3,000 of the latter perished; while the Russians, who took four colours, lost but 1,000 men. General Scheremetof, who commanded, was made a field-marshal; and the Russian clergy, conceiving that St. Nicholas was reconciled to them, offered a public thanksgiving accordingly. Several petty engagements took place by water between the Russian and Swedish vessels on the lakes Peipus and Ladoga. Though commonly terminating in favour of the Swedes, yet the Russians had the advantage occasionally; and in the month of May, a Swedish frigate was captured. During July, Peter received intelligence that a Swedish fleet was on its way to the North Sea, for the purpose of destroying Archangel. Starting instantly for that remote city, he put it into a state of defence; and having prevented the landing of the Swedes, drew the plan of a citadel, called the New Dwina; and after laying the first stone, returned to the seat of war.

Marshal Scheremetof having obtained another triumph over a body of Swedes commanded by Schlippenbach, acquired the reputation of being a great general. Taking advantage of his success, he laid the whole country under contribution, and marched upon Marienburg, a little town on the confines of Livonia and Ingria. The garrison, satisfied that resistance would be useless, immediately capitulated, on condition that they and the inhabitants should be allowed to depart unmolested. The terms were granted; but an intemperate Swedish officer set fire to the powder-magazine, which, in exploding, killed many both of the Russians and of his own countrymen. The former, irritated at this act of treachery, fell upon the garrison, destroyed the town, and carried off the inhabitants.

Among these unfortunate people was a young peasant girl named Martha, of about sixteen years of age. She was an orphan, and had been brought up by the Lutheran minister of Marienburg, in whose household she fulfilled the duties of a servant. It is said, that only the day before, she had been married to a sergeant in the Swedish army, who was killed in the confusion, and that when she was brought into the presence of one of the Russian generals named Bauer, she was in tears for the loss of her new-made and early-lost husband. Martha was graceful and interesting, and had a peculiarly soft and fascinating expression of

countenance. Bauer was struck with her appearance, and, being a single man, he took her to his home, where she became his housekeeper, and, as it is generally supposed, his mistress. The general afterwards denied this circumstance; but it was when he had powerful motives for doing so. The world believed that Martha lived with the general on terms of more than common familiarity; and we do not see any reason to suppose that, in this instance, the world was wrong. Prince Mentschikoff, seeing the pretty widowed orphan at the house of the general, was likewise impressed by her beauty and amiability, and begged Bauer to part with her. The general was not disposed to deny anything to a prince, especially to a rising prince, who stood high in the favour of the czar. He acceded to the request, and Martha then became the avowed mistress of Mentschikoff. In this capacity she remained until the year 1704, when the czar accidentally beheld her, and was as much struck with her appearance as either Bauer or Mentschikoff. Entering into conversation with Martha, Peter soon felt strongly attracted towards her: the first impression was not only sustained, but heightened; and the Livonian orphan left the bed of Mentschikoff to share that of the czar. In the year 1696, Peter had put away his wife Eudoxia Lapuchin, whose jealousy and bigoted opposition to his reforms excited his disgust and anger; and he eventually married Martha, to whom he gave the more dignified name of Catherine. "There had been instances before this," says Voltaire, "of private persons being raised to the throne. Nothing was more common in Russia, and in all the Asiatic kingdoms, than marriages between sovereigns and their subjects. But that a poor stranger, who had been discovered amidst the ruins of a plundered town, should become the absolute sovereign of that very empire into which she was led captive, is an incident which fortune and merit have never before produced in the annals of the world."

The rise of Prince Mentschikoff was only something less remarkable than that of Martha—or rather of Catherine, as we must henceforth call her. His parents were extremely humble people, vassals of the monastery of Cosmopoli. When their son had reached the age of thirteen, they sent him to Moscow to get his living as best he could. Being received into the service of a pastrycook, he went about the streets to sell puffs and cakes. Having an agreeable voice, he used to attract notice to his humble dainties by singing ballads. One day the czar happened to hear the boy, and being pleased with his appearance and voice, sent for him, and asked if he would sell his pies and his basket. The young itinerant pastrycook answered modestly, that his pies were for sale, but he must ask his master's leave to sell his basket; though, as everything belonged to his prince, he needed only to lay his commands upon him. This answer further pleased the czar, who ordered the boy to come to court, where he was at first employed in some mean station. As he exhibited considerable address and capacity, Peter made him groom of his bedchamber; and thence gradually raised him to the highest preferments. As if this career was not in itself sufficiently romantic, a wild story has been related of Mentschikoff having, while a pastrycook's boy, saved the czar from being poisoned by a discontented boyard; but it bears an air of improbability, and is generally discountenanced.

We have, though indeed inevitably, been digressing slightly from the strict chronological march of historic facts. This is sometimes necessary for the sake of grace and pictorial effect, and also for the avoidance of repetition; but woe be to the writer who does not keep his facts in good chronological order: then, like ill-disciplined troops, they fall into confusion, perplex the general who has assumed to arrange them, and bring him to disgrace and defeat.

We diverged at the point where, in the year 1702, Marshal Scheremetof had marched upon and destroyed the town of Marienburg, on the confines of Livonia and Ingria. After this success, Peter pushed forward his operations in the direction of the river Neva, which connects Lake Ladoga with the Baltic Sea, and at the mouth of which now stands the large and elegant city, the foundations of which Peter was so soon to lay. Near that point where the river Neva left the lake, was an island, on which stood Rotteburg, a strongly-fortified town, commanding the lake. This town was indispensable to Peter in carrying out the extensive design he had formed, and he resolved to obtain possession of it. His troops besieged the town from the 18th of September until the 12th of October. Three breaches having been made, the Russians gave the assault; but such was the

desperate valour of the Swedish garrison, that though reduced to only eighty-three effective men, they yet obtained an honourable capitulation, even when victory was almost in the grasp of their assailants. Peter gained what he wanted; but the siege was by no means a very brilliant triumph, in a military sense. He, however, chose so to consider it, and distributed rewards to the officers and soldiers by whom it was conducted. Others, who had run away during the assault, were subject to a severe punishment. They were put to a whimsically-ignominious death: their comrades spat in their faces, and then shot them. The czar caused the fortifications of Rotteburg to be repaired; and changed its name into that of Schlüsselburg, or City of the Key, because it was regarded as the key of Ingria and Finland. Prince Mentschikoff, formerly the pie-boy, but now grown a very good officer, was made the first Russian governor of the conquered town. Charles XII. thought very little of this. He regarded the Russians with contempt, and fancied that he could readily drive them out as soon as he returned from Poland. His easy conquest at the battle of Narva had given him a false estimate of his enemies.

The depth of winter produced some brief pause in the execution of the czar's designs with respect to his intended city near the shores of the Baltic. He therefore spent the early part of the year 1703 at Moscow, where, however, he by no means gave himself up to luxurious ease, but employed his time in seeing that his new regulations were carried into effect, and in improving the civil as well as military government. Even in his amusements he promoted those more social and rational customs which he desired to introduce amongst his unwilling subjects. At the marriage of one of his jesters, he caused all the nobles and their ladies to be invited; and gave, at the same time, a command that everybody should be dressed in the ancient fashion. The dinner was placed on the table in the uncouth manner that was customary a hundred years before. Although the cold was intense, he would not permit a fire to be kindled, because there had formerly been a superstitious custom of not lighting a fire on a wedding-day. Neither was any wine permitted, because the Russians, in old times, used only to drink mead and brandy; and he would not suffer any other liquor. The shivering and disgusted guests complained to the czar of this cheerless treatment; but he replied, in a jocular tone, "Your ancestors did so, and surely ancient customs are always the best." This covert sarcasm, added to the practical lesson which preceded it, discouraged the complaints of those who were always ready to prefer the customs of the past, and taught them to believe that changes might possibly be improvements.

Returning to the frontiers of Sweden, the czar visited the dockyards of Olonetz, to inspect the ships he had directed to be built there, and the foundries he had established in that town for the manufacture of arms. The object of Peter was to obtain the secure occupation of both shores of the Neva. It was therefore necessary to expel the Swedes from all places in the neighbourhood, and to take or destroy all the fortified posts they held in Ingria and Carelia. The most important of the latter was a fortress called Nientschantz, situated near Lake Ladoga, and not far from the Neva. As Peter laid seige to this fortress by land, and prevented its receiving supplies by water, it surrendered on the 12th of May. Two Swedish vessels that came too late to relieve the garrison, were also captured by the ships of the czar.

Peter now resolved at once to erect the new capital of his empire, although the very ground on which it was to stand did not belong to him, and would have to be contested for with a powerful rival, who knew no sense of fear, and loved war as a pastime. Advancing up the Neva, in the direction of the sea, he selected a wild and marshy island, covered with brushwood, and inhabited only by a few fishermen. The place was unpromising, and extremely ill-adapted for the purpose for which the czar intended it. So low was it, as to be little better than a muddy swamp in summer, and a frozen pool in winter. Such a situation was necessarily unhealthy; and the surrounding country was covered with marshes, and almost impenetrable forests—the haunts of wolves and bears. The place was also subject to inundations when the tide set in more fiercely than usual from the Baltic: but all these considerations were overlooked by Peter in his anxiety to obtain a great fortified seaport.

On the 27th of May, 1703, was laid the foundations of the fortress of St. Petersburg, the nucleus of the magnificent city which now bears that name. The difficul-

ties to be overcome were stupendous. The neighbouring country was one vast morass, intersected by numerous branches of the Neva, and countless pools of water.* Everywhere there was water, and deadly miasma arising from it; while the soft spongy soil seemed to defy the skill of man to convert it into a solid foundation. As for stone, the neighbouring country was actually destitute of it; and the new fortress was built with the stone taken from that recently captured at Nientschantz. Again, the population was so scanty, that it could not furnish labourers; and such as were at once obtained, did not possess the tools necessary for the accomplishment of their work. But Peter was not to be baffled, and his energy soon overcame all obstacles. Workmen were sent for from all parts of the empire; and a vast concourse of labourers was soon collected, including in its motley groups, Russians, Tartars, Cossacks, Calmucks, and Finns. These poor people were employed in deepening the channels of the river, and raising the levels of the land destined for the site of the city. Unhappy men! the new capital may, without a metaphor, be said to be constructed upon their bones. Such was the severity of the weather, the unhealthiness of the place, the hardness of the toil, and the scarcity of provisions, that no less than 100,000 of them perished during the first year. But such a powerful fact as this did not affect the iron nerves of the czar. He was eager and inflexible, and the work went rapidly on. The fortress was completed within five months; and, at the expiration of a year, 30,000 wooden houses and huts had arisen from the dreary swamp, whose yielding soil was hardened with human bones. The beginning was humble enough; and few, even of the idealists and dreamers of the world, could have conceived that this new-born city was, at no distant time, to challenge the admiration of the world for its gorgeous palaces, its magnificent cathedrals, its imperial academies and libraries, its gigantic squares, its massive quays, its superb theatres, its pleasure-gardens, and all that conduces to the brilliancy of an exotic civilisation! Yet St. Petersburg was but slowly populated; and even now its inhabitants can scarcely be said to be numerous.

At the time of Peter's death, in 1725, it contained 75,000 inhabitants: these had increased to 110,000 on the accession of Catherine II.; and it is now about 500,000; of which number two-thirds are males. Some authorities add, that the men are remarkable for their good looks, and the women for the contrary.

While Peter was struggling to subdue the wildness of nature in this locality, and wooden houses were daily rising above the swamp, he devoted his attention to securing the safety of his new city. Charles XII. was not a monarch from whom territory could be filched or wrested with impunity; and other enemies might strike at the unfinished sea-cradle of Russia, if it remained undefended. The czar, therefore, diligently examined the neighbourhood himself, and, selecting a little island lying near the mouth of the river Neva, he gave it the name of Cronstadt; and, making a model of the fortifications he designed to be erected there, employed Prince Mentschikoff to carry the works into execution. With what success this was accomplished, the present world-famous seaward defences of St. Petersburg attest.

In the month of November the czar returned to Moscow, where he had again to encounter the discontent of the people. Noble, priest, and citizen were alike dissatisfied at the erection of a new city on so unfavourable a site; where winter predominates over eight months of the year; in which rye was an article of garden culture, and a bee-hive an absolute curiosity. The nobles dreaded that the wealth and dignity of Moscow would be transferred to the dismal islands of the Neva; while the poor looked upon the place with a superstitious horror, on account of the enormous amount of life sacrificed in its erection. The new city, however, prospered, notwithstanding the many ominous predictions that it would soon be engulphed beneath the waters of the Neva. Five months from the day of its foundation, a Dutch vessel, freighted with merchandise, entered the river. Presents were made to the captain to encourage

* Lady Eastlake remarks—"No one can judge of the daring position of St. Petersburg, who has not mounted one of the artificial heights (such as the gilt spire of the admiralty), and viewed the immense body of water in which she floats like a bark overladen with precious goods; while the autumn waves, as if maddened by the prospect of winter's long imprisonment, play wild pranks with her resistless shores, deriding her false foundations, and overturning in a few hours the laborious erections of as many years." St. Petersburg has been compared to a floating city of palaces.





others to follow his example, which they speedily did. The third ship, however, that entered the port was from England. These commercial visits gave some hope to the downcast inhabitants, whose compulsory residence in the new city was by no means to their taste. Indeed, after the departure of Peter for Moscow, the priests tried their hands at a miracle, which was intended to be a visible expression of the assumed displeasure of the Omnipotent. A church was amongst the earliest of the buildings erected; and an image of the Virgin, with which it was adorned, was seen to shed tears, in pity—so said the pious men—for the sufferings of the people. It caused great excitement until the return of the czar, who, being a little sceptical in such matters, caused the image to be taken down and carefully examined. The vulgar fraud was soon exposed; and the mechanical contrivance by which the figure was made to appear to weep, shown to the simple people.

The czar could afford to despise opposition even of a more serious kind than this. His power was rapidly increasing; and notwithstanding his great outlays, his personal expenditure was so trivial, that he was enabled to accumulate wealth. Almost at the same time that he was employed in the erection of a new capital, he fortified Novgorod, Pleskow, Kief, Smolensk, Azoff, and Archangel. He also bestowed a considerable subsidy upon Augustus, the king of Poland, to enable him to oppose the Swedish monarch. Yet he informed Cornelius de Bruyer (a Dutch traveller, with whom Peter would frequently converse with familiarity), that after providing for all the expenses of the war, he had still 300,000 roubles in his coffers.

The Swedish gladiator Charles, who still preserved his contempt both for the Russians and their ruler, said that Peter might amuse himself as he thought fit in building a city, as he should soon take it away from him, and set fire to his wooden houses. The Turkish government, however, took a different view of the proceedings of the czar: the fortifications he had erected at Azoff and in its neighbourhood excited their alarm; and the sultan sent an ambassador to complain of these warlike preparations. Peter replied, that he was as much a sovereign in his own dominions as the great signior was in Turkey, and that it could be no violation of the peace to render Russia respectable on the Euxine.

A reference to the map will show the reader that Narva, where Peter's forces had been so ignominiously defeated by the Swedes, lay in dangerous proximity to the new capital. To secure the safety of the latter, and to wipe off the disgrace he had formerly received at Narva, the czar resolved on another attempt to make himself master of that town. In the spring of 1704, he divided the military force of Russia into three portions. One he sent to the assistance of King Augustus, whom Charles had succeeded in driving from his throne; a second he led in person to accomplish the reduction of Narva; while a third he placed under the direction of General Scheremetof, for the purpose of laying siege to Dorpt, a town in Esthonia, in which the famous Gustavus Adolphus had established a university.

Dorpt, after holding out for six weeks, was taken by a stratagem. The Russian general disguised two regiments of infantry and one of cavalry in Swedish uniforms. These pretended Swedes attacked the trenches, and the Russians feigned a flight. The garrison of the town, believing that some succour had arrived, were deceived into making a sortie, when the false attackers and the attacked united their forces, and fell upon the astonished Swedes. So great was the slaughter which followed this surprise, that the town capitulated on the 23rd of July, 1704, and thus avoided the horrors of an assault.

The czar was equally successful at Narva; for he was a far more formidable enemy than when his troops had been so severely chastised there by Charles in 1700. "He not only," says Voltaire, "began to be a good soldier, but he likewise taught the art of war to the Muscovites; discipline was established throughout his troops; he had able engineers, an artillery well served, and many good officers; and he likewise knew the art of subsisting his armies. Some of his generals had learned both how to fight, and also, as occasion required, to decline fighting." The siege of Narva was conducted under the personal superintendence of Peter; and when, on the 20th of August, it was taken by assault, three famous bastions, respectively called Victory, Honour, and Glory, were carried sword-in-hand. Bursting into the town, the besiegers devoted themselves to plunder, obscenity, and slaughter, without the slightest pity or compunction. Such were the atrocities of the

Russian troops, that even the stern czar was moved to disgust and indignation. To his honour it must be recorded, that he ran from place to place to stop the massacre. He saved unhappy women from the hands of his brutal soldiers, who, after having violated them, were about to cut their throats. Several of these ruffians, blinded by their beastly fury, perhaps did not recognise the czar; and refusing to obey his commands, he cut them down with his own hands. Then entering the town-house, where great numbers of the citizens had retired for shelter, he threw his reeking weapon upon the table, and exclaimed, "My sword is not stained with the blood of the inhabitants, but with that of my own soldiers, which I have spilt to save your lives."—"If," remarked one of his biographers, "the czar had always observed this humanity, he would have been the first of men." On this occasion, he seems to have been much impressed by the horrors of war, especially as waged by barbarous troops. It is reported, that when Count de Horn, the governor of the town, was brought before Peter, the czar angrily struck him on the face, and observed, "It is you, and you only, who are the cause of so many calamities. Ought you not to have capitulated when you had no hope of assistance?"

This last acquisition made Peter master of the whole of Ingria, the government of which province he conferred upon Mentschikoff, now raised to the rank of a prince. The elevation of this man from the streets of Moscow to so exalted a position, was not merely a point of eccentricity in the czar. He intended it as a reproof to his ignorant and indolent nobility, and as an assurance to them that merit and assiduity were the only passports to his favour. Under him, the old system of conferring honours and rewards had ceased to exist. The ancient nobility were discontented; but a spirit of emulation was at length excited among the people, who began to perceive that the path to affluence and distinction was open to the gifted, no matter how humble their origin or obscure their station.

CHAPTER XXI.

ST. PETERSBURG THREATENED BY A SWEDISH FLEET; CAMPAIGN IN COURLAND; BATTLE WITH THE SWEDES; MURDER OF GENERAL PATKUL; AFFAIRS OF POLAND; CHARLES XII. RESOLVES TO INVADE RUSSIA AND DETHRONE THE CZAR; THE LATTER DRIVEN FROM GRODNO; ENGAGEMENT AT BEREZINA; THE RUSSIANS RETREAT, FOLLOWED BY THE SWEDES; ENGAGEMENT NEAR MOHILO; CHARLES ENTERS THE UKRAINE; BRILLIANT CONFLICT OF THE SWEDES, UNDER GENERAL LEWENHAUPT, WITH THE RUSSIAN ARMY; CHARLES DISAPPOINTED OF HIS SUPPLIES, AND OF THE AID HE EXPECTED FROM MAZEPPA; CHARLES LAYS SIEGE TO PULTOWA; PETER ADVANCES TO ITS ASSISTANCE; THE FAMOUS BATTLE OF PULTOWA, AND RUIN OF CHARLES; MILITARY SOLEMNITY AT MOSCOW

It was Peter's policy to keep Charles XII. as long as possible in Poland, in the hope that he might exhaust his strength, or perhaps even receive a check which would cripple his power. With this design, he had no sooner secured himself in Ingria, than he made an offer of further assistance to the dethroned king, Augustus. In the August of 1704, Peter sent General Repnin from the borders of Lithuania to the assistance of Augustus, with a body of 6,000 horse and 6,000 foot. The autumn of this year the czar spent in improving his new city, or rather colony—for it was as yet no more—of St. Petersburg: the winter he passed in Moscow; on his return into which, according to his general custom, he made a triumphal entry.

As the winter of 1704-'5 melted into spring, Peter prepared to take the field himself in Poland, for the double purpose of assisting his helpless ally Augustus, and of weakening his warlike rival Charles. While thus engaged, Cronstadt and St. Petersburg were threatened by a formidable Swedish fleet, consisting of two-and-twenty ships of war, carrying from fifty-four to sixty-four guns each, besides six frigates, two bomb-ketches, and two fire-ships. The Swedes landed their troops on the little island of Kotin, but were received with so unexpected and precise a fire, that they retreated in confusion, abandoning their dead, and leaving 300 prisoners in the hands of the enemy. Two other descents were made; but they were equally unsuccessful. At length the

hostile fleet, which had hovered about the coast, seeking for an opportunity of striking at St. Petersburg, being thus baffled and repulsed, retired; and the new city, yet only rising from its swampy bed, was saved.

In the meantime Peter had marched into Courland, where he was encountered and defeated by a Swedish army under General Lewenhaupt. So severe was this check, that the czar lost about 5,000 men, together with all his artillery. Notwithstanding this and other reverses, Peter preserved the discipline of his forces, penetrated to Mitau, the capital of Courland, and compelled it to surrender by capitulation. His troops were beginning to show the results of that superior training to which they had been subjected. Since the taking of Narva, Peter had so repressed the plundering propensities of his troops, that when the Russian soldiers were appointed to guard the vaults in the castle of Mitau (the usual burying-place of the dukes of Courland), they, on finding that the bodies of those princes had been dragged out of their tombs, and stript of their ornaments, refused to undertake the charge until they had sent for a Swedish colonel, and induced him to sign a certificate that these depredations were the acts of his own countrymen.

At the approach of winter the czar again returned to Moscow, where his presence was required in consequence of an insurrection of an insignificant character. This he soon quelled; and then he might have obtained some repose from those incessant toils to which he was subjected, but that he received intelligence that Charles XII., at the head of a powerful army, was advancing upon Grodno, where the combined Russian and Saxon armies in the service of Augustus were encamped. Peter hurried to the spot occupied by the Swedes. A battle took place at Frauenstadt on the 12th of February, 1706. It scarcely lasted a quarter of an hour, by which time the Swedes were victors. So great was the disorder, and so sudden the panic in the ranks of the allied Russians and Saxons, that 7,000 loaded fusees were found on the field of battle, which they had thrown down without firing. The victory of the Swedes was complete; the slaughter of their foes terrible. Of 6,000 Russians in the army of Augustus, scarcely any escaped. The Swedes gave no quarter to the fallen, and were guilty of great atrocities. The czar asserted, in a manifesto he published, that many of his soldiers who had been taken prisoners were murdered in cold blood three days after the battle. Doubtless, a savage spirit predominated on each side, and war was made even more than commonly terrible by the brutal passions of a barbarous soldiery.

Peter was not disheartened; misfortune lost its usually enfeebling influence when it assailed him. He raised more troops, and encouraged the dispirited Augustus to take advantage of the absence of Charles in Saxony, and again to enter Poland. Augustus yielded; but terrified by the success of the fierce Swede, he at last wrote a letter with his own hand to Charles, begging him to grant a peace. The terms of the latter were severe; the chief of them being, that he should for ever renounce the throne of Poland and the Russian alliance. To the expostulations of the plenipotentiaries of Augustus, the minister of Charles replied, "Such is the will of the king, my master; and he never changes his mind."

While these negotiations were being privately carried on, Prince Mentschikoff joined the forces of Augustus with 20,000 men, much to the confusion of the fugitive monarch, who, having resolved on submission, wished to be left to himself. Not only had he been dethroned by his enemy, but, should the negotiations be discovered, he was in danger of being taken prisoner by his ally. At this crisis, the consternation of Augustus was increased by the intelligence that 10,000 Swedes, under the command of General Meyerfeldt, were approaching to give him battle. To attack the Swedes, and either to win or lose the battle, would add to the complexities of his situation. He therefore sent a secret messenger to Meyerfeldt, informing him of the expected peace, and begging him to retire. Even this incident produced a result exactly the reverse of what was intended. The Swede thought that a snare was being laid to intimidate him, and therefore resolved on the attack. The battle took place; the Russians were the victors, and entered Warsaw in triumph. There the irresolute and humiliated Augustus was met by his own plenipotentiaries, who presented to him the treaty they had just concluded, by which he promised to give up all claim to the crown of Poland, and to abandon for ever his alliance with the Russians. Feeling that he could not struggle for any time

effectually against the power of Charles, he signed the treaty, and then set out to apologise in person to that monarch for having defeated his troops, and to endeavour to propitiate his favour. The two monarchs met without ceremony at a place called Gutersdorff. "Charles was, as usual, in his jack-boots, with a piece of black taffeta tied round his neck instead of a cravat; his clothes of coarse blue cloth, with gilt copper buttons. He had a long sword by his side, which had served him in the battle of Narva, and on the pommel of which he frequently leaned. The conversation turned wholly upon those jack-boots; Charles informed Augustus that he had not laid them aside for six years, except when he went to bed. These trifles were the only subjects of discourse between the two kings, one of whom had just deprived the other of his crown! Augustus, especially, spoke with an air of complaisance and satisfaction, which princes and men accustomed to the management of great affairs know how to assume amidst the most cruel mortifications. The two kings dined together twice. Charles always affected to give Augustus the right-hand; but so far from mitigating the rigour of his demands, he only increased their severity."*

Augustus not only surrendered his crown, but he gave up to Charles the brave and unfortunate Livonian general, Patkul. This gentleman had, in consequence of a shameful injustice he experienced at the hands of the father of Charles, left the military service of Sweden for that of Russia; which, as he was not a native of either country, he had a right to do, if such was his desire. At this time he was acting with Augustus in the capacity of ambassador from the czar, in which character his person ought to have been regarded as secure from all outrage. The ungrateful Augustus arrested and gave him up to the vindictive Charles, whose troops had been beaten by his military genius; and the Swedish monarch not only condemned him to death, but caused him to be executed by the horrible and lingering mode of being broken on the wheel! The pretence for this shameful murder—the darkest blot on the character of Charles—was that Patkul was a rebel; which military authorities have decided he was not. Whatever had been his offence, his position as general and ambassador of the czar of Russia, ought to have exempted him from such cruel ignominy. The fate of Patkul was as romantic as it was horrible: he was engaged to be married to a lady of high birth and great beauty, about the very time that this calamity came upon him. The brave man who had faced death with intrepidity in so many battles, melted into tears upon the bosom of the chaplain, as he confided to him the portrait of his beloved, entreating him to wait upon her, and impart all the consolation that lay in his power. The condemned officer had only been informed that he was to die; and when he saw the wheel to which he was to be bound, and the frightful nature of his punishment shot across his mind, he fell into convulsions, and dropt, shuddering, into the arms of the pitying and weeping minister.

The czar was disgusted at the weakness of Augustus, and furious at the conduct of Charles. The surrender of his ambassador by one monarch, and his execution by another, were violations of the law of nations, and insults to him as a sovereign. Prior to the death of General Patkul, the czar complained bitterly of these indignities to the several courts of Europe, and tried to induce them to interpose their mediation to procure the restoration of his ambassador, and to avert the affront which, in his person, was about to be offered to crowned heads. These appeals were without avail; Germany, England, and Holland were then engaged in a ruinous war against France, with the object of restraining the ambition of Louis XIV.: the monarchs of these countries also felt that Charles was a dangerous person to interfere with. Not one of the princes of Europe interposed in behalf of the unhappy Patkul, who was abandoned to the fate that the vengeance of Charles had condemned him to. Justly did Voltaire observe—"There is not a civilian in Europe, nay, there is not a slave, but must shudder with horror at this barbarous act of injustice." He added—"The splendour of high achievements used formerly to cover such cruelties; but now they are an indelible stain to military glory."

Poland had at this time two monarchs, and each of them almost powerless;—Augustus, whom Charles XII. had driven from the throne, and Stanislaus, whom he had placed upon it. The latter, though a prince of many virtues, was not willingly submitted to by the distracted nation on which he had been forced, and he was threatened with dethronement by Peter, who had re-

* Voltaire's *Life of Charles XII.*

solved on the restoration of Augustus. At a meeting of the Polish nobles, the throne was declared vacant; and it was agreed that a diet should be assembled for the purpose of electing some one to fill it. So that Poland was on the point of having three kings at once, and under circumstances which would have perplexed the people as to whom their allegiance was due. As Augustus had renounced the protection of the czar, the latter favoured the project of a new election. Peter had obtained a considerable influence over many of the Polish nobles, and much weight was attached to his advice. It was therefore agreed that an interregnum should be declared, and the primate invested as regent until the result of the election was known.

Such was the state of affairs when, in the July of 1707, Stanislaus, who had been acknowledged by most of the sovereigns of Europe, advanced into Poland, accompanied by the famous general Renschild and sixteen regiments of Swedes. Wherever he came he was acknowledged as sovereign; and the discipline of his troops, which made the barbarity of the Russian soldiers more keenly felt, conciliated the affections of the people. Besides this, the great affability of Stanislaus won to his side most of the different factions; and a large sum of money he had brought with him, secured the greatest part of the army of the crown.

Charles, in his camp at Altranstad, was caressed and feared by nearly every sovereign of Europe. His intentions were matter of speculation to all the politicians of Europe. It was reported that he intended to join with France in humbling Austria; and our famous soldier, the Duke of Marlborough, visited the Swedish hero, to use his influence in preventing a design which would have been fatal to the interests of England and her allies in the war against France. Charles was not communicative. He thought the distinguished English general too courtier-like in his manners, and too foppish in his dress, for a soldier. But though Charles would not at all reveal his mind, the acute Marlborough divined it. He detected, in the brief observations of the Swede, a dislike to France; and he observed that the eyes of Charles kindled at the name of the czar, while a map of Russia also lay on the table before him. The Englishman was convinced that the real design and ambition of Charles was to dethrone the czar, as he had already done the king of Poland. Indeed, Charles, who was prepared to take the field with an army of 45,000 men trained upon the battle-field, scarcely concealed his intention to make Russia the theatre of war. Afterwards he was remarkably explicit. To an attempt of the French ambassador to bring about a peace between Sweden and Russia, Charles answered proudly, that he would treat with the czar in the city of Moscow. When this insulting remark was repeated to Peter, he observed, "My brother Charles wants to act the part of Alexander, but he shall not find me a Darius."

Charles was at length ready to leave Saxony. While there, he had intimidated the pope, whom he treated with contempt; humbled the emperor Joseph; protected the Lutheran religion in the midst of the catholics; dethroned one king, crowned another, and made himself the terror of all the princes around him. Voltaire, in his life of this distinguished monarch, remarks—"The pleasures of Saxony, where he had remained inactive for a whole year, had by no means abated the austerity of his mode of living. He rode out thrice a-day; rose at four in the morning; dressed himself with his own hands; drank no wine; sat at table only a quarter of an hour; exercised his troops every day; and knew no other pleasure than that of making Europe tremble." He left Saxony in the September of 1707; his troops so enriched by its spoil, that it is said every soldier carried with him fifty crowns in ready money. It was his intention to invade Russia and dethrone the czar, many of whose subjects, disgusted with his innovations, Charles believed would welcome him rather as a friend than oppose him as a foe. In this, however, he deceived himself; for the Russian people were rapidly becoming sensible of the wisdom of their ruler, and patient with respect to his changes, many of which they perceived to be beneficial.

The news of Charles's intention to advance on Russia, drew Peter from Moscow, where he had retired to pass the winter. The Swede had fixed his winter quarters in Lithuania; and the czar hurried to Grodno, in that country; where, with a very small force, he established his head-quarters. Charles, on hearing of his arrival, dashed forward with only 800 men to besiege the town, which, on account of the rapidity of his movements, he took by surprise. A German officer, who had the command of a body of troops at one of the gates of the

town, on seeing the king of Sweden, immediately concluded that he was followed by his army. Struck with consternation, he fled from his post, and left the passage open to the enemy. The alarm spread throughout Grodno, and the few Russians who attempted to make a stand were cut to pieces by the Swedish guards. Peter, and the officers who surrounded him, shared the panic and retreated from the town; and Charles planted a guard of thirty men at the very gate by which the czar had retired. During the night, some Jesuits, whose house had been allotted for the accommodation of the king of Sweden, contrived to repair to the czar, and acquaint him with the actual state of affairs. Peter immediately returned with 1,500 horse, in the hope of capturing Charles. Having forced the Swedish guard, an engagement ensued in the streets and public square; but during it the Swedish army arrived, and the czar was a second time compelled to abandon the city.

The position of Peter was a dangerous one; but, fortunately for him, Charles could not make a rapid progress, in the depth of winter, through a swampy and famine-smitten country. The Russians retired by forced marches, followed by the Swedes, whose king had resolved to carry matters to extremity. The czar strengthened the principal posts where the enemy were to pass, and adopted every expedient in his power to stop their progress.

His chief movement was a masterly one. Seeing that Charles was resolved to pursue him, he did not retire towards Moscow, but withdrew into a part of the country where the invader could not procure supplies for his army, or make good his retreat in case of disaster. Proceeding to the country of the Ukraine, he established himself behind sheltered lines, on the right bank of the Dnieper. In June, 1708, before he had effected this movement, he was overtaken by Charles at the little river Berezina. The latter threw a bridge across the river, forced a passage under unfavourable circumstances, and formed in order of battle. The Russians now proved the value of that discipline to which Peter had subjected them. They sustained a fierce contest of some hours with the Swedes. Certainly the latter obtained the advantage, but it was not until they had attacked the Russian intrenchments seven times. Charles was in the greatest personal danger during this battle; and though he was regarded as the victor, it was no discouragement to Peter. The sagacious czar saw the truth of the observation he had made after the terrible defeat of his troops at Narva—that the Swedes, in time, would teach the Russians to beat them. Under the guidance of the indefatigable czar, they were learning that important lesson rapidly.

The Russians continued their retreat to the banks of the Dnieper, and were still followed by the Swedes, who entertained no apprehension of danger, and seemed scarcely sensible of fatigue. Skirmishes occasionally occurred in the rear of the Russians, on which the Swedes hung like a cloud; but though the latter generally obtained the advantage, yet they were weakened even by this profitless sort of victory. Peter could better bear loss in this way than could Charles; because his army was numerically larger. It consisted altogether of nearly 100,000 men; comprising about 38,000 infantry, a similar force of cavalry, 20,000 Cossacks, and 6,000 Calmucks. The Swedish army did not exceed 80,000 men; but as they were veteran soldiers, highly disciplined and accustomed to victory, the chances were in their favour. Peter's consciousness of the superiority of the enemy, deterred him from deciding the struggle by an open battle, and he trusted to harass and starve Charles into retiring. The expectation was a highly rational one; for winter was approaching, the country was desolate, the roads bad, and the Swedes were short of provisions. Moreover, scarcely any opportunity remained for obtaining the latter; for Peter had laid waste the surrounding country in the direction of Moscow, as far as Smolensk.

At length Charles arrived at the banks of the Dnieper, in the neighbourhood of a small town called Mohilo. On the 22nd of September he attacked a large body of Russian and Calmuck cavalry. The latter, used to a desultory mode of warfare, fled through hollow and rugged ways, from which they often unexpectedly reappeared and renewed the conflict. By this means they cut off the regiment at the head of which Charles fought, from the rest of the Swedish army. The king's life was in the greatest danger; two aides-de-camp fell dead at his feet, and his horse was killed beneath him. He then fought on foot, surrounded by his officers; so many of whom were captured or slain, that he was left with no more than five attendants. Yet, though he

killed twelve of the enemy with his own hand, he himself escaped without a single wound. At length he was succoured from this dangerous position by a colonel named Dardof. The Calmucks were mostly put to the sword, and the Russian cavalry sought safety in flight.

Charles was still in the great road to the capital of Russia; but the country was so wasted and depopulated, that his army began to be in serious want of provisions. His minister, Count Piper, earnestly entreated the king to halt until General Lewenhaupt, who was expected with supplies and a reinforcement of 15,000 men, should arrive. Charles rejected this reasonable advice, and, quitting the road that led to the capital, turned his steps towards the barren and inhospitable wastes of the Ukraine. This wild movement disheartened his troops, and astonished the czar, who knew that neither shelter nor provisions could be obtained in that desolate region, and that the country was defended by 30,000 Cossacks, under their hetman Mazeppa. "This person," says Voltaire, "was a Polish gentleman, born in the palatinate of Podolia; he had been educated as page to John Casimir, and had received some tincture of polite learning in his court. An intrigue which he had had in his youth with the lady of a Polish gentleman, having been discovered, the husband caused him to be whipped with rods, to be bound stark naked upon a wild horse, and turned adrift in that condition. The horse, which had been brought out of the Ukraine, returned to his own country, and carried Mazeppa with him, half dead with hunger and fatigue. Some of the country-people gave him assistance, and he lived among them for a long time, signalising himself in several excursions against the Tartars. The superiority of his knowledge gained him great respect among the Cossacks; and his reputation greatly increasing, the czar found it necessary to make him prince of the Ukraine. Being one day at table with the czar at Moscow, the latter proposed to him the task of disciplining the Cossacks, and rendering them docile and dependent. Mazeppa replied, that the situation of the Ukraine, and the genius of those people, were insuperable objects to such a scheme. The czar, who began to be heated with wine, and had not at all times the command of his passions, called him a traitor, and threatened to have him impaled. Mazeppa, on his return to the Ukraine, conceived the idea of a revolt, the execution of which was greatly facilitated by the Swedish army, which soon after appeared on the frontiers. He was determined to render himself independent, and to erect the Ukraine, with some other ruins of the Russian empire, into a powerful kingdom. Brave, enterprising, and indefatigable, he entered secretly into a league with the king of Sweden, to accelerate the ruin of the czar, and to convert it to his own advantage."

Charles reposed an imprudent confidence in the promises of Mazeppa, and proceeded to the river Desna, where the latter had arranged to meet him with 30,000 Cossacks, together with a considerable amount of treasure, ammunition, and provisions. The Swedish monarch also sent a command to General Lewenhaupt, to bring his troops and provisions into the Ukraine, where he proposed to pass the winter. Charles was a creature of impulse. He did not pause to reflect whether the Cossack chief was in a condition to fulfil his engagements, or how he should provision his army in case of any disappointment. In fact, the king had fallen into a fatal error, which the czar resolved to omit no opportunity of pushing forward to extremities.

Peter suffered the Swedes to march without molestation upon their fate; but it was nature rather than man against whom they had now to contend. A marshy forest of fifty leagues had to be traversed: here the Swedes mistook their way, which it cost them a four days' weary march to recover; and even then they lost most of their artillery and waggons, which either stuck or sank in the morass. When they arrived, in a state of exhaustion, on the banks of the Desna, they were almost without provisions. There Mazeppa was to have met the king, and brought the necessary succours for the troops. No news, however, was heard of him; and hunger began to blanch the cheeks and shrink the bold figures of the Swedes. Charles shared all the hardships and privations of his followers, and by his dauntless bearing, sustained their spirits; but though they admired his courage, they condemned his conduct.

Instead of falling upon the main body of the Swedes, the czar prudently resolved to prevent a junction between that and the troops under General Lewenhaupt. He was charged, not only with the conduct of

15,000 men, but with great stores of provisions, ammunition, and treasure. Peter suffered him to cross the Dnieper, though the rear of the Swede had been harassed by a Russian force under General Bauer. The czar also followed with a powerful army; and, in the month of October, the Swedes found themselves pressed upon by a powerful army, the numerical strength of which has been variously stated. Lewenhaupt, with the fearlessness of his country, resolved to attack the czar, and a furious conflict took place on the 7th of the month. So fierce was the first attack of the Swedes, that they killed 1,500 of their foes, threw the Russians into confusion, and put numbers of them to flight. The astonished czar feared defeat, which, under the circumstances, would have been utter ruin. Rushing to the rear-guard, where the Cossacks and Calmucks—the most ferocious of his soldiery—were stationed, he shouted, "I command you to fire upon every one that runs away, even upon me myself, should I be so cowardly as to fly." The Russians recovered themselves, but the battle was not at first resumed; for the Swedish general, who had received strict orders to rejoin his master, chose rather to continue his march than to resume the strife.

The following morning the czar attacked the Swedes upon the borders of a morass. The conflict raged for some time with great fury; but though the loss of the Russians was three times greater than that of the Swedes, the victory remained undecided. At four in the afternoon the struggle was renewed for the third time, when the superior numbers of the Russians gave them the advantage; and the Swede's lines were broken, and the men driven back upon their baggage. Though conquered, they would not submit; Lewenhaupt rallied them behind the waggons, and the men exhibited a readiness again to meet the foe. At daybreak, the czar attacked the Swedes again; and a fifth battle was fought, as sanguinary as any of the preceding ones: of the 9,000 Swedes that were left, one-half perished, and the remainder were still unbroken. These pursued their march during the night, after having spiked their cannon, and burnt a portion of their baggage-waggons; the rest, containing the provisions for Charles's army, fell into the hands of the czar. The latter lost about 10,000 men in these desperate engagements; but he succeeded in crippling the king of Sweden. Lewenhaupt, though defeated, obtained the credit of disputing a victory for three days against an immensely superior force; and of having effected an honourable retreat. In this condition he reached his master, with a miserable remnant of his troops, scarcely amounting to 4,000 men, and destitute alike of the expected provisions and ammunition.

Much about the same time Mazeppa arrived; and he, too, came rather like a fugitive than a powerful ally; bringing with him only 7,000 followers. The Cossacks thought he was leading them against Charles; and when he disclosed his design of joining that monarch, the bulk of them deserted him, and returned home. Those who remained with him were fallen upon by the Russians, and great numbers cut to pieces. Thirty of the principal friends of the hetman had been captured and broken on the wheel; his towns had been burnt, his treasures plundered, and the provisions he had collected for the king of Sweden seized. He himself escaped with difficulty with the remnant of the Cossack force; and the enraged czar had conferred his dignity of hetman on another.

Charles did not give way under these accumulated misfortunes, or permit them to alter his designs. Neither Mazeppa nor Count Piper could induce him to relinquish his intended progress towards the little fortified town of Pultowa, the capital of the Ukraine. To the suggestion of the latter, that he should pass the winter in a small town of the Ukraine, called Romana, the king answered that it was beneath his dignity to shut himself up in a town. To a further entreaty that he would march back into Poland to obtain for his troops that refreshment of which they stood so greatly in need, he responded, that this would be the same thing as flying before the czar; that the season would grow milder, and that he must subdue the Ukraine, and march on to Moscow. In the meantime, the Swedish army was reduced to about 25,000 men, and these were gradually melting away. The winter was remarkably severe, and great numbers of the Swedes perished from cold and want. In one of these terrible marches, about 2,000 men fell, almost frozen to death, before the eyes of their sovereign. These brave soldiers were without shoes, and their uniforms were reduced to rags. Almost their only food was bread, and this of the coarsest kind. Yet Charles assumed

an air of indifference. A soldier ventured, in the presence of the whole army, to present to him, with an air of complaint, a piece of bread that was black and mouldy, made of barley and oats. The king received it without the least emotion, ate every morsel of it, and then coolly said to the soldier, "It is not good, but it may be eaten." Such conduct contributed to make the Swedes support hardships which would have been intolerable under any other general.

The czar had advanced into the Ukraine to harass an enemy whom he wisely concluded must, in the end, be ruined, as his army could not receive reinforcements. Yet such was the intense cold of the winter of 1708-'9, that the rival forces were compelled to remain in a state of inaction. But the positions of the two armies were widely different. The Russians had a fertile country to fall back upon for subsistence; while the Swedes were almost perishing from want. Indeed, had it not been for the influence of Mazeppa in procuring provisions, they must have been exterminated from the combined action of cold and famine. Notwithstanding the usual discipline of the Swedes, their necessities drove them to ravage the surrounding country; they thus became a terror to the scanty population, and constantly narrowed the field from which they could obtain supplies.

Charles resumed his march in the month of February, 1709; and proceeding across the Ukraine in a south-easterly direction, entered the sandy deserts lying westward of the territory of the Don Cossacks. Finding progress almost impossible, he was compelled to retrace his steps over the country just desolated by the progress of his starving troops, who burnt all the villages on the road, because the poor peasants hid their flocks in caves and retired places, and struggled hard with the invaders, who wanted to deprive them of their means of subsistence. Destitute alike of guide or shelter, the obstinate Charles lost three months in marching and counter-marching through cold and barren solitudes; during which time his army was slowly mouldering away.

The fortified town of Pultowa was well supplied with provisions, and would, if taken by Charles, have enabled him to rest and feed his wretched troops until he could obtain reinforcements from Poland and Sweden. His only resource lay in the capture of Pultowa; while, on the other hand, it was of immense consequence to the Russians, as it commanded a mountain-pass communicating with the main road to Moscow. This defile the czar had had the precaution to render almost impenetrable; yet to the sanguine Charles nothing seemed impossible; and with his usual enthusiasm and contempt of danger, he depended on marching to Moscow after he had made himself master of Pultowa.

The Swedes—now reduced to about 18,000 men, exclusive of their Cossack allies—felt reanimated as they threw up trenches before the batteries of Pultowa; for they felt sure of taking it, and thus terminating the miseries they had so long endured. The czar was soon aware of this movement; and he arrived in the neighbourhood of the threatened town on the 15th of June, with an army of about 60,000 men, well provided with artillery, ammunition, and provisions. He first reinforced the garrison—an act which he accomplished by a manœuvre which showed that he had made some advance in the practice of military tactics. Having by a feint attack drawn the besiegers out of their trenches, he took advantage of the circumstance, and poured fresh troops into the town. "Ah!" exclaimed Charles, as he beheld the success of this expedient, "I see well that we have taught the Muscovites the art of war!"

The river Vorskla flowed between the rival armies. This Peter crossed with his whole force, and intrenched himself, in a single night, within view of the enemy. The czar then posted his cavalry between two woods, and covered them with several redoubts, lined with artillery. Several skirmishes took place while these measures were in progress. In one of them Charles received a shot from a carbine, which shattered the bone of his heel. Though the pain was extreme, he did not mention that he was wounded until an attendant perceived that his boot was covered with blood. So severe was the injury, that the surgeons were of opinion that the leg must be amputated. One, however, affirmed that he could save the limb by making deep incisions. "Fall to work, then, presently," replied the king; "cut boldly, and fear nothing." Then holding the leg himself, he beheld the operation with as much calmness as if it had been made upon another person.

While confined to his bed, Charles was informed that the Russians intended to attack him; and though himself unable to

lead his army into the field, he resolved upon anticipating the enemy. Voltaire draws a comparison between the rival kings, who at this time excited the attention of all Europe. He observes—"On the 8th of July, 1709, the decisive battle of Pultowa was fought between the two most extraordinary monarchs that were in the world. Charles XII., illustrious in consequence of a succession of victories during nine years; and the czar Peter, distinguished by nine years of labour, taken to form troops equal to those of Sweden. The one glorious for having given away dominions; the other for having civilised his own. Charles, fond of dangers and fighting for glory alone; Peter, not avoiding danger, and making war only for advantage. The Swedish monarch, liberal from greatness of soul; the Muscovite, never giving but with some great design. The one, master of a sobriety and continence beyond example; of a magnanimous disposition, and never cruel but once: the other, not having yet divested himself of the barbarism of his education and of his country; as much the object of terror to his subjects as of admiration to strangers; and too prone to excesses, which even shortened his days. Charles bore the title of 'Invincible,' of which a single moment might deprive him; while the neighbouring nations had given Peter the name of 'Great,' which, as he did not owe it to his victories, he could not lose by a defeat."

The battle commenced at half-past four in the morning, with a desperate attack on the Russian redoubts. Charles was carried in a litter at the head of his infantry; and his troops, cheered by his presence, took two of the redoubts sword-in-hand. Indeed, so furious was the first charge of the Swedes, that the Russian squadrons were broken, and in danger of being defeated. Peter dashed forward to rally his men, and a musket-ball passed through his hat: an inch difference in the flight of that bullet would have altered the destinies of Russia. Mentschikoff also fought as though he felt that life, fortune, fame, country—all hung upon his sword; and such was the danger to which he was exposed, that three horses fell dead beneath him. The inspirited Swedes shouted "Victory!" and Charles, who was still intoxicated with the remembrance of Narva, concluded that the battle was won.

He was deceived. General Creuts, whom he had sent with 5,000 horse to take the enemy in flank, missed his way, and failed to execute the duty assigned to him. This gave the czar time to rally his cavalry, which now fell upon the Swedes, and threw them into disorder. At the same time the Russians kept up a fire from seventy-two pieces of cannon upon the Swedish cavalry: the latter were almost destitute of artillery; it had been abandoned during their long and painful marches. Mentschikoff had been detached by the czar to take up a position between Pultowa and the Swedes; and this command he executed with such dexterity, as to surround a Swedish corps of reserve, amounting to 3,000 men, and cut them to pieces. The Russian infantry now advanced from their lines in order of battle; the Swedes also prepared for a general engagement; and a pause ensued.

Peter rode from rank to rank, encouraging the soldiers and captains, and promising rewards to them all. At nine o'clock the conflict recommenced, and the horses of Charles's litter were almost immediately killed by a cannon-ball. A second shot broke the litter in pieces, and overturned the king. So dangerous was the position he occupied, that of the four-and-twenty soldiers who afterwards relieved each other by carrying him upon their pikes, no less than one-and-twenty were killed. At the same time the cannon of the Russians made terrible execution upon the Swedes, who were struck with consternation at the slaughter to which they were exposed. At length their first line was driven back upon their second, which, struck with panic, broke and fled. The battle was prolonged for two hours with great fury, when the Swedes were altogether thrown into confusion, and slaughtered in heaps. According to the Russian calculation, 9,224 Swedes were left dead upon the field, and two or three thousand were taken prisoners. The loss of the victors was comparatively small.

Charles was not only defeated, but ruined. Though perfectly helpless, he refused to fly. In this position, Poniatowski, a Polish officer who had followed the king from affection, caused two soldiers to lift him on a horse. Then rallying a body of 500 cavalry around the king, Poniatowski dashed through the Russian regiments, and conducted Charles to the baggage of the Swedish army. During his flight, he suffered extreme agony from the wound in his heel, which led to suppuration, attended with fever; but, though sometimes insensible, he never complained. On inquiring for Count Piper, his minister, and for his most distinguished generals, he was informed they had been made prisoners. "Prisoners to the Russians!" he responded, with a shrug of the shoulders; "come, then, let us rather go to the Turks." This he and his followers did; for after almost unexampled sufferings, they reached the Turkish town of Bender, in Bessarabia, where he was received with hospitality by the seraskier.

The remains of the Swedish army, under General Lewenhaupt, were pursued by Prince Mentschikoff, at the head of 20,000 men. In consideration for the miserable condition of his men, the Swede surrendered, and the whole army was made prisoners of war. Many of these brave men, however, sooner than become captives to the Russians, threw themselves into the Dnieper, and were drowned. The rest were sent to colonise Siberia, where they supported themselves by a mechanical ingenuity for which they eventually became distinguished. As to the Cossacks who were captured, the czar regarded them all as traitors; and, with that vindictive ferocity which commonly characterised him, had them broken on the wheel.

On the evening of Peter's victory at Pultowa, he honoured the captive Swedish generals with an invitation to dine with him. He was much disappointed that he could not extend a similarly unwelcome hospitality to their king. As the prisoners were brought to him in crowds, after the battle, he frequently inquired, "Where, then, is my brother Charles?" At table, the czar asked General Renschild, "What might be the number of his master's troops before the battle?" The Swede answered, "That the king alone had the muster-roll, and would never communicate it to any one; but that he imagined the whole might be about 30,000, of which 18,000 were Swedes, and the rest Cossacks." In a tone of surprise, the czar then inquired, "How they durst venture to penetrate into so distant a country, and lay siege to Pultowa with such a handful of men?" "We were not always consulted," replied the Swedish general; "but, like faithful servants, we obeyed our master's orders without ever presuming to contradict them." "Ah!" exclaimed Peter, turning to some of his courtiers who were formerly suspected of having been engaged in a conspiracy against him—"see how a king ought to be served." Then, filling his glass, he said as he raised it to his lips, "To the health of my masters in the art of war." General Renschild asked who were the persons honoured with so high a title. "You, gentlemen," replied the czar; "the Swedish generals." The general responded, "Your majesty is very ungrateful, then, for having handled your masters so rudely."

The war between Sweden and Russia may be said to have terminated, in fact, with the battle of Pultowa, the results of which were of the highest importance to Russia, and of no small consequence to Europe. The victory of Peter was the triumph of patience and forethought over mere reckless daring; the exaltation of the reforming statesman over the warrior who preferred personal fame to the advancement of his subjects. Peter was the original aggressor; but he had since been disposed to make restitution, and to conclude peace with his foe. On the other hand, Charles indulged in the dream of dethroning the czar, and conquering the Russian empire. In this position the original aspect of the quarrel was reversed; Charles became the aggressor, while Peter was the defender of his own territories against one whose career was desolation, and whose success brought no good either to victors or vanquished. From this famous battle the Russian empire has derived its present prosperity and cultivation; which, had Charles been successful, would have been thrown back to an indefinite period. If Peter had been defeated, or had he fallen amidst the victory of his soldiers, Russia would again have become the prey of civil wars and domestic convulsions, from which she would not have escaped until some other giant in the art of ruling came to liberate her.

Other and more immediate results arose out of the defeat of Charles at Pultowa. When the Swede was flushed with the glory of conquest, he compelled the emperor Joseph to eject the catholics out of 105 churches, in favour of the Silesians of the confession of Augsburg: the latter were now ejected in their turn, and the churches restored to the catholics. Augustus, the dethroned king of Poland, protested against an extorted abdication, and was, before the close of the year, restored by Peter. The senate of Sweden supposed their king to be dead; but, on account of the uncertainty on this point, both they and the nation were thrown into confusion. A new treaty

against Sweden was entered into between the czar and the kings of Poland, Denmark, and Prussia. Its design was to restore to each of those states the conquests obtained from them by Gustavus Adolphus. The czar thus acquired a title to Livonia, Ingria, and a part of Finland; and he was not slow in attempting to gain possession of these territories. In the month of November he bombarded and afterwards blockaded Riga, the capital of Livonia, which submitted to the Russians after between nine and ten thousand of them had perished by a plague that was raging there. Kexholm, Pernau, Revel, and other towns also surrendered; and the whole of Livonia was in the hands of the czar.

The czar in the meantime had visited St. Petersburg, to inspect the progress of that city, from whence he proceeded to Moscow, and superintended the preparations which were making for a grand military festival in celebration of the triumph over the Swedes. The first day of the new year (1710) was ushered in with this solemnity, by which the czar sought to inspire his subjects with military enthusiasm and ideas of conquest. The artillery of the vanquished, their colours and standards, the litter in which their wounded king was carried on the field of battle, the soldiers, officers, generals, and ministers of the captive Swedes, all on foot, moved in solemn procession under seven magnificent arches, attended with the ringing of bells, the braying of trumpets, the booming roar of a hundred pieces of cannon, and the wild joyous shouts of a living sea of people. The victors, preceded by their generals, mounted upon war-chargers, closed the procession. The czar, as was usual with him, took his position according to the rank he held in the army, which was then that of major-general. At each triumphal arch stood the deputies of the several orders of the state; and at the last, a number of young noblemen, attired in the garb of Roman patricians, presented the victorious monarch with a crown of laurel. At every pause made in this gorgeous progress, the people rent the air with acclamations of "Long live the emperor our father!" It has been truly said, that this imposing splendour augmented the veneration the Russians entertained for their monarch, and perhaps made him appear greater in their eyes than the real advantages they derived from him.

The following month another ceremony took place, which was doubtless more agreeable to the czar than any festival imitated from the military pageants of the ancient Romans, for it showed the respect in which he began to be held by the old and powerful states of Europe. In the year 1708, Mateof, his ambassador at the court of London, was arrested in the streets for debt, at the suit of some English merchants, and obliged to give in bail. The merchants contended that the privileges of ambassadors must yield to the laws of commerce; while Mateof and the foreign ministers who advocated his cause, maintained that, under any circumstances, their persons ought to be regarded as sacred. Peter was greatly offended at what he considered as a slight offered to himself in the person of his representative, and he wrote to the queen of England, and insisted upon satisfaction. Anne was perplexed. She could not comply with his desire to have the merchants punished, because, by the laws of their country, they had a right to sue for their just demands; while, at the same time, no law existed to exempt foreign ministers from being arrested for debt. The irritation of the czar was increased by a suspicion, that the ambassadors of Russia were not respected in other countries; for only the preceding year, the unfortunate General Patkul, his plenipotentiary in Saxony, had been tortured to death at the command of Charles XII. Anne induced her parliament to pass an act rendering it no longer lawful to arrest an ambassador for debt; and with this Peter was obliged to be contented. But the great victory of Pultowa rendered the czar a more illustrious and powerful prince in the estimation of his neighbours; and in England it was thought necessary to make a further public satisfaction to the hero of that famous contest. Mr. Whitworth was selected to proceed to Russia and offer a ceremonial apology. This gentleman was commissioned to address the czar as "Most high and most mighty emperor," and to inform him that the queen had imprisoned the persons who presumed to arrest his ambassador, and that they had been rendered infamous. The statement was an untruth; but the czar accepted the compliment, which was an indication of the rising importance of Russia. Peter had not been called emperor by any foreign state until he won the battle of Pultowa.

CHAPTER XXII.

WAR WITH TURKEY; PETER AND HIS ARMY ADVANCE INTO MOLDAVIA; ENGAGEMENTS ON THE BANKS OF THE PRUTH, AND DESPERATE SITUATION OF PETER; HE OBTAINS A PEACE, AND IS ALLOWED TO RETIRE; MARRIAGE OF THE PRINCE ALEXIS, AND PUBLIC CELEBRATION OF THE CZAR'S MARRIAGE WITH CATHERINE; PETER ENTERS INTO A FRESH LEAGUE AGAINST SWEDEN; ACTIVE HOSTILITIES WITH THAT COUNTRY; PETER DEFEATS THE SWEDISH NAVY, AND BECOMES MASTER OF FINLAND; NATIONAL REJOICINGS OF THE RUSSIANS.

CHARLES XII., in his retreat at Bender, strained every nerve to induce the sultan, Achmet III., to take up arms against Russia. His endeavours were seconded by the mother of the sultan, who, though she had never seen Charles, was influenced by a great admiration for this extraordinary man. "When will you," she would sometimes say to her son, "assist my lion to devour this czar?"

Though Charles and his followers, amounting altogether to 1,800 persons, were all hospitably entertained at Bender, at the sole expense of the sultan, yet it is not very probable that monarch would have been induced to take any active part against the czar, but that his own interests were involved. The Ottoman Porte seemed instinctively to recognise a growing enemy in the rising empire of Russia, and to regard it with jealousy, if not with aversion. The sultan viewed with suspicion the fortifications which the czar had erected at Azoff and Taganrog, and the increasing naval power of Russia on the waters of Azoff and the Euxine. He discerned a spirit of restless encroachment in Peter, which he considered it necessary to check; and he was confirmed in this resolution by the representations of the khan of the Crimea, whose independence was overshadowed by the increasing might of Russia.

When, therefore, Charles presented memorial after memorial to the sultan, and his favourite, Count Poniatowski, backed them with all the insinuating arts of an accomplished statesman, the Ottoman Porte resolved on war. The sultan presented the count with a purse containing 1,000 ducats; and the grand-vizier said to him, "I will take your king in one hand, and a sword in the other, and will lead him to Moscow at the head of 200,000 men." Though the distribution of Russian gold among the ministers of the sultan deferred the coming storm, it was unable to avert it. The chief vizier was changed, and hostile feelings towards Russia influenced the councils of the Porte. As a preliminary to a declaration of war, Count Tolstoi, the czar's ambassador, was arrested in the public streets at Constantinople, and committed, together with thirty of his followers, to the gloomy state prison called the Seven Towers.* This was in accordance with a barbarous custom then prevailing at Constantinople, arising from the contempt in which the Turks held foreign ministers.

Peter was much irritated at this indignity, and he resolved to avenge it. In the January of 1711 he appointed a kind of senatorial regency to govern during his absence; issued a conscription for the purpose of recruiting his army, one division of which he sent to Moldavia; besides putting his ships at Azoff and the Black Sea in readiness. But before the czar left Moscow, he made a public acknowledgment of his marriage with the Livonian orphan, which had been privately solemnised in 1707. "The young captive of Marienburg," observes Voltaire, "was superior to her sex, as well as to her misfortunes. Her behaviour had rendered her so agreeable, that the czar would always have her near his person. She attended him in his travels and in his most toilsome expeditions, sharing his fatigues, and soothing his

* "The Seven Towers—that celebrated prison of which the very name is a spell of power—are rapidly crumbling to decay, but must continue to be amongst the most interesting of the antiquities of Constantinople, as long as one stone remains upon another. * * * Instruments of torture—racks, wheels and oubliettes—are rife within this place of gloom and horror. One chasm, upon whose brink you stand, is called the 'Well of Blood;' and is said to have overflowed its margin with the ensanguined stream which was once warm with life. A small court, designated the 'Place of Heads,' is pointed out as having been cumbered with the slain, until the revolting pile was of sufficient height to enable the spectator to look out from its summit upon the waves of the glittering Propontis; and more than one stone tunnel is shown, in which the captive was condemned to crawl upon his hands and knees, and there left to die of famine."—Miss Pardoe's *City of the Sultan.*

cares, with the cheerfulness of her disposition and complaisant behaviour. She was quite a stranger to all that fastidious pomp and ceremony which the rest of the sex have now converted into a real necessity. But what rendered her a more extraordinary favourite, was her neither being envied nor opposed; nor was any other person sacrificed to make room for her promotion. Often did she appease the emperor's wrath, and add to his greatness by inspiring him with clemency." The tie between Catherine and the czar was doubtless strengthened by the fact, that she had already borne him two daughters.

Peter left Moscow for his expedition to Turkey on the 17th of March, attended by the devoted Catherine, who could not be prevented from accompanying him on a campaign which it was justly anticipated would be an arduous one. The czar proceeded to Jassy, the capital of Moldavia, with an army of only 40,000 men. The princes or hospodars of Moldavia and Wallachia, though acknowledging the supremacy of the Porte, were intriguing with the czar, through whose instrumentality they hoped to accomplish their independence. Cantimir, the prince of Wallachia, had made liberal promises of troops and provisions to the czar, but he afterwards pleaded that he was unable to fulfil them on account of the attachment his subjects bore towards the Porte. As for the Prince of Wallachia, he shrunk from the coming storm, and dreading the vengeance of the Turks, abandoned his secret alliance with Russia, and returned to his duty. These defections placed the czar in a position of serious difficulty; for he found himself in a wild, uncultivated country, where the herbage that should have supplied forage to his horses, had been destroyed by swarms of locusts, and provisions for his troops could scarcely be obtained. The men pursued their way across a mere desert, oppressed by the scorching heat of the sun, and greatly in want of water. Desertion and hunger told heavily upon his army.

Such was the situation of the czar, when he received intelligence that the Turkish vizier, Baltagai Mahomet, had crossed the Danube at the head of 100,000 men, and was directing his march towards Jassy, along the banks of the Pruth. Peter held a council of war, and decided upon marching towards the Pruth, and attacking the enemy, despite his superiority of numbers. This resolve was put into execution, and the czar arrrived at the banks of the river by the 18th of June. He was too late to dispute the passage of the Turkish army, which, joined by the Tartars of the Crimea and other reinforcements, was swelled to the formidable strength of 200,000 men.

The disparity of numbers between the rival forces was alarming; the situation of the Russians extremely critical. Peter's position resembled that of Charles at Pultowa. He was almost destitute of provisions; while an army of Turks in front prevented his advance, and an army of Tartars behind cut off his retreat. Seeing his safety to consist solely in the accomplishment of the latter movement, Peter decamped during the night of the 20th of July. It was too late; for at daybreak the Turks fell upon his rear. The Russians were compelled to pause, and intrench themselves behind their baggage and heavy waggons. In this position they met the attack of the Turks with firmness, and even compelled them to retire. Peter had formed his army, which consisted of 30,000 infantry and about 7,000 cavalry, into a hollow square, in the centre of which he placed Catherine and the women; and in this position the Russians received several furious but irregular onslaughts from the Turks. Yet the situation of the czar was desperate; for his enemies had only to maintain their position, and the Russians must either surrender or perish from hunger. In the protracted sort of engagement, extending over three days, the loss of both Turks and Russians was terrible.

In this painful state of affairs, the czar's spirits began to give way. To the Russian senate, whom he had appointed to rule in his absence, he addressed this declaration:—"I announce to you, that deceived by false intelligence, and through no fault of mine, I am here shut up in my camp by a Turkish army four times more numerous than my own; our provisions cut off; and on the point of being cut to pieces or taken prisoners, unless Heaven comes to our aid in some unexpected manner. If it befall that I am taken by the Turks, you will no longer consider me your czar and lord, nor pay regard to any order that may be brought you on my part; not even though you may see my hand signed to it; but you will wait until I come myself in person. If I am destined to perish here, and you receive well-confirmed news of my death,

then you will choose for my successor the worthiest among you."

To hide the torture of his mind, Peter retired to his tent on the advance of night, and gave orders that no one should approach him. He subsequently admitted that, in his whole life, he never experienced such agitation as racked him in that hour of danger and apparent ruin. He revolved in his thoughts all that he had been doing for so many years to promote the glory and happiness of his country, and that he must now either see his army exterminated by famine, or encounter another of such superior force that defeat would be almost inevitable. Yet, even in this distraction, he decided for battle; and sending for General Scheremetof, commanded him to have everything ready, at break of day, for attacking the Turks with fixed bayonets. He also ordered the baggage to be burnt, to prevent its falling into the hands of the enemy. The czar repeated his prohibition that he should be undisturbed, and again he was left alone. But there was one who, in this night of consternation, dared to disobey his commands. Catherine felt that, in the time of trial, the place of the wife was by the side of her husband. In spite of his prohibition, she entered the tent of the czar, and found him in strong convulsions.

Peter was subject to these fits; and Catherine, more than any other person, had the power to soothe and restore him. Having applied the necessary remedies, she assumed a cheering tone, and suggested that, instead of fighting under such desperate circumstances, he should try what could be effected by negotiation. This proposition was the result of a council she had just before held with General Scheremetof and the other officers. It was impossible to anticipate any terms that were not of a most unfavourable kind, even if they did not involve dishonour. Peter was perplexed; the prospect was dark every way; but the entreaties and tears of Catherine prevailed, and he consented.

It has been said that Catherine bribed Baltagai Mahomet, the Turkish minister and general, and thus procured favourable terms for the czar. The assertion appears to be an idle calumny. It originated in the circumstance that the czarina, in compliance with Oriental custom (which enjoins that a suitor should never approach a minister empty-handed), sent to Baltagai all her jewels, money, and whatever valuables she had with her in the camp. This was merely a customary tribute, and never designed nor accepted as a bribe. It is indeed absurd, to suppose that a man who had the control of the vast wealth of the Ottoman treasury, would have sold a favourable peace to a prostrate foe for a few jewels, which, had he reduced the czar, he could still have obtained as spoil. Other causes were at work. Baltagai had been disgusted with the ingratitude and insolence of the Swedish exile, Charles, whom he did not, therefore, wish to see too triumphant. Moreover, he was no soldier, and did not care to risk a battle, although victory appeared certain: and as to the alarming power of the czar, he doubtless thought that would be sufficiently checked by the humiliation Peter must experience in soliciting peace under circumstances which showed that his influence had been overrated. Much has been written upon this point; and it is certainly difficult to understand how Peter obtained such favourable terms as he did; yet we think Baltagai may fairly be acquitted of the charge of having sold the interests of his country.

After some delay, a suspension of arms was declared, and a favourable answer received from Baltagai. He required that the Russians should deliver up Azoff, and burn the galleys which lay in that harbour; demolish the important citadels built upon the Palus Mæotis, and surrender the ammunition and cannon contained in them to the sultan. The czar was also to renounce all further interference in the affairs of Poland and the Cossacks; and to promise that Charles XII. should not be molested on his return to Sweden. In addition to these terms, it was proposed that the ancient tribute of Russia to the Tartars of the Crimea should be renewed; but this offensive condition was abandoned. The Turks also insisted that Cantimir, the prince of Wallachia, who had promised assistance to Peter, should be delivered up to them. This the czar steadily refused, saying, "I will rather cede to the Turks the country as far as Kursk; I should still have some hopes of recovering it: but my word once broken cannot be restored. Honour is all that we have peculiar to ourselves; renouncing that, is ceasing to be a monarch."

To the other conditions Peter assented, and a treaty of peace was begun, concluded and signed all in one day, the 21st of July. The Turks furnished their starving foes

with provisions, and the czar was allowed to retire with his army, artillery, colours, and baggage. As the czar commenced his march, the king of Sweden spurred, hot and impatient, into the Turkish camp. He had come to see the ruin of his rival; and on hearing of the escape of Peter, he ran to the tent of the vizier, and angrily reproached him for having signed the treaty. "I have a right," replied Baltagai, "to make war or peace." "But," inquired the king, "had you not the whole Russian army in your power?" "Our law orders," returned the Turk, "to give peace to our enemies when they implore our mercy." "And does it command you," exclaimed the king, passionately, "to make a bad treaty when you may impose what conditions you please? Did it not depend upon you to lead the czar prisoner to Constantinople?" With a meaning sarcasm the vizier replied, "And who would have governed his empire in his absence? It is not proper that all kings should leave their dominions." Stung to the quick, Charles threw himself upon a sofa, and entangling his spur in the robe of the vizier, purposely tore it. Then, rising up, he disdainfully quitted the tent; and, remounting his horse, returned in rage and despair to Bender. It has been well observed, that the Turkish general, in overlooking the indignity he received, showed himself greater than the impetuous king who offered it. Charles afterwards employed himself in endeavouring, by intrigues at the Ottoman court, to have the vizier displaced; but his activity only led to the withdrawal of the sum allowed by the sultan for the maintenance of himself and his followers, and his being ordered to quit the empire.

Peter returned to Russia by way of Jassy; and, in compliance with the treaty he had so recently made, caused the fortresses of Samara and Kamienska to be demolished. He, however, raised some difficulties about the destruction of his harbour and works at Taganrog, and the restitution of Azoff. The sultan became impatient to receive the keys of the latter city, and negotiations were opened afresh. Azoff was then restored to the Turks—a circumstance by which the progress of Russia in the south, towards the sea, was driven back. At the same time the Ottoman Porte, notwithstanding its habitual contempt for Christian states, constituted itself the arbiter between Russia, Poland, and Sweden. The sultan desired the czar to withdraw his troops from Poland, to which Peter consented, on condition that Charles should be compelled to retire from Turkey. The sultan was by no means averse to this arrangement, for he was tired of the whims and intrigues of his ungrateful guest, whom, nevertheless, he found it extremely difficult to get rid of. The czar's health had been seriously impaired by the mental anxiety he had experienced, and he therefore went to Carlsbad, in Bohemia, to drink the medicinal waters for which it is famous. Peter had for some time occasionally felt some mental uneasiness from another cause. His first wife, Eudoxia Lapuchin (whom, on account of her uncongenial temper and her bigoted opposition, he had thought necessary to divorce), brought him a son, who was born in the convent to which she had been compelled to retire. This prince, though he has been described as accomplished (an assertion which is extremely apocryphal), showed a headstrong disposition from his boyhood, and an attachment to low pleasures. His time was spent with vulgar and vicious companions; and, what was far worse, he inherited all his mother's bigotry and her aversion to those reforms which it was the great object of Peter's life to effect. Few things could have more deeply wounded the czar than the reflection that his successor might overturn his labours, and let the empire relapse into barbarism. It is probable that, even at this period, Peter had formed the idea of excluding his son from the throne, in the event of its being found impossible to reform him. The czar felt himself the parent of an empire, as well as the father of a dull and graceless youth.

With a view of reforming his son Alexis Petrovitz, the czar married him, in the October of 1711, at Dresden, to the princess of Wolfenbuttle, sister to the empress of Germany. The match had a political value to the czar, who was glad to strengthen his connections by so distinguished an alliance; but Alexis entered into it with reluctance. After the ceremony the czar returned to St. Petersburg, where he publicly celebrated his marriage with the czarina Catherine, to whom he had been previously united privately. The solemnity was conducted with great splendour; and Peter not only designed the festivities, but personally laboured at the preparation of them. This ceremonial was intended by him, and regarded by his subjects, as an act of grateful acknowledgment for the services Catherine had

lately rendered when the czar was hemmed in by his foes on the banks of the Pruth. The amiable nature of the czarina, and her utter devotion to her distinguished husband, neutralised any feeling of envy or ill-will which might otherwise have been entertained towards her on account of her humble origin. But either in times of grief or cheerfulness, the activity of the czar never forsook him. He followed up the public rejoicings with which the double marriage of his son and himself were celebrated, by planning and executing many national improvements. New roads were laid down, and new canals were dug. His city of St. Petersburg, now rapidly increasing in importance, was the favourite child of his brain. He finished the foundry and the admiralty, and caused an exchange and warehouses to be built there. Further than this, he removed the senate from Moscow to St. Petersburg; and thus made the latter, in some degree, the capital of the empire.

At peace with Turkey, Peter determined to strip Sweden of every place which could be an annoyance to his new capital. He even designed to take from Sweden all its German provinces; and in order to effect this, he entered into a league with the electors of Brandenburg and Hanover, and the king of Denmark. Charles, in his exile, showed the same inflexible pride which had ever characterised him. From his lonely dwelling in the deserts of Bessarabia, he hurled defiance at the czar and his allies; and without attempting to break up the league formed against him, sent commands, that the most vigorous resistance should be made both by land and sea. Notwithstanding the impoverished state of Sweden, both with respect to men and money, his orders were obeyed. The senate of Stockholm fitted out a fleet of thirteen ships of the line; and a considerable land force was raised, and placed under the command of Count Steinbock, a general whose unquestionable courage and military skill were exceeded by his cruelty. Steinbock attacked the Danish and Saxon troops near a place called Gadebusch, before the Russians were able to join them. The battle was fought with great fury; for such was the hatred existing between the Swedes and the Danes, that in many cases the officers rushed furiously upon each other, animated by a mad thirst for their adversaries' blood, and fell dead from the wounds received from this recklessness. Steinbock gained the victory; but that circumstance merely deferred his ruin. The Swedish general followed up his transient triumph by an act of infamous cruelty. Because the Danes had reduced the town of Stade to ashes, he retaliated on that of Altona, a commercial town below Hamburg, on the banks of the Elbe. The unfortunate inhabitants were compelled to quit their houses at midnight on the 9th of January, 1713, and to wander forth into the open country during a winter of more than usual severity. "Men and women," observes a modern historian, "weeping and wailing, and bending under the weight of their furniture, fled to the neighbouring hills, which were covered with snow. Many palsied men were carried thither on the shoulders of the young. Women with newly-born infants in their arms, fled and perished with them from the cold, throwing their last looks towards the flames which were consuming their homes. All the inhabitants had not time to quit the town before the Swedes set fire to it. The conflagration continued from midnight till ten in the morning; almost all the houses being wood, were entirely consumed; and the next day, scarcely anything remained to indicate that there had been a town upon that spot!" All Germany protested against this wanton cruelty; and the generals of the Polish and Danish armies wrote to Count Steinbock, reproaching him with his enormous cruelty, for the perpetration of which no military necessity could be alleged. The Swede retorted, that the allies were guilty of as great atrocities in desolating Pomerania, and that he had only endeavoured to teach the enemies of his master not to make war for the future like barbarians. The reproof was, no doubt, merited; but the retaliation was an ignoble one.

Steinbock's success was extremely transient. The Saxons and the Danes were soon joined by the Russians; and he was compelled to retire before the troops he had recently defeated, and shelter himself and his army in Tenningen, a fortified place in Holstein, into which he obtained admission by artifice. The allied army then went into winter quarters; but on the renewal of hostilities, the Swedes, amounting to 11,000 men, were compelled to surrender themselves prisoners of war. As to Steinbock, unable to repay the ransom which was demanded for his liberation, he languished out the remainder of his life in prison at Copen-

hagen. Thus, at least on this occasion, historical truth, and what is called poetical justice, went hand-in-hand.

Everything seemed adverse to the absent king of Sweden, whose turbulent behaviour in the Turkish dominions had made him the inmate of a prison. Nearly the whole of Pomerania was overrun and partitioned amongst the allies. With the exception of Stralsund, scarcely a place remained in the possession of the Swedes; and that was besieged by the Russians. The czar, satisfied that it must fall, left the operations against it in the hands of Prince Mentschikoff. He then (May, 1713) returned to St. Petersburg, and proceeded with a powerful squadron of galleys, and 16,000 troops, to pursue his career of conquest in the Gulf of Finland. Helsingfors, Bergo, and Abo, the latter the capital of Finland, successively yielded to the czar, who commanded the whole coast of the gulf up to the city he thus easily subdued. There was nothing of fighting for the love of glory about this: military vanity seems never to have been the moving principle in the mind of the czar. A glance at the map will show any one, that if St. Petersburg was to be maintained as the capital of Russia, the possession of the coasts of the Gulf of Finland was a geographical necessity. On becoming master of Abo, the czar robbed it of its magnificent library, which he conveyed to St. Petersburg, and erected a building for its reception.

The insulted and fallen Swedes, who were learning by painful experience, that no nation can long pursue a course of conquest without eventually suffering bitterly from that retaliation which seems a law of nature, resolved, in spite of their impoverished condition, to resist this last act of aggression. Collecting all their naval power, they put to sea in the Gulf of Bothnia, with a considerable squadron. The czar, glad of an opportunity of distinguishing his infant navy, set sail with sixteen ships of the line, and 180 galleys fit for navigating the shallow waters of the inlets of the gulf. The hostile fleets met near the Aland Isles: that of the Swedes was stronger in large ships, but inferior in galleys. Under such circumstances, the wisdom of the czar was apparent in bringing the enemy to an engagement among the rocks and shallows which lie in the neighbourhood of Aland, where, though galleys could act, large vessels could not. The Swedes were defeated with terrible slaughter, their admiral captured, and many of their vessels sunk or taken. The rest escaped; but so great was the consternation, that even the inhabitants of Stockholm did not think themselves safe. This triumph at Aland, Peter regarded as the most glorious action of his life after the victory at Pultowa. It made him master of Finland, the government of which he gave to Prince Galitzin, and then returned to St. Petersburg, where he was received with public rejoicings and festivities. These were rendered more brilliant to celebrate the birth of a daughter, of which the czarina had been confined. In honour of her, Peter instituted the order of St. Catherine, which dignity she alone could bestow.

The Russian people were delighted with the spectacles with which the czar occasionally entertained them; and not the less so because they were all highly flattering to their national emotions. On this occasion the cannon, colours, and standards taken from the captured Swedish ships, were carried to St. Petersburg, accompanied by the Russian army, marching in order of battle. The triumphal arch which the czar, according to custom, had himself designed, was decorated with the emblems of his victories. Admiral Apraxin, who commanded the Russian fleet, headed the procession beneath the arch, and was followed by the czar as rear-admiral, and the other officers, according to their rank. Erenschild (the Swedish admiral) and his officers followed their conquerors. Gold and silver medals were then distributed to all Russians engaged in the battle; and the czar, ascending a throne which had been prepared for the occasion, thus addressed his subjects and companions-in-arms:—"Countrymen! is there any one among you who, twenty years ago, could have thought of fighting under me in the Baltic, in ships built by yourselves, and that we should be settled in those countries which we have conquered by our great toils and courage? The ancient seat of sciences is said to have been in Greece; they afterwards moved to Italy, whence they spread themselves to most parts of Europe. Now it is our turn, if you will second my design, and to obedience add study. Arts circulate in the world as does blood in the body; and perhaps they will settle their empire amongst us in their return to Greece, their ancient country. I dare hope that, by our achievements and solid glory, we shall one day make the most civilised nations blush."

Though many of the old boyards listened to this manly harangue with indifference, if not with actual dislike, the young nobles were affected by it even to tears. To them it opened up new paths to distinction, and seemed, in raising the dignity and power of their country, to add a greater brilliancy to the rank they bore. But whatever of discontent lingered amongst those who loved ever to look back to the dead past, rather than to press forward with the living present—to collect fading laurels from half-forgotten graves, rather than to gain fresh ones by deeds of heroic activity—it dared no longer show itself. The czar had won the people, and he reigned now doubly absolute—by the law of the empire, and by the force of genius. Real joy dwelt for a while at St. Petersburg, and public festivities were prolonged by private hospitalities. The czar gave a series of public dinners, to which all classes of the people were invited; and the illustrious monarch went from table to table amongst his guests, and conversed freely, even with those of the most humble condition, concerning their trades and occupations. The nobles, in their turn, gave balls and public entertainments on a very grand scale; the mercantile classes had their social festivals also; even the artisans and serfs drank their bad brandy with an air of triumph; and St. Petersburg presented a scene of rejoicing which had never been known beneath its cold sky before. Yet under and around the great city of the swamp lay the bones of more than 100,000 men, victims of its creation; sacrificed to the iron will of the brilliant despot, whose restless energy and deep-seeing genius remoulded his people, and, in this wild spot, even changed the face of nature! How great, sometimes how terrible, is the power of one large and original mind!

CHAPTER XXIII.

RETURN OF CHARLES XII. FROM TURKEY; CAPTURE OF STRALSUND; PETER AGAIN STARTS ON HIS TRAVELS; POLITICAL CONSPIRACY OF BARON GOERTZ; THE CZAR VISITS FRANCE; MEMORIAL PRESENTED TO HIM BY THE DOCTORS OF THE SORBONNE; PETER AND CATHERINE AT BERLIN; THEY RETURN TO RUSSIA.

Sweden, exhausted by its efforts, sought peace with Russia. The regency of Stockholm, despairing of the return of the king, came to a resolution to consult him no longer, and to make pacific proposals to the czar. This resolution was interrupted by the sudden reappearance of the king, after a stay of five years and some months in Bessarabia. Having passed through the most extraordinary adventures, and endured severe sufferings, Charles, on the 21st of October, 1714, presented himself, during the night, at the gates of the town of Stralsund, in the disguise of a courier. He had not been in a bed for sixteen nights, and his legs were so swollen from extreme fatigue, that his boots were obliged to be cut off. The fugitive king found Europe in a very different condition to that in which he had left it. The war between France, England, and Holland, was over. Anne of England having made peace with the aged Louis XIV., had just gone to that bourne where warrior and politician, queen, subject, or beggar, alike remain in tranquillity. George I., elector of Hanover, had been called to the throne of Great Britain, and had taken from the territories of Sweden the duchy of Bremen and Verden. Frederic William, the new king of Prussia, had seized on Stettin and part of Pomerania; while the czar had enriched himself enormously at the expense of his former rival, Charles. In the north of Europe, Peter had acquired an uncontrollable ascendancy; and all the neighbouring princes referred their claims to him.

The spirit of the fallen Charles had not sunk with his fortunes; but his subjects were now too feeble to second his daring projects. They had lost their confidence, and were no longer disposed to seek in

battle nobler terms than they could obtain by arbitration. But when Charles applied to the citizens of Stockholm for money to raise a force equal to his necessities, his generous people, who pitied their wild king even while they blamed him, complied, as far as possible, with his wishes. His rash conduct has been described as resulting not from the fury of despair, but rather from the gallantry of a nature that never could be penetrated by despair. Shutting himself up in Stralsund, which was made celebrated by his connection with it, he undertook its defence, with a garrison of about 9,000 men, against the combined army of Prussians, Danes, and Saxons, amounting to 36,000 men. Charles defended the place inch by inch; and when it was at length reduced to a heap of ruins, he succeeded in escaping before it surrendered to the assailants.* He made his way to Carlscrona; and, though so near his capital, he yet resolved never to enter it again until he had obtained some signal victory. Regarding his people only as born to become soldiers to carry out his projects, he issued orders for raising men throughout his whole kingdom. Miserable Sweden! infatuated king!

While the sun of Charles was thus setting, the power of Peter was approaching its utmost height. Livonia, Esthonia, Ingria, and nearly all Finland, had been acquired by him. He was ready to protect them by war if necessary; but not averse to peace, if his adversaries desired it. Almost every day he created some new regulations or establishments in connection with the navy, army, the commerce, or the laws. About 400,000 men were employed in the public works at St. Petersburg, which rapidly became a place of great commerce and wealth. The czar, however, in his anxiety for its prosperity, committed an act of folly and injustice; for he prohibited all goods imported into Russia at Archangel from being sent to Moscow.

Peter now resolved to undertake a second journey through the principal countries of Europe. The time was eminently favourable for such an expedition; for he had established his reforms at home upon a secure basis, and he had nothing to fear from enemies abroad. He had performed his first journey with the view of obtaining information concerning the arts and manufactures of the places he visited; but in the second he desired to examine the secrets of foreign courts, and the political systems of Europe. He left Russia in 1716, accompanied by the czarina Catherine, and followed by the gratitude of his people. His journey was a kind of triumphal progress, and he was generally received with public rejoicings and festivities. Catherine, who was approaching her confinement, was compelled to rest for a short time at Schwerin, while Peter pursued his way to Holland. The czarina soon followed him, but was compelled to pause at Wesel, where she was delivered of a son, whose brief existence only disappointed the hopes of his father. Such was Catherine's anxiety to rejoin her husband, that, ten days after her confinement, she accompanied him to Amsterdam.

The czar went to Copenhagen, and had an interview with the king of Denmark, who received him with great distinction. He then visited the king of Prussia, and paused at many places, either from motives of pleasure or for the sake of making observations. All this time he travelled in a very simple manner, avoiding all show or parade whatever. An amusing incident arose out of this love of simplicity in so great a man. He arrived late one night at Nymegen, in a common post-chaise, and accompanied by only two attendants. As

* The daring and energy of this extraordinary man during this period, is thus graphically described by his biographer Voltaire:—"Nothing was able to move him; he employed the day in making ditches and intrenchments behind the walls, and in the night he sallied out upon the enemy In the meantime Stralsund was battered in breach, the bombs fell as thick as hail upon the houses, and half the town was reduced to ashes. The citizens, however, so far from complaining, were filled with the highest veneration for their royal master, whose fatigues, temperance, and courage astonished them. He inspired them with similar qualities; and, under him, they all became soldiers: they accompanied him in all his sallies, and served him in the place of a second garrison. One day, as the king was dictating some letters to his secretary, to be sent to Sweden, a bomb fell on the house, penetrated the roof, and burst near the apartment where he was. One-half of the floor was shattered to pieces. The closet where the king was employed, partly formed out of a thick wall, resisted the explosion; and, by an astonishing piece of fortune, none of the splinters that flew about in the air entered at the closet door, which happened to be open. The report of the bomb, and the noise it occasioned in the house, which seemed ready to fall, made the secretary drop his pen. 'What is the matter?' said the king, with a placid air, 'why do you not write?' The secretary could only exclaim, 'Ah, sire! the bomb!' 'Well,' continued the king, 'what has the bomb to do with the letter I am dictating to you? Go on.'"

his frugal supper consisted only of poached eggs and a little bread and cheese, he was much astonished when, the next morning, the landlord presented a bill of one hundred ducats for his entertainment. Peter remonstrated, and asked if eggs were so very scarce in that neighbourhood. "No," answered the landlord; "but emperors are." The czar settled the bill; for he must have felt that, statesman as he was, he had for once been overreached.

On reaching Amsterdam, Peter was received with an exhibition of feeling which surpassed enthusiasm. There the honest ship-builders regarded him as their pupil; and the workmen looked upon him as a great man who had given additional dignity to labour; and they remembered the time he performed the like work with themselves. They found his manners unchanged: the great emperor of Russia talked to them as familiarly as, about eighteen years before, Master Peter the amateur carpenter had done. The little cottage at Sardam, in which he had dwelt, though scarcely more than a hovel, had been improved and carefully preserved. It was known as "The Prince's House." On re-entering it, after so long an absence, Peter desired to be left alone; and there, for a while, he remained absorbed by reflection of a kind it is not difficult to divine. Wonder for the past, and grateful joy for the present, no doubt filled that strong mind, as, reflecting upon the strange vicissitudes of life, he beheld the scene of his early labours; while his imagination, speeding to the tideless Baltic, saw upon its broad basin their result in the triumphant fleet of Russia.

The czar remained three months in Holland, chiefly because the Hague, then regarded as the centre of the negotiations of Europe, and crowded with travellers and foreign ministers, afforded him an opportunity of making certain political observations. A cunning adventurer, named Baron Goertz, who had acquired the confidence of Charles XII., and desired to bring about an alliance between that fallen monarch and the czar, had projected a great revolution throughout Europe; and many secret communications concerning it were passing in the diplomatic circles of that place. This project was of a remarkable kind, for kings and chief ministers were the conspirators. Amongst other wild plans, it was designed to drive George I. from the throne of England, and to set the son of James II. in his place. Charles XII., on being reconciled to Peter, was to make a descent upon Scotland, and carry the plan into execution by calling to arms all the partisans of the Stuart family. It appears that the czar was favourable to the designs of these diplomatic revolutionists, and that he with difficulty avoided becoming implicated in them. Happily these plans were discovered, and communicated to the king of England; and, at his desire, the States-general placed Baron Goertz under arrest. George also put the Swedish ambassador at London into confinement; and the two were examined like some great criminals; as indeed they were. Charles was indignant that his ambassadors had been so insulted, and maintained a disdainful silence towards England and Holland. Peter, on the detection of the conspiracy with which he was not identified, though he was favourable to it, wrote a long letter to George I., full of compliments and congratulations, and assurances of a sincere friendship. George did not believe a word of these protestations; but it was not politic to quarrel with so powerful a monarch as the czar; and he assumed a satisfaction which he did not feel.

In the meantime Peter left Holland, and proceeded on a visit to Paris, where great preparations were made for receiving him with a becoming splendour. Marshal Tesse, with many of the nobility, a squadron of the guards, and the king's coaches, advanced to meet him. The czar, actuated by a real or pretended contempt for splendour, rode on so rapidly, that he left the escort far behind, and entered Paris, attended only by four gentlemen. The retiring habits of the czar must have disappointed the French people, who had prepared many *fêtes* and entertainments in his honour, which were rendered nugatory by the rapidity with which he travelled. The Duke of Orleans, then regent during the infancy of Louis XV., received Peter at the Louvre, where the state apartments were prepared for himself and his retinue. The czar declined this grandeur. "I am a soldier," said he; "bread and beer are all I want; I like small rooms better than large. I do not wish to move about in state, and tire so many people." The same evening he took up his lodgings at the other end of the town, at the Hôtel Lesdiguière, which belonged to Marshal Villeroy. Here he was visited, the next day, by the regent, and, the one following,

by the infant king. This visit courtesy obliged the czar to return; but he did so in the evening, in as quiet a manner as possible. The household troops were placed under arms, and the young king brought to the czar's coach. So great was the crowd that thronged about the royal child, that Peter felt uneasy for his safety, and, taking him into his arms, carried him for some time.

However averse the czar might be to ceremony or ostentation, he could not but be pleased with many of the delicate attentions he met with in France. On dining with the Duke d'Antin, at his seat three leagues from Paris, Peter observed that a handsome portrait of himself had been recently put up in the dining-room. Touched by the compliment, it is said he felt that true politeness was an ingredient in the nature of the French. Another incident of the same kind must have given him a far greater satisfaction. On going to see medals struck in that gallery of the Louvre devoted to the artists of the kings of France, one dropping from the die, fell at the feet of the czar. He stooped, picked it up, and found it to be a medal of himself, with a figure representing fame on the reverse. Peter and all his attendants were presented with copies of this medal in gold. On visiting the other artists in the Louvre, all their finest efforts were laid at his feet, with a request that he would deign to accept of them. When he went to see the tapestry of the Gobelins, the carpets of the *Savonnerie*, the *ateliers* of the king's sculptors, painters, goldsmiths, and mathematical instrument-makers, whatever engaged his eye was offered to him in the name of the sovereign. On his visit to the Academy of Sciences, he with his own hand corrected several errors in old maps of the Russian dominions. He even became a member of the academy, and afterwards kept up a correspondence concerning experiments and discoveries with that distinguished body.

The most earnest minds in France admired the experienced glance and skilful hand with which he selected such objects as he designed to carry back with him to Russia, and the masters whom he engaged for the instruction of his people. Artists and manufacturers were surprised at his knowledge of their professions. They observed, that "his questions uniformly gave proof of his knowledge, and excited admiration of the sagacity of an enlarged mind, which was as prompt to comprehend information as it was eager to gain it. While travelling through France on his return, the czar would often leave his carriage, and, entering the fields, fall into conversation with the labourers. He desired them to explain the use of their agricultural instruments, and took sketches of them with his own hand. One day his attention was attracted by seeing a person of a different dress and superior appearance working with the labourers. The czar immediately interrogated this man; and then, turning to his attendants, observed—"Look at this good country priest! With the labour of his own hands he procures cider, wine, and money to boot. Remind me of this when we are in Russia again. I will endeavour to stimulate our priests by this example, and, by teaching them to till the soil, rescue them from their sloth and wretchedness."

The occasion on which the czar exhibited the greatest excitement while in France, was at his visit to the tomb of Cardinal Richelieu. But it was not the beauty of the design or sculpture that attracted him. His thoughts were rather with the dust that lay beneath that magnificent mausoleum. His mind dwelt upon the character of the great statesman, which these things were designed to perpetuate. Giving way to a transient enthusiasm, Peter exclaimed earnestly—"Thou great man! I would have given thee one-half of my dominions to have learnt of thee how to govern the other!" Thus do the truly great ever recognise and admit the claims of each other.

When the czar visited the mausoleum of the wise priest and statesman, the doctors of the Sorbonne placed a memorial in his hands, with the object of bringing about a reunion of the Greek and Latin churches, by inducing Peter to recognise the spiritual authority of the pope. The division of the Christian church into that of the West and the East, was completed about the middle of the eleventh century, when the pope at Rome, and the patriarch at Constantinople, severally anathematised each other, and all further communion between their respective churches ceased. This schism the theological doctors of the university thought to heal at the expense of a piece of parchment; as if such a monarch as the czar would be at all likely to acknowledge the authority of the pope in any shape whatever. His path lay in quite a different direction; and it is not rational to suppose that Peter would throw his country into confusion, and encounter the enmity of

the Russian clergy, and perhaps the whole population of his empire, to bring about an event, the result of which would be to introduce an authority into it, differing from, and claiming to be superior to, his own. The wily doctors artfully confined their memorial almost entirely to softening down this point. They spoke of the liberties enjoyed by the Gallican church; from which they concluded that the Russian church would forfeit nothing in that respect, should the proposed union take place. They also asserted that the popes were subject to the councils, and that a decree of the supreme pontiff was not a rule of faith. Peter cared nothing for these matters; and he had no intention of placing a yoke upon his shoulders, though it might be a very light one, and fit so well as not to gall the wearer in any direction. Never mind the lightness: why wear a yoke at all, especially when there was no necessity for doing so? Still the czar received the memorial with good humour; and, answering that he was a soldier, unaccustomed to disputations of that kind, referred the matter to the Russian bishops. They, it may be anticipated, at once indignantly rejected it. The pope, also offended that the overture had failed, expressed a dissatisfaction at its having been attempted; and the meddlers of the Sorbonne were blamed on all sides; as meddlers generally are, and always deserve to be.

However pleasantly the czar treated this application at the time, he afterwards thought it proper to express his real feeling towards the papal authority, in order to dissipate any needless apprehensions which his subjects might entertain on such a matter. With this object, when, in 1718, he expelled the Jesuits out of his dominions, he instituted a burlesque ceremonial for the entertainment of the people, in ridicule of the pontiff of the Roman church. At the Russian court was a vain old man, named Jotoff or Sotoff, who, in earlier years, had taught the czar to write, but who, in the decline of his life, occupied a position analogous to that of a buffoon. On this dotard, the czar whimsically said that he would confer one of the most eminent dignities in the known world. Jotoff accordingly had the title of pope bestowed upon him, together with a salary of 2,000 roubles, and a house at St. Petersburg in the quarter of the Tartars. Jotoff was enthroned by the mob, led by buffoons, and harangued by four men who stammered. His mock holiness then created a body of mimic cardinals; and after they had all drank themselves into a state of staggering intoxication, paraded the streets in procession, accompanied by rough music playing out of time, and the clattering of pots and pans, to the intense delight of the mob, to whose not over-refined taste this drunken carnival was admirably adapted. A military procession and solemnity for some great victory, would scarcely have pleased them so much. This satirical ceremony was retained for some years after the death of Jotoff, and performed both in St. Petersburg and Moscow. Though, at first sight, it appeared only a mere popular orgie, yet it had the effect of confirming the national aversion to a church which assumed a power of control and anathema over kings and nations.

Before the czar left France, he expressed a desire to have an interview with the celebrated Madame de Maintenon, the widow of Louis XIV., then in the decline of her chequered life. The similarity that existed between the marriage of Louis and his own, excited his curiosity. Yet there was almost as much difference between the two ladies as between their respective husbands, who were the most unlike of men. Catherine was altogether uneducated; while the mind of Madame de Maintenon had been cultivated up to that exotic point where luxuriance sinks into weakness. The first was a child of nature; the second lived the artificial life of an over-refined court. The first was in some respects a heroine; the last merely a fascinating woman. Peter had not taken Catherine with him to France, because, with a delicacy of feeling scarcely to be expected in him, he feared that the rigid ceremony of the French court might embarrass her, and that its frequenters might not sufficiently estimate the merits of a woman who, from the banks of the Pruth to the shores of Finland, had, at her husband's side, faced death both by sea and land.

The czar discerned in the luxurious extravagance of the French court, a sign of the unhealthy condition of a nation which was then silently floating towards the terrible convulsion in which an infuriated people trampled king, government, church, religion—everything beneath their feet. Peter felt so strongly on the subject, that he observed, he was sorry for France and for its infant king, and believed that the

latter was on the point of losing his kingdom through luxuries and superfluities. While the czar condemned the extravagance, and despised the high-breeding, of the French courtiers, yet many amongst them formed a generous estimate of his character. The following description of Peter, by an author attached to the court, we will quote, on account of the value of contemporary criticism respecting so remarkable a man:—"His deportment is full of dignity and confidence, as becomes an absolute master. He has large and bright eyes, with a penetrating, and occasionally stern glance. His motions, which are abrupt and hasty, betray the violence of his passions, and the impetuosity of his disposition. His orders succeed each other rapidly and imperiously. He dismisses with a word, with a sign, without allowing himself to be thwarted by time, place, or circumstance, now and then forgetting even the rules of decorum; yet with the regent and the young king he maintains his state, and regulates all his movements according to the points of a strict and proud etiquette. For the rest, the court discovered in him more great qualities than bad ones; it considered his faults to be merely trivial and superficial. It remarked, that he was usually sober, and that he gave way only now and then to excessive intemperance; that, regular in his habits of living, he always went to bed at nine o'clock, rose at four, and was never for a moment unemployed; and, accordingly, that he was well-informed, and seemed to have a better knowledge of naval affairs and fortification, than any man in France."

On leaving that country, the czar induced many French artists and other skilful persons to follow him, with the object of promoting the exercise of their professions in Russia. No government seemed actuated by any ungenerous feelings towards him in this matter. "All nations," observes Voltaire, "where he travelled, prided themselves in seconding his design of transporting the arts into a new country, and in concurring to this kind of creation."

The czar rejoined Catherine at Amsterdam, and they proceeded together to Berlin, to pay a visit to Frederic William,* the king of Prussia, who, to use the expressive language of Mr. Macaulay, "must be allowed to have possessed some talents for administration, but whose character was disfigured by odious vices, and whose eccentricities were such as had never before been seen out of a madhouse." Though Frederic was so mean that he half-starved his children, and frequently had food in a state unfit to be eaten placed upon the royal table, yet he received his illustrious visitors with as much respect as his rude nature could be capable of. The czar, on arriving at Berlin, drove to a private lodging, where he received a message that the king would wait upon him the next day, at noon. Before the appointed time, a *cortége* of royal carriages came to bring the czar to the palace; but the officers who accompanied them were told that he was already with the king. He had gone out privately by another door, with a view of avoiding that ceremony which he regarded as obstructive of freedom, and a waste of time. A king who dressed like a common soldier, and sat in an old-fashioned wooden arm-chair, possessed a recommendation to the good-will of the eccentric czar. Peter, Catherine, and Frederic William were a strange trio. "Had Charles XII. been with them," says Voltaire, "four crowned heads would have been seen together, with less fastidiousness about them than a German bishop or a Roman cardinal." Though the boisterous king was sufficiently well pleased with his guests, yet the manners of Peter and Catherine were by no means refined enough for the then petty court of Berlin, which, in this respect, was more critical than that of Paris. The queen thought Peter rough, and Catherine homely; and, therefore, the ladies of the court thought so too. One of the latter, the Margravine de Bareith, gave an account in her memoirs of the reception of the illustrious strangers at court. From this description it may be seen how difficult it is for little minds to estimate great ones. The margravine remarked, that when Peter approached to salute the queen, that her majesty looked as if she would rather be excused. On another occasion he took her hand so heartily, that the royal prude desired him to be more respectful. Peter laughed, and said that she was more delicate than his Catherine. But the supercilious description of the latter by the margravine, while it is a bit of odd and, probably, truthful portrait-painting, exhibits the hypercritical spirit in which the czarina was observed. "She is," says the narrator, "short and lusty, remarkably coarse, and without grace or animation. One need only see her to be

* The father of Frederic the Great.

satisfied of her low birth. At the first blush one would take her for a German actress. Her clothes looked as if bought at a doll-shop; everything was so old-fashioned and so bedecked with silver and tinsel. She was decorated with a dozen orders, portraits of saints and relics; which occasioned such a clatter, that when she walked, one would suppose an ass with bells was approaching."

Peter, during his tour, purchased great quantities of pictures, chiefly of the Dutch and Flemish school; cabinets of birds and insects, a large collection of books, and whatever appeared likely to ornament the new city, to which he had given his name. Amongst these valuables was a great hollow globe, eleven feet in diameter, whose inside represented the celestial, and the outside the terrestrial, sphere. This was presented to him by the king of Denmark. With these treasures of art and literature he subsequently laid the foundation of the Imperial Academy of Sciences, the idea of which he took from that of Paris, of which he had been elected a member during a visit to that capital.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MISCONDUCT OF THE CZAREVITCH ALEXIS; PETER EXPOSTULATES WITH HIM; PETER, WHILE ON HIS TRAVELS, COMMANDS HIS SON TO MEET HIM AT COPENHAGEN; THE LATTER GOES TO VIENNA, AND CLAIMS THE PROTECTION OF THE EMPEROR; THE CZAR PROMISES TO PARDON HIS SON IF HE WILL RETURN; ALEXIS DOES SO, AND IS ARRESTED, IMPRISONED, AND FINALLY PLACED ON HIS TRIAL FOR TREASON; HIS CONDEMNATION AND DEATH.

THE czar arrived at St. Petersburg, from his foreign tour, on the 21st of October, 1717, and his attention was soon engaged by an incident of a peculiar character.

His son, the czarevitch Alexis, now nine-and-twenty years of age, had long been a source of anxiety to Peter. Alexis, even from his youth, had shown an aversion to the reforms of his father, and selected his friends and advisers from among the disaffected nobles and priests, who were opposed to all change. These bigoted persons confirmed in the mind of the czarevitch the lessons of his ignorant and superstitious mother, who had taught him that the changes the czar effected in the government and manners of the people, were acts offensive to God. The obstinate mental blindness of Eudoxia induced Peter to repudiate her; an act which he followed by taking a mistress to his bed. The czarina's desire for revenge was greater than the piety of which she made so much parade, and she chose a lover to supply the place of a disgusted husband. The czar discovered her misconduct, and, with his customary severity, caused her paramour to be impaled; after which he solemnly divorced his dishonoured wife, and condemned her to pass her life in the cloisters.

Peter's active life prevented him from paying much personal attention to his son; but he caused able foreign preceptors to be placed about him. So intense were the prejudices which had been instilled into the mind of the young prince, that he hated these persons merely because they were foreigners. Yet, though weak-minded, he was not without capacity, and seems to have profited to some extent by the tuition he received from them. He wrote and spoke German readily, and had made some progress in mathematics. Though removed from the influence of his mother, it yet hung about him, and exerted a power over him; and the ecclesiastical books which the priests put in his hands were his ruin. He placed an implicit confidence in these works, the composition of narrow-minded men; and fancied that he read in their pages so many execrations of the labours in which his father was engaged. Indeed, priests were the frequent companions of Alexis, and they acquired an absolute ascendancy over him. They persuaded him that the whole nation abhorred his father's innovations; that from the fits to which the czar was subject, it might be concluded that he would not live long; and that the way to conciliate the affections of the people was

to show an aversion to novelties. Alexis listened with satisfaction to these insidious suggestions; and by so doing, became a passive conspirator against his father.

The marriage of the czar with Catherine in 1707, and the fertility of that marriage, still further irritated the mind of the prince, and he gave himself up to habits of drunkenness and dissipation. His marriage, in 1711, with the Princess of Wolfenbuttle, failed to exercise any reforming influence. The unfortunate lady, ill-treated by her husband, destitute of all comfort, and even of those things which to the high-born are regarded as necessaries of existence, lingered in suffering until the November of 1715. She left a son, who afterwards ascended the throne which his father forfeited by his offences.

The czar appears to have been touched by the death of his daughter-in-law; and he beheld with great grief the unaltered mind and temper of his son. What course would he pursue when, in the natural succession of events, he ascended the throne? Peter resolved that he would not permit a graceless boy to overthrow the labours of his life. After the death of the princess, the czar addressed a letter to Alexis, in which, after reviewing the charges brought against him, and censuring the ruinous course he was following, thus concluded:—"I will still wait a while to see if you will amend. If not, know that I will deprive you of the succession as a useless limb is cut off. Do not imagine I am only frightening you, nor would I have you to rely on the title of being my eldest son; for since I do not spare my own life for the good of my country and the prosperity of my people, why should I spare yours? I would prefer to transmit the crown to an entire stranger who merited it, than to my own son who had proved himself unworthy of the trust."

This menacing letter, in which the father yet mingled with the statesman and the judge, elicited from Alexis only a brief reply, and that of so strange and submissive a kind, as to create an instant doubt of the sincerity of the writer. "God is my witness," said the prince; "and I swear upon my soul, that I will never claim the succession. I commit my children* into your hands; and for myself, I ask for nothing more than a subsistence during my life."

* Alexis had but one son by the Princess of Wolfenbuttle; but he had also illegitimate children.

The czar doubted the good faith of his son, and suspected dissimulation; he was also deeply pained that he could not gain the confidence and co-operation of his natural successor. He wrote again to Alexis a letter, in which pathos, entreaty, and threats were combined. "I observe," he said, "that all you speak of in your letter is the succession, as if I stood in need of your consent. I represented to you the grief your behaviour has given me for so many years, and you do not speak of it. The exhortations of a father make no impression on you. I have brought myself to write to you once more; but for the last time. If you despise my counsels while I am living, what regard will you pay to them after my death? Though you may at present intend to keep your promises, yet those bushy beards (*i.e.*, priests) will be able to wind you as they please, and induce you to break your word. It is you on whom these people rely. You have no gratitude to him who gave you life. Since you have been of proper age, did you ever assist him in his labours? Do you not blame, do you not detest everything I do for the good of my people? I have all the reason in the world to believe, that if you survive me, you will destroy all that I have done. Amend; make yourself worthy of the succession, or become a monk. Let me have your answer, either in writing or personally, or I will deal with you as with a malefactor."

Alexis might easily have conciliated his father by a promise, made in evident sincerity, that he would change his conduct and dismiss his evil advisers. This he was unwilling to do; and his obstinacy must have confirmed the suspicions of the czar, that his son only waited for his death in order to commence the destruction of the cherished labours of his life. Alexis pretended illness, and wrote a short, cold letter to his father, merely stating that he intended to embrace the monkish life, and desiring the consent of the czar to that effect. Such a decision did not appear natural in a young man, and must have been regarded by the acute Peter as an evasion. Still the disquieted father visited his son prior to setting out on his travels to Germany and France; and gave him six months to reflect upon his future conduct, and to abandon his monastic intentions, if he desired to fit himself to become an emperor. Yet the very day that the czar left the capital, Alexis rose from

the bed to which he pretended that illness had confined him, and, in a riotous banquet, celebrated with his evil advisers the departure of his father!

During the absence of the czar, Alexis never wrote a line to him—a circumstance which caused him both disappointment and irritation. At Copenhagen Peter received information that his unworthy son only admitted into his presence such evil-minded persons as humoured his prejudices and fostered his discontent. The outraged father forthwith wrote to his ungrateful son, that he must at once choose the cloister or the throne; but that if he valued the latter, to meet him at Copenhagen. The czarevitch wrote that he would come; but his priestly counsellors suggested to him that it might be dangerous to put himself into the hands of a provoked and vindictive father. Acting upon this sinister advice, he resolved on a step of the most suspicious and fatal kind. Drawing a considerable sum of money from Prince Mentschikoff, under the pretext of paying the expenses of his journey to his father, he departed; but, on reaching the borders of Livonia, took the road to Vienna, and threw himself on the protection of the emperor, Charles VI., at whose court he trusted to remain until the death of the czar.

The emperor was displeased at a step which, if he countenanced, would place him in a false position with respect to a powerful neighbour. He would not keep Alexis at his court; and, as he could not deny him the shelter he sought, sent him to a fortress in the Tyrol, from which Alexis went, under a feigned name, to the castle of St. Elmo at Naples. The czar traced the fugitive, and sent M. Tolstoi, a privy councillor, and Romanzoff, a captain of the guards, to him with a letter. This communication, dated from Spa, July 10th, 1717, ran as follows:—"I now write to you, and for the last time, to let you know that you had best comply with my will, which Tolstoi and Romanzoff will make known to you. If you obey me, I assure you, and I promise before God, that I will not punish you; so far from it, that if you return, I will love you better than ever. But if you do not, by virtue of the power I have received from God, as your father, I pronounce against you my eternal curse; and as your sovereign, I assure you, I shall find ways to punish you; in which I hope, as my cause is just, God will take it in hand, and assist me in revenging it. Remember further, that I never used compulsion with you. Was I under any obligation to leave you to your own option? Had I been for forcing you, was not the power in my hand? It was but to speak the word, and I should have been obeyed." Alexis was induced to return, in compliance with the wishes of his father—a circumstance to which it seems he was led by the persuasions of his mistress, Aphrosina, who had been bribed by Tolstoi to exert her influence over him to that effect.

Alexis reached Moscow on the 13th of February, 1718, and the very day of his arrival he went and paid his respects to his father, and had a long private interview with him. The citizens believed that a reconciliation had taken place between the father and the son, and that everything was forgotten. But the next morning they were startled by the deep notes of the great bell of Moscow, which tolled solemnly; and by seeing the regiments of guards under arms. The members of the senate, and the nobles of the highest rank, were summoned to meet the czar at the castle; and the bishops, archimandrites, and professors of divinity, met in the cathedral. When these solemn preliminaries were over, Alexis was brought before his father, deprived of his sword, and a prisoner! In this circumstance the czar appears to have been guilty of a breach of faith, as he had promised to pardon his son if the latter would but return and submit himself. Alexis had returned, and instead of procuring the pardon and tenderness which had been promised, found himself under arrest. This event has created a strong feeling against the czar in the minds of many historic writers, who have done their utmost to blacken his character, as though he was the offender in this painful case. Up to this point he had exhibited more forbearance than could have been expected from a man of his impulsive and violent nature, and he deserves rather the compassion, than the censure of the world. It was no small crime to set at nought a father's love—to practise year after year upon his heart—to exhibit the blackest ingratitude—and to torture such a monarch with the fear that all his labours for the advancement of a great empire would be trampled into the dust by a bigoted and triumphant successor, who would openly rejoice over a parent's grave amid the acclamations of

servile and ignorant priests and low dissolute fellows, who would delight in rending to pieces that growing civilisation which their base natures could not comprehend. Certainly, in causing the arrest of his son, the tortured father broke his word; but it is difficult to censure this inconsistency in the conduct of a distracted monarch.

Alexis, on being brought as a prisoner into the presence of his father, threw himself at his feet, and with a flood of tears presented to him a paper, in which he acknowledged his offences, declared himself unworthy of the succession, and only solicited his life. The czar raised the ingrate, and taking him into an adjoining cabinet, questioned him as to his advisers, or rather his accomplices, in what he regarded as an incomplete and baffled conspiracy, declaring that if he concealed anything relating to his escape, his head should answer for it.

Peter then returned with his son into the council-chamber, where the czar read a public declaration, in which he reproached the prince with his indolence and his dissolute habits; for his intimacy with those who advocated ancient abuses; for his bad conduct to his wife, and his violation of conjugal faith, by forming a connection during her lifetime with a woman of low birth; and for going to Vienna, and placing himself under the protection of the emperor, by which he had slandered his father, declaring that his life was not safe in Russia unless he renounced the succession, and even going so far as to desire the emperor openly to defend him by force of arms.

After these charges the czar proceeded to pass the following sentence of deposition against the offender:—"Such was the manner in which our son returned; and though his flight and his calumnies deserved death, those crimes our fatherly affection forgives. But his notorious unworthiness and immorality will not allow us, in conscience, to leave him the succession to the empire; it being too manifest that his conduct would subvert the glory of the nation, and occasion the loss of all the provinces recovered by our arms. Our subjects would be extremely to be pitied; since, leaving them under such a successor, would be plunging them into a condition much worse than any that they have ever experienced. Accordingly, by our paternal power, in virtue of which, according to the laws of our empire, every private subject of ours can at pleasure disinherit a son, and pursuant to our prerogative as sovereign, and in regard to the welfare of our dominions, we for ever deprive our said son, Alexis, of succeeding after us to the throne of Russia, on account of his crimes and unworthiness; even though not a single person of our family should exist at the time of our decease. And we constitute, appoint, and declare, in the want of a mor aged successor, our second son, Peter,* young as he is, successor to the said throne after us. Accursed be our son Alexis, if ever, at any time, he shall claim the said succession, or go about to procure it. We also require our faithful subjects that, pursuant to this appointment and our will, they acknowledge and consider our said son Peter as our lawful successor, and that they confirm the same by oath at the altar on the holy gospels, and kissing the cross. And all those who shall, at any time whatever, oppose this our will, and dare to consider our son Alexis as successor, or assist him to that end, we declare traitors to us and to their country; and we have ordered these presents to be everywhere published, that no person may plead ignorance."

After this document had been read, the prince signed an act of renunciation, in which he acknowledged his exclusion to be just, on account of his unworthiness, and took an oath to submit himself in every particular to his father's will. The czar then proceeded to the cathedral, where these documents were read to the assembled ecclesiastics, who testified their approbation by affixing their signatures to copies of them. An oath recognising the renunciation and order of succession, was afterwards administered to the army and navy, and to every subject of the czar.

It is natural to suppose that the disgraced and disinherited Alexis was now set at liberty; but such was not the case. The czar had solemnly called God to witness, that if his son would return to Moscow, he would not only pardon him, but even love him better than ever. The extorted renunciation might be justified on the ground of political expediency; but by his submission in this respect, Alexis had purchased his pardon and his freedom. These were his right, as he had not committed any new offence to justify the revocation of his father's promise of mercy. Yet, instead of

* Son of the empress Catherine; but who died 15th April, 1719.

obtaining his freedom, he was led away into close confinement, where no one but the agents of the czar were permitted to approach him. In this condition the dejected Alexis underwent a second examination, first by his father, and secondly by commissioners. Peter felt that he had no ordinary difficulty to deal with; and he feared that Alexis, if set at liberty, might again become the tool of the factious party which had already poisoned his mind against the improvements of his father. Thus, in the event of the czar's death, the prince would probably be induced to revoke his renunciation of the crown, and a servile war might ensue, in which the recent reforms might be overthrown. Again Peter felt the necessity of crushing the disaffection of which the weak prince was the instrument and the centre, by ascertaining the names of his ill-advisers, and punishing them as conspirators, if their offence could be brought under such a term. The old party yet possessed a power in the state, and the czar resolved to administer such a correction as should strike its adherents with a salutary terror.

To obtain the necessary information for this proceeding, the czar had placed his son in confinement, and subjected him to a constant inquisition, under a threat that he should be punished with death if he concealed or misstated any facts that were known to him. The mind of the miserable prince was still further weakened by the influence of terror, and he seems to have attempted to save his life by making such confessions as he thought were desired.

One subject on which the prince was questioned, was concerning a letter written from St. Petersburg, after the flight of the prince Alexis, by M. Beyer, the emperor's resident there. The substance of it was, that a mutiny was in progress in the Russian army in Mecklenburg, and that the officers talked of sending Catherine and her infant son to the prison where the repudiated czarina was confined, and of placing Alexis upon his father's throne. There had been a sedition in the Russian troops alluded to, and though speedily suppressed, it gave an air of probability to the design spoken of in the letter. Yet, if this design existed, the prince was not implicated in it, nor was the letter addressed to him; he had only received a copy of it, sent from Vienna. Still the czar put this question to the prince—"When you saw, by Beyer's letter, that there was a revolt in the Mecklenburg army, you was glad of it. I apprehend you had some view, and that you would have declared for the rebels even in my lifetime?" This was interrogating the prince as to his secret sentiments, which, if they may be owned to a father who, by his counsels, would rectify them, may be concealed from a judge, who is to determine only from attested facts. The hidden sentiments of the heart are not within the cognizance of a court of judicature. Alexis might have concealed or disowned his thoughts; but, with an inexplicable infatuation, he answered in writing, "Had the rebels invited me in your lifetime, I should probably have joined them, had they been strong enough."

By this strange and most unnecessary confession, elicited by a mode adverse to the judicial proceedings of the most enlightened countries of Europe, Alexis furnished the ground of a charge of treason against him. But other evidence existed, of a kind calculated to criminate the now bewildered prince. The rough draught of a letter, written by him from Vienna to the senators and archbishops of Russia, was discovered amongst his papers. It contained this passage—"The continual injuries which I have undeservedly suffered, have obliged me to quit my country. It was very narrowly I escaped being shut up in a convent; they who have confined my mother were about using me in the same manner. I am under the protection of a great prince, until it please God that I may return to my country. It is my desire you will not forsake me at present." The concluding words, *at present*, which might be supposed to cover some treasonable project, were drawn through with a pen—afterwards restored—then again crossed out; which sufficiently showed the writer to be in a state of perturbation; giving himself up to his resentment one minute, and repenting of it the next. Moreover, this letter never reached its destination, as it was intercepted by the court of Vienna, which had no intention of embroiling itself in a dispute with that of Russia.

Several witnesses were brought forward, whose depositions proved the sullen opposition and the hostile mind which Alexis entertained towards his father; but they proved nothing of a more criminal nature. A man named Afanassief maintained that, on one occasion, he heard the prince de-

clare—"I will say something to the bishops, and they will repeat it to the priests, and the priests will tell it to their parishioners, and I shall be placed upon the throne, even though it were against my will." His own mistress, Aphrosina, gave evidence of a similar kind. But, observes Voltaire, "none of the accusations were very precise. Instead of a digested plan, a connected intrigue, a conspiracy, or an association, and still less any preparatives, here was only a discontented, unruly son, complaining of his father, flying from his presence, and even wishing for his death. But this son was heir to the greatest monarchy of our hemisphere; and, in his situation, no fault was small."

The mother of Alexis, and his sister, the Princess Mary, were implicated in these proceedings. The prince was charged with consulting them respecting his flight; and the Bishop of Rostof, who was in the confidence of all three, on being arrested, deposed that the imprisoned princesses had expressed some hopes of a change which would set them at liberty; and that it was by their advice that the prince fled into Germany, instead of joining his father at Copenhagen. It must be admitted, that the examination was conducted in an inquisitorial and merciless manner. Everything was collected that could in any way tell against the prince, and assist in composing a charge of constructive treason against him. Thus, a priest, named Jacques, was seized and put to the torture, with the object of wringing from him any secrets which the prince might have poured into his ear during the solemn confidence of the confessional. Under these circumstances, the priest acknowledged that Alexis had accused himself before God of having wished his father's death, to which he (the confessor) had responded, "God will forgive you; it is no more than what we all wish." The spectacle of a confessor accusing his penitent was a strange one. All proofs derived from auricular confessions are, by the canons of the church, not to be received in a court of justice. Such statements are regarded as secrets between God and the penitent; this rule and belief holds equally in the Greek and Roman churches. But Peter considered that the welfare of the empire was concerned, and he conducted his inquiries rather in the temper of a wronged and unforgiving parent, than with the dignified calmness and rigid impartiality of a judge.

The czar appears to have thought that sufficient was proved against the prince, not only to justify the reversal of the promise of pardon extended to him, but even to make it expedient to place him on his trial. But first, Peter wreaked his vengeance on the misleaders of his wretched son. Two bishops, two nobles, and fifty priests were put to death, and their heads exhibited in a ghastly circle around the scaffold. During this period, the public excitement was greatly increased by Moscow being declared in a state of siege, and no citizen permitted to leave it under pain of death.

When Peter had made a terrible example of the bigots whose influence had corrupted and ruined his son, he took the captive prince to St. Petersburg, where, four months afterwards, he was subjected to fresh examinations. At Moscow he had been questioned as to what communications had passed between him and the emperor at Vienna. That potentate had not admitted the prince to his presence; but the latter had applied to Count Schonbron, a lord of the bedchamber, who said, "The emperor will not forsake you; and that, at the proper season, after your father's death, he will assist you with an armed force to ascend the throne." "My answer was," added the prince, "that is not what I ask. All I desire is, that the emperor will be pleased to grant me his protection." On the resumption of the interrogations at St. Petersburg, this point was revived, and a rigid inquiry instituted into all particulars concerning it. Whether the prince had forgotten his former statement, or whether, in his disordered state of mind, he had gradually accustomed himself to believe in the truth of assertions which were constantly put before him in the shape of affirmative queries, or whether the answer was merely extorted from his fears, cannot positively be determined. Certain it is, that he now made a statement, in writing, which greatly differed from his first simple and highly probable explanation. It ran thus:—"Intending in nothing to imitate my father, I sought to obtain the succession by any means whatever. I was for having it by foreign assistance; and if I had got my ends, and the emperor had done *what he promised me*, to procure the crown of Russia, even by open force, I would have spared nothing to have secured myself in the succession. For instance, had the emperor asked me, in return, some of my country's troops for service against any of his enemies, or large

sums of money, I would have willingly done everything he wished, even to the giving great presents to his ministers and generals. I would, at my own expense, have maintained the auxiliary troops with which he would have supplied me, to put me in possession of the crown of Russia; and, in short, I would have refrained from nothing to have accomplished my object."

This deposition has every appearance of having been extorted from the prince by threats, or drawn from him by hopes of pardon. It has also an air of falsehood; for it directly contradicts the former statement on the same subject, made by the prince at Moscow. This discrepancy seems to have been fatal to the cause of the distracted Alexis. The czar had commanded him to make a full confession of the names of all the accomplices of his elopement; and, from this statement, it was certain the prince had been guilty of prevarication, if not of concealment. It would, indeed, have been no more than honourable to suppress the names of those persons who were in his confidence; for to disclose them, was but to send these unhappy men to the scaffold; yet it was none the less a disobedience to the commands of the czar, and a crime in the sight of that inflexible parent. Peter resolved to punish his son for these suppressions; to bring him before a solemn tribunal, composed of the great officers of state, the judges, and the bishops; to charge him with high treason, and to leave the decision of the case in their hands.

It is not easy to sanction this severe and painful resolve. The conduct of the czar has found many to condemn, and but few to apologise for it. Though we must disapprove of Peter's proceedings, we cannot join in the vehemence of invective that has been used against him. Voltaire has placed both aspects of the case in what we regard as a tolerably impartial light; and we cannot do better than quote his sentiments upon it. He observes—"In this last interrogation Alexis says what he believes he should have done in case of a contest for his inheritance; an inheritance which he had not judicially renounced before his journey to Vienna and Naples. Now we see him deposing a second time, not what he has done, and what may be made obnoxious to the rigour of the law, but what he fancies he might one day have done; which of course comes not within the cognizance of any court of justice. We see him accusing himself twice of secret thoughts which he might have had hereafter. The whole world does not afford a single instance of a man tried and condemned for transitory ideas starting up in his mind, and never communicated to any one living. There is not a court of justice in Europe, where a man accusing himself of a criminal thought, would be minded; and it is said that God himself does not punish them, unless accompanied with a determination of the will. To these considerations, however natural, it may be answered that Alexis, by his concealing several of the accomplices of his elopement, had given his father a right to punish him. His pardon was annexed to a general confession; and this he did not make till it was too late. In fine, after such a procedure, it did not seem possible, according to human nature, that Alexis would ever pardon a brother for whose sake he had been disinherited; and it was said—'*Better a delinquent be punished, than a whole empire endangered.*' The rigour of justice also corresponded with reasons of state."*

The tribunal summoned by the stern

* Bell, in his critical and reflective work on Russia, has the following remarks on these opinions of the great French writer:—"It would hardly lead to any profitable conclusion to discuss the subtle doctrine which a modern historian has laid down in reference to this extraordinary trial. If the question really lay between the life of one individual and the safety of an empire, political expediency would pronounce a sentence that would be irreconcilable with Christian equity This is the only ground upon which the conduct of Peter will admit of justification—if, indeed, there be any justification for making a state necessity paramount to domestic obligations, and those immutable principles of justice which regulate the punishment by the measure of the offence. But we must not venture to judge of the actions of this monarch by a reference either to the laws of any other nation, or to any abstract code of right and wrong. He was the apostle of a mighty reformation. He stood alone against the prejudices, the ancient customs, and the superstitions of his subjects. Had he observed a strict system of morals in legislation, and in his heroic resistance to the popular will; or, rather, had he not constantly sacrificed minor considerations of that nature in his efforts to accomplish the great objects to which he dedicated his life, he certainly never would have succeeded in reclaiming Russia from the state of barbarism in which he found her, and linking her in spirit, in knowledge, and by national treaties, to the states of Europe. With reference, however, to the case of the unfortunate Prince Alexis, the historian is spared the painful task of analysing the mere legal propriety of the proceedings adopted by the czar; for, by the law of Russia, the sovereign, in common with all parents, possessed the dangerous, but incontestable, right of life or death of his son. Peter, therefore, did not infringe the law of the country. He calmly availed

father for the trial of his son for high treason, met on the 24th of June, 1718. The court presented a solemn spectacle. The criminal, wasted, haggard, and utterly subdued from mental excitement and imprisonment, was so changed that even his friends scarcely recognised in him the once wild and profligate czarevitch. On the other hand was the accuser, who, crushing in his bosom the emotions of parental feeling, stood there to arraign his son. The robust frame of the czar stooped slightly from the weight of years and care; but his stern face and eagle eye were stamped with the expression of judicial rigour. On the faces of the solemn and in part venerable auditory, sat looks of expectancy, pain, and pity.

After the preliminary proceedings of the court had been passed over, the czar commenced a narrative of the offences of his son; and having detailed them, he added that his own joy in the success of his arms and internal reforms, was overbalanced by the deep sorrow he experienced in consequence of the profligate conduct of the prince. He then continued in the following strain:—"Though by all laws, human and divine, and especially by those of Russia, which exclude all interposition of the civil power between father and son, even among private persons, we have a full and sufficient power of sentencing our son according to his crimes and our will, without consulting the opinions of any persons whatsoever; yet, as men are not so clear-sighted in their own affairs as in those of others, and as the most skilful and experienced physicians trust not to their own judgment concerning themselves; so, fearing lest I should bring some sin on my conscience, I state my case to you, and require a remedy. For if, ignorant of the nature of my distemper, I should go about to cure it by my own ability, the consequence may be eternal death; seeing that I have sworn on the judgments of God, and have in writing promised my son his pardon, provided he tells me the truth; and afterwards confirmed that promise with my mouth. Though he has broke his promise, yet, that I may not in anything depart from my obligations, I desire you to consider this affair with the greatest attention, to see what he has deserved. Do not flatter me, or fear that, should he deserve only a slight punishment, and you deliver your opinion accordingly, you will offend me; for I swear to you by the great God, and by his judgments, that you have nothing at all to apprehend. Let it not give you uneasiness that you are to try your sovereign's son; but do justice without any respect of persons, and destroy not both your souls and mine. Lastly, let not our conscience have anything to reproach us with on the terrible day of judgment, and let not our country be hurt."

The czar having delivered this address to the judges, transmitted another to the clergy, which concluded with these observations:—"Though this case does not come within the spiritual, but rather the civil, jurisdiction, and we have this day brought it before the secular court; yet, recollecting that passage in the Word of God which requires us to consult the heads and elders of the church, that we may be informed in the will of Heaven, and being anxious of receiving all possible instruction on so important an occasion, we desire of you, the bishops and the whole ecclesiastical power, as propounders of the Word of God, not to pronounce any judgment in this case, but to examine it, and give us your opinions according to the sacred oracles, from which we may be best instructed as to the punishment our son deserves; which opinions you will deliver to us in writing under your hands, so that, being rightly informed therein, we may not lay any burden upon our conscience. We therefore repose implicit confidence in you, that, as guardians of the divine laws, as faithful pastors of the Christian flock, and as promoters of your country's good, you will act with dignity suited to your station; and we conjure you, by that dignity and the holiness of the functions you discharge, to proceed without fear or dissimulation."

The clergy delivered their response to this solemn appeal on the 1st of July. After a preamble, stating that the case did not come within the scope of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, followed several texts from

himself of the fatal jurisdiction which was reposed in his hands. Posterity will not accuse the monarch of having strained any legal principle, or of having prevented any legal right, to achieve his purpose; but it will unhesitatingly condemn the father for having resorted to a prerogative which he was not enforced to employ, and which it would have well become him to have relinquished. He was superior to his age, but of a severe temper, and not always magnanimous in the exercise of those powers with which he was invested by nature and by his position."

Scripture, having reference both to the execution of justice and the beauty of mercy. They, however, drew particular attention to the passage in Leviticus, in which it is said, that whoever curseth his father or mother shall be put to death; and to a verse in the gospel of St. Matthew, which gives the sanction of Christianity to this rigid Judaical law. After these and similar citations, the document concluded with these remarkable words:—"If his majesty is inclined to punish the delinquent according to his actions and the measure of his guilt, he has before him examples from the Old Testament. If he be inclined to show mercy, he has the pattern of Christ himself, kindly receiving the penitent prodigal; dismissing the woman taken in adultery, who, by the law, was to be stoned; and delighting in mercy more than in sacrifice. He has likewise the example of David, who was solicitous for the safety of his son Absalom, although he had rebelled against him; who recommended him to the commanders of his army when they went forth to give him battle, saying, 'Spare my son Absalom!' The father was for showing mercy; but divine justice did not spare the offender. The czar's heart is in the hands of God; let him choose that to which God shall incline him."

The merciful tendency of this answer has drawn down considerable admiration upon the body from whom it emanated. Even Voltaire has a sentence of generous commendation upon them in consequence. Our judgment, however, rather coincides with that of another writer, who arrives at a very different conclusion with regard to the merit to be attributed to the clergy in this matter. "If," says he, "they had been sincerely disposed to impress upon the mind of the czar a merciful construction of the case, and if they had been sufficiently courageous to have tendered such an opinion unreservedly, it is quite clear that their answer would have been very differently prepared. The fact seems to be, that they were afraid of committing themselves to one side or the other; and that in order to escape all responsibility, they placed a sufficient number of examples, bearing both ways, before the czar, so that whatever course his majesty might ultimately pursue, should be justified by satisfactory precedents. The reforms that Peter had effected in the church had already rendered the clergy subservient to his will. They felt that they were no longer an independent body. Their arrogance, which formerly had kept the throne in awe, was now sunk into servility; and it is therefore not surprising, that, thus called upon to give an opinion on a question respecting which it is scarcely assuming too much to say that the czar's mind was already made up, or had, at all events, exhibited so strong a feeling against the prince as to warrant them in believing that he desired to punish and not to spare his son—it is not surprising that they should have submitted so equivocal a statement to his majesty. But it is a source of no slight surprise, that any commentators on this event should have traced to the Christian benevolence of those ecclesiastics a document which was dictated by their fears."

On the day in which the clergy delivered their opinion to the czar, the Prince Alexis was examined for the last time. He then signed a written confession, in which he acknowledged himself to have been a bigot in his youth, to have kept the company of monks and priests, and drunk intemperately with them; to have received from them those impressions which first alienated him from the duties of his condition, and even created in him a hatred of his father's person. He further admitted, that he would have used any means whatever to have secured the succession.

Several days elapsed; and then, on the 5th of July, the ministers, senators, military and civil officers, whom the czar had constituted the judges of his son, delivered their judgment. The document stated, that having put the case to the vote, they unanimously, and without any contradiction, agreed and resolved that the czarevitch, Alexis, *deserves death* for his many capital crimes and offences against his sovereign and father. After an enumeration of these, the document concluded:—"It is with grieved hearts and eyes full of tears, that we, being servants and subjects, pronounce this sentence, seeing that, as such, it does not belong to us to take cognizance of so momentous a concern; and especially to pronounce a sentence against the son of our sovereign and most bountiful lord, the czar. However, it being his will that we should pass our judgment, we by these presents declare our real opinion, and we pronounce this condemnation with a clear and Christian conscience, as we shall answer for it before the just and impartial tribunal of

God. Submitting, withal, this sentence and condemnation to the supreme power, will, and merciful revision of his czarish majesty and most gracious sovereign." This sentence is open to the same censure as the opinion of the clergy; it was not impartial. The servile senators understood the wishes of the czar, and they obeyed them. They would willingly have spared the prince, but they had a still stronger desire to please the czar.

Sentence was pronounced on the 6th; and on hearing it, the wretched Alexis was seized with convulsions, and carried in a state of insensibility from the court. The next morning, the czar received word that his son was dangerously ill, and implored to see him. Peter, attended by the principal officers of his court, immediately went to visit the miserable prince. During this tragic interview, both father and son shed tears. The condemned prince then asked his father's pardon, which the latter gave him. The czar took his leave; but in the evening a second message was sent, informing him that the prince was in mortal extremity; but before the father could arrive at the bedside of his son, Alexis was no more.

There is nothing in these circumstances inconsistent with the supposition that the prince died a natural death; but suspicions to the contrary prevailed throughout Europe; and the czar has been charged with the shocking crime of murdering his own son! This charge has never been conclusively refuted, nor definitely established, as we think it must have been, had it been true. Most historians have written on the subject with a palpable bias against the czar, and an evident desire to believe him guilty of so great a crime. The wildest, most improbable, and revolting stories were circulated at the time, and Peter was said to have personally put his son to death in many different ways. According to one of them, the czar first knouted, and then beheaded the prince with his own hands; and the head was so carefully sewed on to the body again by a lady of the court, that although the corpse lay in state during four days, the mode of death was never detected!

Another narrative, though scarcely less improbable, is entitled to more consideration, because it is related on the authority of a person who was in the service of the czar, and, moreover, himself an actor in the incident he describes. Captain Bruce, a military officer in the service of Russia, Prussia, and Great Britain, after alluding, in his *Memoirs*, to the trial of Prince Alexis, thus continues:—"The trial was begun on the 25th of June, and continued to the 6th of July, when the supreme court, with unanimous consent, passed sentence of death upon the prince, but left the manner of it to his majesty's determination. The prince was brought before the court, his sentence read to him, and he was reconveyed to his prison in the fortress. On the next day his majesty, attended by all the senators and bishops, with several others of high rank, went to the fort, and entered the apartment where the czarevitch was kept prisoner. Some little time thereafter, Marshal Weyde came out, and ordered me to go to Mr. Bear's, the druggist, whose shop was hard by, and tell him to make the *potion strong* which he had bespoke, as the prince was then very ill. When I delivered this message to Mr. Bear, he turned quite pale, and fell a shaking and trembling, and appeared in the utmost confusion, which surprised me so much, that I asked him what was the matter with him; but he was unable to return me any answer. In the meantime the marshal himself came in, much in the same condition with the druggist, saying, he ought to have been more expeditious, as the prince was very ill of an apoplectic fit. Upon this the druggist delivered him a silver cup with a cover, which the marshal himself carried into the prince's apartments, staggering all the way he went like one drunk. About half-an-hour after, the czar with all his attendants withdrew, with very dismal countenances: and when they went, the marshal ordered me to attend at the prince's apartment; and in case of any alteration, to inform him immediately thereof. There were at that time two physicians and two surgeons in waiting, with whom and the officers on guard I dined on what had been dressed for the prince's dinner. The physicians were called in immediately after to attend the prince, who was struggling out of one convulsion into another; and, after great agonies, expired at five o'clock in the afternoon. I went directly to inform the marshal, and he went that moment to acquaint his majesty, who ordered the corpse to be embowelled; after which it was laid in a coffin covered with black velvet, and a pall of rich gold tissue spread over it; it was then carried

out of the fort to the church of the Holy Trinity, where the corpse lay in state till the 11th in the evening, when it was carried back to the fort, and deposited in the royal burial vault, next the coffin of the princess, his late consort; on which occasion, the czar and czaritza, and the chief of the nobility, followed in procession Various were the reports that were spread concerning his death. It was given out publicly, that on hearing the sentence of death pronounced, the dread thereof threw him into an apoplectic fit, of which he died. Very few believed he died a natural death; but it was dangerous for people to speak as they thought. The ministers of the emperor and the states of Holland were forbid the court for speaking their minds too freely on this occasion; and upon complaint against them, both were recalled."*

This strange, and to us incredible narrative, is adopted by Leclerc, a French writer, who was then at St. Petersburg, but who is admitted to be careless in the selection of his facts. Had the czar resolved to poison his son, would he have disclosed his design to so many persons as this account states he did, some one of whom would have been certain, after the death of Peter, to have revealed the secret? It is scarcely less than ridiculous, to suppose that the czar should have sent a marshal of the empire to the shop of a neighbouring druggist for a draught of poison for the prince! A man of honour would scarcely have performed an office fit only for a hangman; nor would *two* persons have been sent to the druggist's for the poison, when one was sufficient. Again, it is extremely improbable that the four physicians and surgeons attending at the bedside of the prince would, unless they also were accomplices in the murder, have permitted an unknown potion to be given to their patient; and quite impossible that they would not have detected the symptoms of poisoning. The only object to be gained by the czar, if he had deprived his son of life, was to avoid the odium which might attach to him on account of his want of parental emotion. Peter was not a man to care much for the opinions of others; but had this been the case, his object was only to be gained by the prince appearing to die a natural death, and the fact of violence being kept a profound secret. Yet, according to this account, the czar had not only a number of unnecessary accomplices, but the murder was committed almost in public. If Peter had, indeed, resolved upon violently terminating the life of his son, it would have been more political to have left him to the axe of the executioner, than to have committed a crime which could scarcely have escaped detection, and must for ever have left the name of its author exposed to the abhorrence of mankind. The objection, that the pride of the czar would have prevented him from sending his unworthy son to the scaffold, has not, to our mind, the weight which has sometimes been attributed to it. Peter would not have felt disgraced by having his name for ever associated with that of the heroic and unbending Brutus.

The czar acted openly in the matter; and,

* Captain Bruce adds the following passage elucidatory of the character of the prince. Though entitled to no further confidence than the extract above, it is certainly far more probable:—"Thus died Prince Alexis, undoubted heir to that great monarchy; little regretted by people of rank, as he always shunned their acquaintance and company. It was said, the czar had taken uncommon pains in the education of this prince, but all in vain; indolent and slovenly by nature, he kept the lowest of company, with whom he indulged himself in all manner of vice and debauchery. His father, to put a stop to this, sent him abroad to see foreign courts, thinking thereby to reclaim him, but all to no purpose; on which he ordered him to attend him in all his expeditions, thereby to keep a watchful eye over him himself; but the prince evaded this by continually pretending to be sick, which might probably be the case, as he was most part of his time drunk. The czar, at last, thought to reclaim him by marrying him to some foreign princess; what effect that had has been already mentioned. After the death of his amiable princess, his majesty ordered him to attend him in his expedition to Germany; and being on his journey, under pretence of going to join him in Mecklenburg, he fled privately, and sought the protection of his brother-in-law, the emperor of Germany, whom he endeavoured to engage in a war against his father. It was made appear on his trial, that he threatened, whenever he came to the throne, to overturn all his father had done, declaring, that he would be revenged on Prince Mentschikoff and his sister-in-law, by impaling them alive, as also the great chancellor, Count Galatkin, and his son, for persuading him to marry the Princess Wolfenbuttle; that he would send all his father's favourites into banishment, and expel all foreigners out of the country; that h would release his mother from confinement, and put dame Catherine and her children in her place; after this he would form his court of people who had the ancient manners and customs of Russia most at heart, for he hated all innovations. Nothing could have touched the czar more sensibly than threatening to overthrow all he had been doing for so many years for the welfare and glory of his country, with so much danger, toil, and labour, without ever sparing his own person; which made him say with great emotion, that he would rather give his dominions to a worthy stranger, than be succeeded by so worthless a son."

with a view to correct any misrepresentation of his conduct, caused a report of the whole trial to be printed, and copies sent to the various courts of Europe. It was accompanied by a letter from the czar, stating the reasons which had induced him to bring his son to trial, and giving the following account of the last moments of the prince:—"While," said Peter, "we were debating between the natural feelings of paternal clemency and the duties we owed to the security of our kingdom; and while we were pondering on what resolution we ought to take in an affair of such difficulty and importance, it pleased the Almighty God, by his especial will and his just judgment, and by his mercy, to deliver us out of that embarrassment, and to save our family and kingdom from the shame and the dangers, by abridging, yesterday, the life of our said son Alexis, after an illness with which he was seized as soon as he heard the sentence of death pronounced against him. That illness appeared at first like an apoplexy; but he afterwards recovered his senses, and received the holy sacrament as a Christian; and having desired to see us, we went to him immediately, with all our councillors and senators; and then he acknowledged and sincerely confessed all his said faults and crimes committed against us, with tears, and all the marks of a true penitent; and begged our pardon, which, according to Christian and paternal duty, we granted him. After which, on the 7th of July, at six in the evening, he surrendered his soul to God." This account was received throughout Europe as a satisfactory explanation of the sudden death of the prince; and it is certainly far more probable than the one given by Captain Bruce, or the rumours that the unfortunate Alexis was beheaded either by his own father or by Marshal Weyde. An accusation has even been brought against the amiable Catherine, that she urged on Peter to destroy Alexis, in order that her own son might succeed to the throne. Lamberti, the writer who relates this, also infers that Catherine poisoned her husband Peter—a supposition notoriously in opposition to the known facts. Voltaire, who must have been well-informed upon this point, remarks—"No foreign minister, residing at the Russian court, has ever accused, or so much as suspected, Catherine of having taken the least step against a son-in-law from whom she had everything to fear. If it is not said that she interceded for his pardon, all the memoirs of that time, especially those of Count Bassewitz, agree, that she pitied his misfortunes. I have before me the memoirs of a public minister, in which I find these very words:—'I was present when the czar said to the Duke of Holstein, that Catherine had entreated him to hinder sentence being pronounced against the czarevitch; only, said she, compel him to become a monk; as the disgrace of a sentence of death will reflect on your grandson.'"

Had the czar acted with perfect good faith to his unworthy and unfortunate son, we should have said that his conduct, though stern, was unimpeachable. To lose the father in the patriot, is an act of nobleness. But patriotism should be pure in its integrity, and perfectly free from reproach. Peter violated a solemn promise of pardon when he arrested his son; and the reasons he assigned for placing him upon his trial were strained and insufficient. Whether Peter, after the condemnation of Alexis, anticipated the office of the executioner by the administration of poison, must perhaps for ever remain a mystery. For reasons already assigned, we are inclined to believe that such was not the case; though it must be admitted that the well-known ferocity of the czar's character gives an air of remote probability to the inference that he was guilty of procuring the murder of his son. But many writers have acted on this subject in a manner as illogical as it is unjust. They first argue that it is highly probable the czar caused poison to be administered to his son; then assume that he actually did so; and conclude by heaping on the memory of Peter that invective which he would deserve if guilty. Even Count Ségur, who adopts this course, and luxuriates in a storm of dramatic eloquence, based on so unjust a ground, observes—"But it must be owned that the blood which was shed was not shed in vain: the last hope of barbarism was destroyed, and the regeneration of the Russians was secured."

CHAPTER XXV.

DOMESTIC REFORMS; DEATH OF CHARLES XII.; RUSSIA HARASSES SWEDEN; IMPOTENT INTERFERENCE OF ENGLAND; SUCCESSFUL MEDIATION OF FRANCE; CONGRESS OF NEUSTADT, AND PEACE WITH SWEDEN; GREAT REJOICINGS IN RUSSIA; CLIMAX OF THE GLORY OF PETER; THE SENATE BESTOW UPON HIM THE TITLES OF GREAT, EMPEROR, AND FATHER; PETER PUNISHES PUBLIC OFFICERS WHO HAVE BEEN GUILTY OF CORRUPTION; FINAL ABOLITION OF THE PATRIARCHATE; THE CZAR COMPELS THE MONKS AND NUNS TO ADOPT SOME USEFUL OCCUPATION; THE CZAR'S EXPEDITION TO PERSIA; EXTENSION OF THE RUSSIAN FRONTIER IN THAT DIRECTION; CORONATION OF THE EMPRESS; STRANGE CHARGE CONCERNING HER; LAST ILLNESS AND DEATH OF PETER; HIS CHARACTER AND PRESUMED POLICY.

THE gloomy year (1718) which witnessed the trial and death of Prince Alexis, was yet distinguished by the number and extent of the improvements the czar effected in Russia. His mind was not engrossed by the trouble which his son's misconduct had brought upon him; for he had in truth become the father of the empire; all the inhabitants of which he regarded as his family. The punishments he inflicted he considered as sacrifices which a stern necessity obliged him to offer up for the welfare of the state.

Thus, in a year which was certainly one of sadness and suffering, the czar appointed a general police throughout the empire, under control of an office at St. Petersburg. Luxury in apparel and games of chance were prohibited; the streets cleared of the swarms of beggars who used to infest them; and schools, almshouses, and hospitals built and endowed. At St. Petersburg the wealthy were compelled to erect houses of a regular construction, the materials for which the czar caused to be brought there free of cost by such vessels and other conveyances as were returning empty from the neighbouring localities. In this favourite city the streets were paved and lighted with lamps in imitation of those established at Paris by Louis XIV. Regulations were made for preserving order and cleanliness in the streets, and for the speedy extinction of fires. Weights and measures were fixed and rendered uniform, and an erroneous attempt was made to benefit the poor by fixing the price of provisions.

Peter gave much attention to the promotion of trade and manufactures; improving many of the latter, and creating new ones. He went in person to give directions to the managers of corn, powder, and saw-mills; rope-yards, sail-cloth, and linen manufactories, brick-kilns, and slate quarries. He instituted a commercial court of justice, or board of trade, of which, that no injustice might be done to strangers, one-half were natives, and the other foreigners. The czar encouraged the production of cloths and woollen stuffs by liberal bounties, in consequence of which Moscow came to make linen equal to that of Holland; while at St. Petersburg, the silk of Persia was manufactured as finely as at Ispahan. He caused the mines to be worked with increased energy, built the city of Ladoga, and connected the great lake of that name with the Neva, by means of canals and sluices. At the making of this and another canal in the same locality, the czar frequently laboured with his own hands. He measured the ground, and then mingling with the labourers, threw up the earth into a barrow, and wheeled it away himself. This example was occasionally followed by his courtiers; and thus labour was dignified, and the workmen stimulated to increased exertion. At the same time he commissioned a body of engineers to prepare correct maps of the whole empire, for the convenience of Russians, and the information of the rest of Europe.

The conspiracy which had been originated by the adventurer, Baron Goertz, had not been abandoned. Latterly, the slight hostilities the czar had undertaken against Sweden, had been less with a view of injuring her than from a desire of compelling her to purchase peace by the cession of the provinces he had conquered. A congress for the promotion of peace even took place; and there is every reason to suppose that its conclusion would have been followed by an alliance between Peter and Charles, who, in conjunction with Cardinal Alberoni, intended then to address themselves to carry out certain schemes which, in the event of their being successful, would have revolutionised the face of Europe. We have mentioned that a part of this conspiracy was the restoration of the Stuarts to the throne of England. But Charles was not permitted

to light up the flames of war in this country. On the evening of the 11th of December of this eventful year (1718), he was killed before the town of Frederickshall, in Norway. A ball struck him on the right temple, passed through his head, and, in an instant, he was a disfigured corpse. Thus perished this "heroic madman," in his thirty-seventh year; who must, to quote the language of his celebrated biographer, be considered "rather an extraordinary than a great man, and more worthy to be admired than imitated." Suspicions were very generally entertained at the time, that Charles was shot by one of his own officers, and not by the enemy. Voltaire discredits them, and says that the shot which struck Charles was much too large to have entered a pistol, which must have been the instrument used if the king was really assassinated. Other writers take a different view of the matter; and Dr. Clarke, the celebrated traveller, who spared no trouble to ascertain the facts of the case, observed—"That he (Charles) was really assassinated, seems so clear, that it is marvellous any doubt should be entertained as to the fact; and yet, with a view to ascertain the truth as to the manner of his death, every succeeding sovereign has thought it right to open his sepulchre and inspect his embalmed remains."*

It is said, that when the czar heard of the death of his former rival, he shed tears, and exclaimed—"My dear Charles, how much I lament you!" If this grief was really sincere, it found few to share it. Sweden was glad to be rid of a man whose restless excitement had brought her to the verge of ruin. The senate insulted his memory by seizing and beheading the crafty Baron Goertz, to whom they attributed many of the ill-deeds of Charles. The conspiracy for remodelling Europe in the interests of despots was thus blown to the winds, and the contemplated alliance between Russia and Sweden abandoned. Though Ulrica Eleonora (the sister of Charles, and new sovereign of Sweden) sought to heal the wounds of her country by the repose of peace, yet, instead of becoming the ally of Russia, she entered into friendly negotiations with England, which was only not openly hostile to the czar.

Sweden sought for peace, and was ready to make considerable sacrifices to obtain it. Prussia and Denmark she disarmed by large concessions, and she purchased from George I. the protective presence of an English fleet in the Baltic. But Russia was the giant foe of Sweden; and the terms on which the czar was willing to grant peace were extravagantly large. As Sweden hesitated, Peter put a fleet to sea, and threatened the coasts of that country. His vessels even engaged a Swedish squadron, captured a ship and two frigates, and drove the rest into port.

At this period (1719) the English fleet which George I. had promised for the protection of Sweden, made its appearance in the Baltic. Peter, who was serving with his own ships as vice-admiral, sent a message to Admiral Norris, who commanded the English fleet, desiring to know whether he came only as a friend to Sweden or as an enemy to Russia. Norris answered, that as yet he had no positive orders. This answer, which might be interpreted as a threat, rather incensed than intimidated Peter. When, therefore, the English admiral shortly afterwards sailed for Copenhagen, the Russian vessels made some descents on the Swedish coast, even in the very neighbourhood of Stockholm, destroyed hundreds of villages and castles, together with all the copper and iron-works, and spread desolation in every direction. The neighbourhood of the English fleet proved worse than useless. Admiral Norris, unauthorised to resent the outrages of the Russians, was compelled to let the English flag bear part of the disgrace thus heaped upon Sweden. The czar showed his contempt of this impotent interference, by capturing and carrying off four Swedish frigates, almost in sight of the English fleet. We were said to have done too much, if only mediators; and too little, if enemies.

The severe inflictions which the Swedes suffered at the hands of the Russians, made them solicit a suspension of arms, for the purpose of concluding a peace. As English

* "The character of this extraordinary man requires no further illustration. We shall merely observe, that whatever the admiration excited by his earlier military successes and his indomitable courage, he was really a madman: that, as the cause of his country's ruin (for, since his day, it has never been more than a fourth-rate state in European affairs), he deserves the execration, not the applause, of mankind. If he was really assassinated, we cannot, indeed, praise the deed or the doer, since both must be held in everlasting odium; but we may observe, that no deed could have been so useful to Sweden, or even to Europe."—*Dunham's History of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway.*

interference had failed, Sweden now sought the mediation of France, and the Duke of Orleans (the regent) succeeded in bringing about the long-negotiated reconciliation. Accordingly, a congress was held at Neustadt, a small town in Finland, where the czar had an army ready to overrun the country in the event of the terms he dictated being rejected. Sweden was in no condition to dispute with him, and nothing was left to her but to consent to his proposals. The peace of Neustadt was finally signed on the 10th of September, 1721, and by it Peter retained possession of all the provinces he had conquered, from Courland to the extremity of the Gulf of Iceland, and from thence through Kexholm and a narrow slip of Finland; leaving him undisputed master of Livonia, Esthonia, Ingria, Carelia, Wybourg, and the neighbouring isles; the whole occupying a space of about 300 leagues in unequal breadths, and equal in extent to a large kingdom. Great was the satisfaction of the czar; and he wrote to his plenipotentiaries—"You have drawn up the treaty as if we had done it ourselves and sent it to you to cause it to be signed by the Swedes. This glorious event will be ever present to our memory."

Peace, though not necessary to Russia, was highly welcome both to the people and the sovereign. The former were delighted at the prospect of a relief, after twenty years of incessant struggle and warfare. The latter, now relieved from the necessity of maintaining large armies on the borders of Sweden, and at peace with those other nations from whom he had any reason to apprehend hostilities, hailed with gratification that leisure which enabled him to devote himself entirely to the reformation of his empire, which, even amidst the occupations of war, he had cultivated with such restless solicitude.

This peace was regarded by the subjects of the czar as the most glorious of his triumphs, and it was celebrated by public festivities, which, for their splendour and the enthusiasm with which they were received by the people, surpassed anything of the kind that had previously taken place in Russia. Peter, touched by the joy and gratitude of the people, granted a remission of all taxes due to the royal treasury, and a pardon to all prisoners, except those confined for robbery, murder, and high treason. Always the teacher of his subjects, he also exhibited to them the little sailing-vessel which, in his young days, had suggested to him the idea of building a navy. This was a striking lesson on the results of industry and perseverance. The czar had preserved this little boat with affectionate care, and he would sometimes amuse himself with decorating it and arming its miniature decks with silver cannon. This period, indeed, must be regarded as the climax of the glory of this extraordinary man. The peace festivities were prolonged during a period of fifteen days, and the senate took advantage of the general happiness of the people to confer on Peter the honourable titles of Great, Emperor, and Father of his country. The chancellor addressed him in the cathedral, in the name of all the orders of the state, after which the assembled senators thrice shouted, "Long live our emperor and our father"—shouts which were taken up and heartily re-echoed by the people without. The same day the foreign ministers at St. Petersburg congratulated the czar on these honours, and addressed him by his new title of emperor, which was recognised by all the courts of Europe, except that of Poland and the pope; the former being convulsed with factions, and the latter sunk into an insignificance which rendered its suffrage of very little importance. When the rejoicings at St. Petersburg were over, they were renewed at Moscow, into which the czar made a triumphal entry under decorated arches.

Yet, during this visit to Moscow, Peter appointed a military commission to inquire into the truth of certain complaints which had been made against those entrusted with the administration of affairs during his absence. Prince Gagarin, governor of Siberia, was found guilty of having robbed his majesty's caravan from China, and of murdering the persons by whom it was conducted, by which and other crimes he had acquired enormous wealth. Prince Mentschikoff, (now the first subject of the empire), Prince Volkonski(governor of Archangel), Admiral Count Apraxin, and General Bruce, were also convicted of peculation. Gagarin was hanged, like Haman, on a gallows fifty cubits high, and Volkonski was shot; the rest were let off with pecuniary fines and castigation from the czar with his walking-stick, which he never failed to use very freely over the shoulders of any one he was displeased with. As to Prince Mentschikoff, he had so often been detected in peculation, that the czar had come to regard him as an incorrigible rogue, with whom, nevertheless,

he did not wish to part. On one occasion the senate, who possessed many proofs of his depredations, drew up a tabular statement of them, and placed it on the table opposite the czar's seat. Peter glanced at the paper, and, discerning its contents, seemed to pay no further attention to them. There it remained, day after day, in the same conspicuous place; until at length Count Tolstoi, who was sitting in the senate beside the czar, ventured to ask him what he thought of that document. "Nothing," replied Peter, "but that Mentschikoff will be always Mentschikoff."

The year which brought peace to Sweden, and gave repose to Russia (1721), witnessed also the consummation of Peter's reforms in the church. Though many years had elapsed since the death of the last patriarch, the czar had found means to evade appointing a successor. "He was," he said, "greatly occupied by business; and therefore, for the present, he desired the metropolitan of Rezan to take upon himself the ecclesiastical affairs of the empire." In the years 1718 and '19 the czar caused a perpetual synod, composed of members always to be nominated by the sovereign, to be erected for the direction of the church. It was to inquire into and decide all matters connected with religion; but its decisions were to be referred to the czar for confirmation; who became, in effect, supreme head of the church. He thus explained his motives for the establishment of this institution, which, with some alterations, exists even at this day. "Under the administration of a synod of priests, none of those disturbances and indiscretions are to be feared which might happen under the government of one sole ecclesiastical chief; that the people, seeing on one side a head of the state, and on the other a head of the church, might, from the superstition natural to them, come to imagine that there are in reality two supreme powers." In illustration of this important point, Peter cited instances of long dissensions between the crown and the priesthood, which every reader of history well knows have ever been a prolific source of bloodshed and misery. He further stated, "That the notion of two distinct powers, founded on the allegory of two swords, which the apostles happened to have in their possession, was absurd and extravagant."

For theology, as a separate branch of learning, Peter had but little respect; and though, in a general sense, a believer in the sacred character of the inspired writings, yet, in practice, he seems only to have regarded the precepts of morality and those of natural religion. On one occasion, the synod represented to the czar, to whom they should have brought a person whom they recommended to his notice as a bishop, that as yet they knew of none but illiterate men. "Well," answered Peter, "it is but choosing the man of the best life; and he will do full as well as the most learned scholar." Yet Peter respected revealed religion; and, despite the well-known tolerance of his character, exclaimed, one day—"The irreligious cannot be tolerated, because, by sapping religion, they turn into ridicule the sacredness of an oath, which is the foundation of all society."

The year 1721 witnessed, we said, the consummation of the czar's reforms in the church. On presiding at a meeting of the synod, some of the superior clergy presented to him a petition, praying him to appoint a patriarch. The hour had now arrived for a conclusive expression of opinion. Rising suddenly from his seat, Peter drew his sword, and, striking the table violently with it, while with the other hand he smote his breast, exclaimed vehemently—"Here is your patriarch!" Then casting a stern glance on his startled listeners, he hastily quitted the room. None of the clergy considered it prudent, subsequently, to renew the subject; and from that time the office of patriarch was no more.

Russia swarmed with monks and nuns, who were for the most part very idle and ignorant persons, and often no better than they should have been in many other respects. On the 31st of January, 1724, Peter issued an ordinance with respect to them, which had been drawn up by himself, in conjunction with an enlightened dignitary of the church. Its object was to discourage people from becoming idle dreamers in monasteries, in a country where the thinness of the population was such, that no man could be well spared from the labour of improving the land. Notwithstanding the gross ignorance of the monks, many of them could write—an accomplishment of which, in the early part of Peter's reign, they had made but a mischievous use. This was to slander the sovereign who was labouring so zealously for the good of his country. One priest even proceeded so far as to publish that Peter was antichrist, because he would have no patriarch. Upon this, another priest of a

more courtly nature, printed a reply, in which he contended that it was impossible for the czar to be antichrist, because the number 666 was not to be found in his name, and he had not the mark of the beast. Peter at once showed that mischievous theological speculations concerning him, intended to foster conspiracy, or whet the knife of the assassin, were not to be perpetrated with impunity. He put the slanderous priest to death, and rewarded with a bishopric the one who refuted him. This was in an early part of the czar's reign: he had, since that time, inspired the discontented among the priests with so much awe, that they had at least ceased to revile him openly. Latterly they had confined their efforts to poisoning the mind of his son—a circumstance which brought disgrace and death upon the prince, and a terrible retribution upon themselves. It is strange that ignorance and superstition will not learn that the civilisation which ameliorates the condition, and elevates the nature of mankind, is not to be hurled back by human might, and that they who oppose its progress are crushed beneath its iron tread.

Peter was himself the most industrious man in the Russian empire, and he regarded it as an outrage both upon morals and common sense, that a multitude of young men and women should make a vow to live a life of uselessness, and to become a public burden. Impressed with this feeling, he at first decreed that no person should enter upon a monastic life until he had attained the age of fifty; at which period the habits of life are so thoroughly formed, that it is probable very few would desire to make so great a change. At the representation of the clergy, however, the monastic age was reduced to thirty, before which no person was permitted to devote themselves to a life of religious seclusion and veiled pauperism. Military men, and occupiers of land, were prohibited from adopting the life of the cloister at any period, without an express permission from the emperor or the synod. The same rule applied to any person in the service of the state. The monks, who had hitherto passed their time chiefly in day-dreams and gluttony, were each of them compelled to work at some trade, or to employ themselves in attending to the sick poor, or the disbanded and disabled soldiers who were distributed amongst the monasteries. The life of the monks being thus made one of labour, and stripped of that respect which might previously have dignified it, many of these persons turned from it in disgust, and sought occupations in which they could render themselves more useful to society. As to the nuns, such of them as had not long passed the meridian of life, were exhorted to marry. Those who declined, or were unable to do so, were all set to perform work suitable to their sex. Some were taught to make laces, by workwomen brought from Brabant and Holland for that purpose; others to labour in the convent grounds, or tend upon the sick, or keep schools for the instruction of the children of the poor. Certain monasteries were also assigned for the admittance and education of orphans of each sex. Unhappily, the life of Peter was not sufficiently prolonged to render these improvements permanent.

The czar was naturally proud of his power over a body of men whose influence has usually ruined all monarchs who endeavoured to reform the abuses existing amongst them. On one occasion, a paper from the well-known English periodical, *The Spectator*, the subject of which was a parallel between Peter and Louis XIV., being read to him, the czar observed—"I cannot think that I deserve the preference given to me above that monarch; but it has been my happiness to go beyond him on one point, and that an essential one. I have brought my clergy to be submissive and quiet, and Louis XIV. suffered his to get the better of him."

Peter never lost his relish for the coarse pleasures which had been the occupation of his early youth. Even at this grave period, when the tragic fate of his son could not have been effaced from his memory, and his time was chiefly occupied in ecclesiastical reforms, he yet amused himself and the people with a vulgar revel, of a nature so strange, that it is wonderful how such a mind as his could possibly be diverted by it. We must, however, regard the most illustrious men as a compound of strength and weakness, and none the more separated from the wants and propensities of the meanest of men on account of their own mental power in some other direction. Shortly after the extinction of the patriarchate, the czar caused Buturlin, the second mock pope of his creation, to be married to the widow of his predecessor Jotoff. The bridegroom was in his eighty-fifth year, and the bride much about the same mature age. The messengers who

carried the invitations to the ceremony were four stutterers. Four decrepid old men attended the bride, and the running footmen were four of the most corpulent fellows that could be found. The orchestra was placed on a waggon drawn by bears, who being goaded with iron spikes, their hideous roarings formed a bass suitable to the tunes played in the waggons. As to the nuptial benediction, that was bestowed by a blind and deaf priest, with spectacles on. The procession, the wedding feast, the ceremony of undressing the bride and bridegroom, and putting them to bed, were all in accordance with the rest of this strange buffoonery. The czar and his courtiers, who followed in the marriage procession, and witnessed the subsequent fooleries, seemed to enjoy them with immense gusto.

Peter's last great public act was an expedition to Persia, which empire was then falling to pieces under the feeble rule of the imbecile Hussein Shah. The throne of the sovereign was almost wrested from him by a usurper, while the empire was invaded on one side by the Affghans, and on the other by the Lesghians, who resided in the neighbourhood of the Caucasus. The latter nation poured into the province of Shirvan, sacked the city of Shamaki, and put the inhabitants to the sword, including about 300 Russian traders, whose warehouses they also plundered of goods estimated at the value of 4,000,000 roubles. Peter was greatly irritated, for he had himself induced the Russian merchants to settle at Shamaki, where they were carrying on a very prosperous trade. He therefore demanded satisfaction for the outrage that had been inflicted. The Persian monarch was willing, but unable, to grant it; he therefore pleaded his helpless condition, and entreated the czar to aid in subduing the foes by whom he was surrounded.

To this Peter had no disinclination, for he had long entertained a project for making himself master of the Caspian Sea, with the object of directing the commerce of Persia and a portion of India through his own dominions. On the 15th of May, 1722, the czar, accompanied by Catherine, set sail with a considerable expedition. They proceeded down the broad Volga as far as the city of Astracan, where Peter paused to await the arrival of his forces and *matériel* of war. During this enforced leisure, he occupied himself in examining the works for the extensive canals designed to join the Caspian, Baltic, and White seas. His troops arrived while he was contemplating these gigantic projects. The army consisted of 22,000 foot, 9,000 dragoons, 15,000 Cossacks, and 3,000 seamen. The project of the czar was full of difficulties; for he commanded that the horses should proceed over land, through deserts which are frequently without water; and beyond them they were to pass the mountains of the Caucasus, where 300 men might check the progress of a whole army. But to this movement the czar was encouraged by the distracted state of Persia, which rendered it almost helpless against aggression.

Sailing from Astracan, the expedition proceeded as far as the little fortified town of Andreof—a town founded by the Georgians. This was soon captured, and the Russians then advanced by land into the province of Daghestan, where Peter caused manifestos, in the Persian and Russian languages, to be circulated. This was to avoid giving offence to the Ottoman Porte, which, besides its subjects the Circassians and Georgians, had in these districts some considerable vassals, who had lately placed themselves under its protection. One of the principal of these was Mahmoud d'Utmich, who, assuming the title of sultan, had the imprudence to attack the Russians. He was utterly defeated; and, according to the account of the victors, "his country was made a bonfire." The intense heat was a source of great suffering to the Russian troops; but Peter exhibited the same attention to discipline, and disregard of personal fatigue and discomfort, which had characterised him in his earlier undertakings. He shared the toil of his army, and constantly either rode or walked by the side of his troops. At this time, his customary dress was a short dimity waistcoat and a white nightcap, with a plain flapped hat over it. He seems, however, to have thought this odd costume more easy than dignified; for he prepared himself to receive any deputation by putting on his regimentals.

The march of the Russians was protracted over the summer months, and in the middle of September they reached the city of Derbend—known by the Persians and Turks as Demir Capi, or Iron Gate, because it once had such a gate towards the south. The city was regarded as impregnable, for the upper part of it joins a steep branch of the

Caucasus, while its walls at the other side are washed by the sea, which in stormy weather breaks over them. Yet on the approach of the Russians, the governor voluntarily came forth to meet the czar, and presented him with the silver keys of the city and the castle, and invited him to enter. Peter took peaceable possession of the place, and encamped his troops within the walls on the sea-shore. Mahmoud the usurper, who had seized the crown of the shah, hastened with an army of Tartars to save Derbend from falling into the power of the Russians; but he was too late—it was already in their hands.

Though Peter had been triumphant thus far, he doubted of the ultimate success of an expedition which, on account of the many natural difficulties to be overcome, he began to perceive had been somewhat rashly undertaken. To provide for the wants of a large army, in its passage through vast sterile tracts and regions where not even a village varied the profound solitude of nature, was no common task. The czar understood the tremendous responsibility of a position where, perhaps, one false step was destruction. In this state of mind he received news that thirteen vessels, containing provisions, stores, horses, and recruits for his army, had been wrecked in their passage from Astracan. This heavy loss, combined with the fact that the season was then unfavourable for military operations, induced Peter to abandon the expedition. Retracing his steps, he returned to Moscow, which he re-entered on the 5th of January, 1723. He celebrated his return from this unprofitable campaign with a triumph, beneath the forced festivities of which he must have concealed the mortification he really felt.

The prizes of the world commonly fall to the strong; and even now, Peter derived advantage from the distracted state of Persia. The shah Hussein, and the usurper Mahmoud, struggled hard for supremacy. Hussein implored the support of the Russian emperor; while Mahmoud feared him as an avenger, who might wrest from him all the fruits of his rebellion. He therefore used every endeavour to excite the Ottoman Porte to hostilities against Peter, by statements concerning the devastations the latter had committed in Daghestan. The apprehensions of the sultan were aroused concerning the safety of Georgia, then a part of the Ottoman dominions; and he was on the point of declaring war against Russia—a circumstance from which he was diverted by the interference of the courts of Vienna and Paris. In the meantime, the dethroned shah of Persia supplicated assistance both from Russia and Turkey; and with the blind selfishness of a despot, offered each of them one part of his dominions, if they would secure for him the remainder. Russia and Turkey, therefore, instead of commencing hostilities, entered upon a treaty with each other, and with the shah, by which it was arranged that Russia should take possession of the provinces of Ghilan, Astaraboth, and Mazandaran, the three principal provinces of the ancient kings of the Medes; while Turkey was to have Casbin, Tauris, and Erivan. Thus was the fine kingdom of Persia dismembered, through the weakness of its sovereign and the turbulence of its people. Peter thus extended his empire from the extremity of the Black Sea to the southern limits of the Caspian. "One single man," observes Voltaire, "by his active and resolute genius, raised his country; while in Persia, one single man, being weak and indolent, occasioned the fall of his."

Russia was again in a state of repose, and silently carrying into action the great reforms which its illustrious ruler had often made too abruptly for endurance, except under favourable circumstances. The empire had become a great power in Europe, and Peter was the undisputed arbiter of the north. He seems now to have desired that rest from toil and excitement which his long life of effort had deserved. Within the period of his reign he had compressed the events of a couple of centuries; and it was wise to rest upon his laurels, and watch the working of the new state of society he had created.

It was now that Peter resolved to bestow upon the partner of his anxieties that illustrious reward which he derived as much honour from bestowing as Catherine did in accepting. In the spring of 1724, he proclaimed his intention of crowning "the empress Catherine, our dearly beloved consort." In this document, Peter again referred to her services on the banks of the Pruth, which had evidently made a deep impression upon him. "It was in this desperate exigency," said he, "that she especially signalised a zeal and fortitude above her sex; and to this all the army and the whole empire can bear witness. For these causes, and in virtue of the power

which God hath given us, we have resolved, in acknowledgment of all her fatigues and good offices, to honour our consort with the imperial crown." The ceremony was performed with great solemnity at Moscow, on the 28th of May. Peter had not alluded to his intention of making Catherine his successor; but it is probable that this coronation was intended to prepare the people for such a result. The idea gained strength from the fact, that the emperor walked on foot before Catherine in the procession as captain of a new company, which he had created on that occasion, with the title of the "Knights of the Empress." On arriving at the cathedral, Peter himself placed the crown upon the head of his consort. Catherine was much affected, and sank on her knees before him, but he raised her with much gentleness, and calmed her agitation. On leaving the cathedral, the globe and sceptre were, at his command, carried before her.

Peter had taken the family of his late enemy, Charles XII., into his protection, and invited the Duke of Holstein, that monarch's nephew, to the Russian court. Soon after the coronation of Catherine, the emperor bestowed upon this prince the hand of his eldest daughter, Anne Petrowna. This princess bore a considerable resemblance to her father, and united a majestic stature with great beauty. The marriage was celebrated without much show; for the health of the czar was now giving way before a painful disorder from which he had for some time suffered.

A strange story is related concerning Catherine at this period, and treated by some writers as more than apocryphal; but it is supported by the authority of Leclerc, Levesque, and other writers. Voltaire alludes to the circumstance, but omits the darkest portion of it, which he might have done from motives of policy. If it is true, Peter was, with difficulty, restrained from sending to the scaffold the woman upon whose head he had so recently placed the crown. It is to be wished that the story is false; but the subsequent licentiousness and intemperance of the empress, give to it a strong colouring of probability. Peter, though much attached to the sex, was ever rather a sensualist than a lover; and, except in the case of Catherine, never seems to have won the affection of any of the rather numerous list of ladies with whom he had lived on terms of more than ordinary familiarity. If this narrative be true, we must believe that she also never regarded him with that pure, elevating emotion which is known as love. In that case she might have regarded him with gratitude, or with admiration; but assuredly never with love. The narrative of which we speak runs thus:—Catherine had amongst her chamberlains a very handsome young gentleman, of agreeable manners, named Moens de la Croix, whose sister, many years previously, had for a short time been the mistress of the czar. This sister—then the widow of a Russian general named Balk—was also employed at court in the capacity of first dresser to the empress. Both brother and sister possessed great influence with the empress; and, after a time, a guilty passion sprung up between Catherine and the handsome chamberlain. So unguarded was their conduct, that the suspicions of Peter were aroused, and he caused the empress and her supposed paramour to be watched. The court at this period was held at Peterhoff; and early one morning Prince Repnin, president of the war department, who slept not far from the czar, was roused from his sleep by the door of his chamber being violently thrown open. Starting up, he beheld some one enter abruptly, and soon recognised the czar, who stood by the bedside, his eyes sparkling with rage, and his features livid and distorted with convulsive fury. Repnin remained for a time speechless from astonishment and terror, and fearing that he had in some way excited this storm of passion in the czar, gave himself up for lost. After a pause, the czar, in a hoarse and broken voice, exclaimed—"Get up! speak to me! there's no need to dress yourself." The marshal obeyed; and then learned that the czar, acting upon information conveyed to him by his spies, had suddenly entered the chamber of Catherine, and discovered her in the arms of her paramour. Peter, struck with so monstrous an ingratitude on the part of one to whom he had borne so much affection, expressed his determination of consigning the empress, at daybreak, to the hands of the headsman. Marshal Repnin, having by this time recovered his composure, ventured to expostulate with his sovereign. The unexpected treachery of the empress was, he said, shocking; but he suggested to the czar that her crime was yet known to no one, and that it would be highly impolitic to make it public. He made bold to remind

the czar of the massacre of the Strelitz, and that every subsequent year had been ensanguined with executions; that, in fine, after the imprisonment of his sister, the condemning of his son to death, and the imprisonment of his first wife, if he should likewise cut off the head of the second, the inhabitants of other countries might come to regard him as a ferocious sovereign, who thirsted for the blood of his subjects, and even for that of his own kindred. He added, that the czar might punish Moens by delivering him to the sword of the law upon some other charge; and also find means to get rid of the empress, without any stain upon his honour or his glory.

Peter listened in gloomy silence; and then, suffering frightfully from the convulsions which commonly attacked him while under powerful excitement, he went into the adjoining room, and walked hurriedly backwards and forwards for about two hours. Then, being somewhat subdued, he returned to the marshal, and said—"Moens shall die immediately; and I will watch the empress so closely, that her first slip shall cost her her life!"

Moens and his sister were arrested the next morning, upon an ideal charge of having received bribes from the enemies of the country, for the purpose of inducing the empress to act upon the mind of the czar in a way injurious to the interests of Russia. With a hope of saving the life and honour of the empress, Moens pleaded guilty to the false charge brought against him, was condemned, and beheaded. His sister, who had acted as a pander to his guilt, received five strokes with the knout, and was banished to Siberia; while her sons—one a chamberlain, and the other a page—were compelled to serve in the army as common soldiers, and sent in that capacity to the Persian frontier. Marshal Repnin adds, that the emperor never after spoke to Catherine, except in public; but this is certainly untrue, as she attended him most assiduously during his last illness; and he died in her arms. Probably the narrative we have just related, and which we do not wish our readers to accept without suspicion, is a mingling of truth with falsehood. It is known that Moens, his sister and her sons, were punished in the way we have mentioned, on a charge of accepting guilty bribes. Perhaps Peter *suspected* Moens of being the paramour of the empress, instead of *detecting* him in her chamber at an hour which left no doubt of guilt. A suspicion would have been enough for so vindictive a man as the czar to have acted upon; and he was not at all likely, having once entertained a suspicion of the fidelity of his consort, to remain almost in indifference until indiscretion ripened into her guilt and his dishonour. We are inclined to believe that Moens fell a victim to the jealous fears of the czar; that Catherine might have been either guilty or innocent (and there is much to favour either supposition), but that she had the address to make Peter believe her the latter, and to regain the tottering place she held in his affections. Certainly, in the almost uxorious passion which the czar entertained for her, she had a powerful advocate.

The health of Peter had for some time been seriously impaired; but he had concealed his disorder from his physicians, and suffered in silence. It was a strangury, from which he sought relief by fits of intemperance, which, while they brought a momentary alleviation, tended in the end to aggravate the severity of his complaint. During the summer of 1724, his sufferings from this cause became so severe, that he was induced, despite his reluctance, to seek the advice of his physicians. They found him in a very dangerous state, and he was compelled to keep his room for nearly four months. Late in the autumn, finding himself much better, he resolved to visit the works on Lake Ladoga, which were not proceeding so rapidly as he wished. His medical attendants expostulated against this imprudence, but in vain. During the whole of October he traversed the fetid marshes in the neighbourhood of the lake. Feeble as he was physically, he had lost nothing of his former mental energy. He discharged the unskilful engineer whose blundering had retarded the progress of the work. "Pisaref," said he to him, "there are two kinds of faults—the one, when we err from ignorance; the other (which is more inexcusable) when we do not make use of our five senses. Why are not the banks of this canal prevented from giving way? Why are there so many windings? Where are the hills which you made an objection? Truly you are an absolute knave!" Turning to the engineer whose plans he approved, the czar addressed him with the title of "friend," and placed 25,000 workmen under his orders.

Impelled by a restless and feverish ac-

tivity, the czar proceeded to the extremity of Lake Ilmen, and also to the salt-works of Starai Roussa. On his return to St. Petersburg he turned from the road and proceeded to Finland, to inspect some manufactories he had established there. Entering the port of Lachta when the sea was rough and the weather threatening, he saw a small vessel, filled with soldiers and sailors, stranded on a shoal, and in danger of perishing from the ignorance of the unskilful mariners. Peter was an able pilot, and he shouted to the men the course they should pursue; but his voice was drowned by the wind and the roaring of the sea. He then sent a shallop to assist them; but those who manned it were timid sailors, and failed to render the required assistance. Resolved to save the poor fellows whose perilous situation had excited his compassion, the czar entered a skiff, and himself pushed off for the spot. As his boat could not reach the shoal, he leaped into the sea, and wading to the boat, succeeded in saving those on board of it, and conveying them to the shore.

For this noble act he paid a severe penalty. He took a violent cold, and during the night his disease returned with all its former severity. A burning fever also seized him, and he suffered acute agonies. He was removed to St. Petersburg, where his alarmed physicians feared that gangrene and its fatal results were not to be averted. Even in this alarming situation, the czar attended to business in every interval of suffering. He laboured to the last; and, as it has been finely said, he paused only to die. Two months he languished in this condition; at times prostrate with suffering, and at others seeming to triumph over disease and impending death, by the force of a will accustomed to subdue everything. About the middle of January, 1725, he even braved the severity of the weather; and, venturing out, attended the ceremony of blessing the water. The following day his most distressing symptoms returned with all their force; and he suffered also from a difficulty of breathing.

The most distinguished physicians that could be procured, not only in St. Petersburg, but also from Leyden and Berlin, were collected around his bed. They used every means known to them to allay his terrible malady; but it is said they only tortured the illustrious patient, whom they sought in vain to save. His agonies were sometimes so great, that he filled the palace with his cries; then, ashamed of this involuntary expression of his tortured frame, he mournfully exclaimed, that "in him might be plainly seen what a wretched animal is man!"

The czar lingered until about the end of the month, and a few days before his death he resigned himself to his approaching fate; for at first he did not appear to think that his disorder would terminate fatally. On the 26th he received the last consolations of religion, and observed—"I dare hope that God will look upon me with a merciful eye for all the good that I have done to my country!"

To the last he thought of his beloved reforms; and, in intervals of ease and reason (for he was frequently in a state of delirium), he directed Catherine to protect his academy of sciences, and to invite to it the learned men of Europe. Then, pointing out the virtuous and able Count Ostermann to her, he exclaimed—"Russia cannot do without him; he is the only man who knows her real interests." Ever occupied with the labours of life, Peter had neglected to write his will. He now, when it was too late, sought to remedy this oversight. He attempted to write, but his hand was no longer sufficiently steady for that purpose, and, after tracing a few almost illegible words, he was compelled to give up the attempt. When the paper was examined, nothing further could be made out from it than the words—"Give all to ————." Signifying his desire that his favourite daughter, the Princess Anne, should attend, he thought to dictate to her that which his powerless fingers could not set down. Before she arrived, he was seized with a fit which rendered him speechless, and paralysed his left side. For fifteen hours he remained in this sad state, almost between the living and the dead. Catherine watched anxiously by his bedside, which she had scarcely left during three successive nights. At length, on the 28th of January, 1725, about four in the morning, he breathed his last in her arms. Thus, in the fifty-second year of his life, and the forty-third of his reign, died the most remarkable and gifted monarch that Russia has ever possessed.

The body of the deceased emperor was removed into the great hall of the palace, followed by the imperial family, the senate, and an immense number of persons of distinction. It was there laid on a bed of state, and the people admitted to kiss the cold

hand of the potentate who had effected such mighty changes in the empire. His funeral was conducted with a magnificence worthy of his great achievements, and the most distinguished honours were paid to his memory by a people who had at length learned to value the greatness of their imperial reformer; the true founder of modern Russia.

Since the death of Peter the Great, an aggressive and absorbing policy, with respect to other nations, has been observable in the Russian government. This has probably arisen from the necessity it felt for the extension of its seaboard, and the multiplication of its outlets into the great trading seas of Europe; but it has generally been attributed to directions said to be bequeathed by the czar Peter to his successors, and since then handed down as a cabinet secret from sovereign to sovereign. These directions, contained in a document denominated the "Will of Peter the Great," contain a plan for the subjugation of Europe beneath Russian supremacy, and the erection of a colossal empire, extending over the whole civilised and semi-civilised world. We have given the text of this "will" elsewhere,* and have in the same place reiterated the doubt generally expressed as to its authenticity. That doubt we now repeat; for, upon a further consideration of the contents of this paper, we are inclined to believe it a forgery; though we will admit that it has never undergone such an investigation—at least such a known and open investigation—as the subject appears to demand. It is scarcely possible that so important and dangerous a cabinet secret should have been allowed to become public; for the promulgation of it might have roused all the rest of Europe into a crusade against a neighbour whose policy they must have regarded as incompatible with general tranquillity, or even safety. But how do the believers in this state paper account for its being made public? They say that the empress Elizabeth, enamoured of the notorious Chevalier d'Eon (a creature of tainted character and doubtful sex, who was sent from the court of France to Russia as a secret agent), allowed him extraordinary opportunities for making important discoveries, and that he transmitted this document to Louis XV. in 1757. The tale is a romantic and suspicious one. Certainly the will first became public through the medium of D'Eon; and what more probable than that he composed it, taking as his cue some vague hints dropped by Russian statesmen or politicians, whose ambition and national vanity were much greater than their prudence and their wisdom.

But apart from the suspicious nature of the external evidence given in support of the authenticity of this paper, we do not think that an examination of the contents of it favours the supposition that it represents the matured thoughts of Peter the Great. A scheme of universal conquest by a man who never fought a single battle for the sake of glory, but ever regarded war only as a means to some useful and profitable end! It has an air of incredibility. Of what use would the sovereignty of Europe have been to Peter or his successors? To achieve it, would exhaust the strength of Russia in incessant wars; to maintain it, would be to convert half her population into a military police, and to engage her in the continual suppression of revolutions, which, by their number, and the bloody fury with which they would inevitably be conducted, would probably ultimately triumph, from the internal feebleness and inanition of their despot. European dominion would have distracted Russia from itself, and it would have fallen back towards barbarism, and probably been broken up again into petty and insignificant states. Such extensive rule could not be grasped by any ordinary hand, nor conducted by any merely human head. Beneath a powerful sovereign such an empire would be always threatened with disruption; and the accession of a weak one would inevitably be followed by confusion, war, and ruin. In later days the great Napoleon tried to realise the day-dream of European conquest, and the result was ruin to himself, prostration to France. Peter understood these views. "It is," said he, on one occasion, "not land, but *water*, that Russia wants." Russia had, in his time, more land than her population could reclaim from the barren wildness of nature; and such is yet the case. Russia requires concentration and compression, not extension; for assuredly any great extension would lead to its widely-separated parts falling asunder, and becoming divided, and perhaps antagonistic states.

As to the idle rant which the "will" attributes to Peter, about Russia regenerating worn-out Europe, a very little reflection will show that the attempt at Russian supremacy would be far more likely to barbarise Europe. The great czar knew this, and he regarded the old states of Europe with ad-

* *History of the War with Russia*, vol. ii., p. 83.

miration. He studied civilisation from them, and ever held them up to his nobles and people as models. He was aware that Europe had nothing to learn from Russia, but that Russia had everything to learn from Europe. So strongly did this conviction appear in his actions, that he has been reproached as having forced upon the Russians an imitative civilisation unsuited to their national character, in preference to letting their better qualities slowly develop themselves. We do not share this opinion, for Peter had to do with a vast nation of semi-savages, whom he was compelled to rend abruptly away from their barbarous habits, and to coerce into decency and humanity. It was necessary to tell them what to do, and how to think; to open their minds; and reform, nay, altogether recreate, their manners. With this object, he compelled them to dress, and live, mingle together, and marry like the inhabitants of the most polished states of Europe. Yet we are told that the far-seeing, deep-thinking czar, who never talked for display, and was as plain in his speech and writing as he was in his dress, babbled about Russia fertilising and regenerating worn-out Europe.* Peter's own opinion of his subjects was not a flattering one; assuredly he did not regard them as civilizers. To those around him, he would exclaim—"You may make war on wild beasts; it is a pleasure which is not unbecoming to you; but as for me, I cannot amuse myself in such a manner, while I have so many to combat in my obstinate and intractable subjects. *They are animals whom I have dressed like men.* I often despair of overcoming their pertinacity, and eradicating their wickedness from their hearts. Let me, therefore, be no longer painted as a cruel tyrant by those who are unacquainted with the circumstances which have imperiously directed my conduct: what numbers of persons have thwarted my designs, rendered abortive my most beneficial plans for the country, and compelled me to use the utmost rigour. I sought for their assistance, and appealed to their patriotism. Those who have comprehended and seconded me, and have been the most useful to my people, I have loaded with rewards; they have been my only favourites!"

The character of Peter was a complex one; made up of diverse, and in some respects discordant, qualities. Few men are wholly good or wholly evil: almost all are both good and evil, according to the passion or appetite which predominates at the time; for our virtues and our vices spring from the same germ; and the last are but a morbid exaggeration of the first. Though a great and most original man, Peter was still but an extraordinary barbarian, who all his life offered a noble homage to the civilisation which he admired, but did not possess. He once observed, after a fit of intoxication, during which he had been guilty of some violence, that he could reform his subjects, but he could not reform himself—an admission as sad as it was evidently true. Such was the vehemence and untameable energy of this great, wild man—this Sampson, who pulled down the temple of barbarism, and crushed its obstinate votaries beneath its ruins—that his habitual industry extended to his vices. He was a drunkard, even to the glaring, wolfish madness of intoxication; and a coarse sensualist, even to that point where depraved appetite sinks into pruriency. His ferocity was such, that, when thoroughly aroused, he panted for blood; and the sighs and agonizing moans of wretches on the rack, the wheel, or the impaling stake, were as horrible music to his ears. Such were his vices, and they are terrible ones; but every allowance should be made for this great creature, whose boyhood was purposely exposed to contamination, whose education was such as he himself gathered without any guide on whom he could rely, and who was exposed to obstacles which would have overwhelmed almost any other man. The frantic opposition he had to subdue in his crusade of civilisation, is an acceptable, if not altogether sufficient apology for his cruelty; while his drunkenness and licentiousness were merely personal vices, and did not affect his people.

Great as were the vices of this illustrious sovereign, his noble qualities far outshone them. He was the most industrious of men, and commonly both frugal and self-denying. He idolised his country, lived for it utterly, laboured for it incessantly, and,

* That the existing military despotisms of Europe will be comparatively short-lived, is probable; that they must eventually perish, is certain; but the regenerating power will not come from without, but arise from *within*. Nations become decrepit, but man is ever young. The worn-out, expiring empire which is torn asunder by revolutions, or divided by the swords of conquerors, yields in its dying struggles those germs which, in the grand career of time, ripen into young and more teachable nations. Nature is ever employed in renewing the youth of the world.

by his almost superhuman exertions, raised it from a distracted, barbarous, and despised state to a powerful empire, with a numerous and a highly-disciplined army; a navy which was not only promising, but powerful; a commerce which was rapidly becoming a broad and inexhaustible source of wealth; and a reputation for national dignity and influence second to no state in Europe. Never did he abandon his exertions for the exaltation and benefit of his native land. We are struck with wonder and admiration at the number and extent of his labours, and the untiring perseverance with which he urged them into practice. He greatly enlarged the boundaries of the empire, and gave it an outlet to the sea, both in the north and in the south. His navies arose with a rapidity that resembled the fabulous works of enchantment, and his fleets feared no foe, either upon the waters of the Baltic or the Euxine. Hitherto the army of Russia had been little better than a savage and riotous mob; this he exterminated, and supplied its place by one organised upon the systems pursued by the most military nations of Europe. He established many institutions for the cultivation of science, literature, and the arts, and also for humane and charitable purposes. Above all, he modified and improved the character of the people; softened their sullen and brutal manners; gave touches of social grace to their domestic life; did something towards breaking up their apathetic ignorance and superstition; and, indeed, raised them in the scale of existence. These things make the impartial mind look with a glance of regret upon his ferocity, his storms of passion, his wild impulses, and his vulgar riots. It is difficult to dwell harshly on these painful topics, when we contemplate the character of the heroic sovereign to whom his people gave, with acclamations, the title of FATHER, and whose grateful descendants regard him with a feeling approaching adoration, as the embodiment of the tutelary Genius of the Empire.

Here we shall introduce a few anecdotes and remarks concerning Peter, which are rather illustrative of his character than of the history of his country. He was an early riser, commonly leaving his bed at the hour of four, even during the winter, and lighting his own fire. He dined at one; and though not a large feeder, would eat anything except fish, to which he had an antipathy. He altogether discarded the solitary state, during meals, of his predecessors on the imperial throne, and loved to dine with Dutch and English skippers, with whom he conversed familiarly, and enjoyed his clay pipe and mug of quass.

Sometimes the czar would pilot the foreign vessels that came to Cronstadt; on which occasions he always took his pay like other pilots, chiefly because he desired to render the service honourable. He commonly received the ambassadors sent to Russia, wherever he chanced to be, without any ceremony; because, he said, they were accredited to his person, and not to any hall or palace. M. Printz, the Prussian ambassador, was taken on board a ship to be introduced to the czar, where Peter, who was aloft, shouted to him to climb up into the maintop, though the eccentric sovereign came down to the quarter-deck, on his visitor pleading his want of practice as an excuse for not complying with so unusual a request. Occasionally, the czar's humours placed those who shared them in dangerous positions. One day he invited several foreign ministers to accompany him on a trip by water from St. Petersburg to Cronstadt. About half-way the vessel was caught in a sudden storm. One of the ambassadors implored the czar, who was steersman, to make for the shore. "We shall all be lost," he added, in accents of terror, "and your majesty will have to answer for my life to the king my master." Peter laughed as he replied, "Sir, if you are drowned, we shall all go to the bottom with you, and there will be nobody left to answer to your court for your excellency's life."

The czar usually indulged in an hour's sleep after dinner. When he was from home he would lie down for this refreshment on the deck of a ship, the floor of a hut, or even the bare ground, if no more convenient resting-place was to be had. When disposed to sleep, the officer in attendance upon him had to lie down and support his master's head on his belly, in which position he was expected to remain as still as the pillow he represented. If by a motion, cough, or sneeze, he woke the czar, the latter kicked or thumped him for his restlessness. Indeed, no one about him was secure from personal violence, as, when offended, he frequently struck or caned his principal officers or nobles, even in public. So common had this become, that the sense

of degradation attending it was lost sight of, and, by a pleasant fiction, those who suffered such chastisement, regarded it as a sort of fatherly correction. Having on one occasion beaten some of his ministers for a fault which they afterwards satisfied him had not been committed, he rendered a sort of apology by acknowledging his mistake, and promising to make an allowance the next time they deserved chastisement. With this impetuous irritability, he was patient and courteous to all persons who desired to lay some useful project before him. He caused the requisite experiments to be made in his presence, and liberally rewarded those who devised anything new, and, not unfrequently, even those who deceived themselves. To the latter, he would kindly explain the causes of their mistake; because, he said, he wished to encourage them to do something better. In the same generous temper, he would stand godfather to the children even of the poorest persons who had the confidence to request such a favour at his hands. He would also occasionally dine and talk familiarly with the common soldiers, and behave towards them with so much simplicity, that he seemed for the time rather their companion than their sovereign. Such popular manners, as soon as they were understood by the then unsocial Russian people, much endeared the czar to his subjects.

With all Peter's manual labours he did not neglect mental cultivation. He not only ordered a number of useful works to be translated into the Russian language, but also translated several himself. Amongst the latter were *L'Architecture de Sebastien Leclerc, L'Art de Tourner, par Plumier* (the czar was a very skilful turner), and *L'Art des Ecluses et des Moulins, par Sturm.* The manuscripts of these, in the handwriting of the emperor, are still preserved at St. Petersburg. In any Russian version which he ordered to be made of a foreign work, if, as sometimes happened, the translator modified passages which reflected upon the Russians, Peter would severely rebuke him, and have the passage literally rendered. "He did not," he observed, "want to flatter his subjects, but to instruct them; and, especially, to show them what they had been, and what foreigners thought of them, that he might stimulate them to change, by their exertions, the opinion of Europe."

In the gusts of passion to which the czar was subject, a manly and fearless expostulation would sometimes disarm his fury. One day, while on board a boat, he, in a fit of anger, seized a senator who had offended him, and was about to hurl him into the water, when the other exclaimed —"You may drown me, but your history will tell of this." Peter felt the reproof, and, admiring the self-possession of the man who gave it, set him down unhurt.

We will conclude this chapter with a curious picture of the manners of Peter and his court while at table. Assuredly the Russians of that period were disgustingly coarse in their habits; and their conduct, as here described, forms a striking contrast to the highly-polished manners and personal dignity of the Russian nobles and gentry of the present day. The following description is taken from a manuscript in the handwriting of Dr. Birch, contained among the Sloane papers in the British Museum:—"There are twenty-four cooks belonging to the kitchen of the Russian court, who are all Russians; and as people of that nation use a great deal of onions, garlic, and train oil in dressing their meat, and employ linseed and walnut oil for their provisions, there is such an intolerable stink in their kitchen, that no stranger is able to bear it, especially the cooks being such nasty fellows, that the very sight of them is enough to turn one's stomach; these are the men who, on great festivals, dress about seventy or eighty or more dishes. But the fowls which are for the czar's own eating are very often dressed by his grand marshal, Alseffiof, who is running up and down, with his apron before him, among the other cooks till it is time to take up dinner, when he puts on his fine clothes and full-bottomed wig, and helps to serve up the dinner. The number of persons invited is generally two or three hundred, though there is room for no more than above a hundred at four or five tables; but as there is no place assigned to anybody, and none of the Russians are willing to go home with an empty stomach, everybody is obliged to seize his chair and hold it with all his force, if he will not have it snatched from him.

"The czar being come in, and having chosen a place for himself, there is such scuffling and fighting for chairs, that nothing more scandalous can be seen in any company, though the czar does not mind it in the least, nor does he take care for putting a stop to such disorder, pretending that a ceremony, and the formal regulations of a

marshal, make people sit uneasy and spoil the pleasure of conversation. Several foreign ministers have complained of this to the czar, and refuse to dine any more at court, but all the answer they got was, that it was not the czar's business to turn master of the ceremonies, and please foreigners, nor was it his intention to abolish the freedom once introduced; this obliged strangers for the future to follow the Russian fashion, in defending the possession of their chairs, by cuffing and boxing their opposer. The company thus sitting down to table without any manner of grace, they all sit so crowded together, that they have much ado to lift their hands to their mouths; and if a stranger happens to sit between two Russians, which is commonly the case, he is sure of losing his stomach, though he should have happened to have eaten nothing for two days before. Carpenters and shipwrights sit next to the czar; but senators, ministers, generals, priests, sailors, buffoons of all kinds, sit pell-mell without any distinction. The first course consists of nothing but cold meats, among which are hams, dried tongues, and the like, which, not being liable to such tricks as shall be mentioned hereafter, strangers ordinarily make their whole meal of them, without tasting anything else, though generally speaking, every one takes his dinner beforehand at home.

"Soups and roasted meats make the second course, and pastry the third. As soon as one sits down, one is obliged to drink a cup of brandy, after which they ply you with great glasses of adulterated Tokay, and other vitiated wines, and between whiles, a bumper of the strongest English beer, by which mixture of liquors every one of the guests is fuddled before the soup is served up. The company being in this condition, make such a noise, racket, hallooing, that it is impossible to hear one another, or even to hear the music, which is playing in the next room, consisting of a sort of trumpets and cornets; for the czar hates violins; and with this revelling noise and uproar the czar is extremely diverted, particularly if the guests fall to boxing and get bloody noses.

"Formerly the company had no napkin given them, but instead of it they had a piece of very coarse linen given them by a servant, who brought in the whole piece under his arm, and cut off half an ell for every person, which they are at liberty to carry home with them; for it had been observed that these pilfering guests used sometimes to pocket the napkins; but at present two or three Russians must make shift with but one napkin, which they pull and haul for, like hungry dogs for a bone. Each person of the company has but one plate during dinner; so if some Russian does not care to mix the sauces of the different dishes together, he pours the soup that is left in his plate either into the dish or into his neighbour's plate, or even under the table, after which he licks his plate clean with his finger, and, last of all, wipes it with the tablecloth. The tables are each thirty or forty feet long, and ten-and-a-half broad; three or four messes of one and the same course are served up to each table; the dessert consists of divers sorts of pastry and fruits, but the czaritza's table is furnished with sweetmeats: however, it is to be observed that these sweetmeats are only set out on great festivals for a show, and that the Russians of the best fashion have nothing for their dessert but the produce of the kitchen-garden, as peas, beans, &c., all raw. At great entertainments it frequently happens that nobody is allowed to go out of the room from noon till midnight; hence it is easy to imagine what a pickle a room must be in, that is full of people who drink like beasts, and none of them escape being dead drunk.

"They often tie eight or ten young mice in a string, and hide them under green peas, or in such soups as the Russians have the greatest appetite to, which sets them a kicking and vomiting in a most beastly manner, when they come to the bottom and discover the trick; they often bake cats, wolves, ravens, and the like, in their pastries, and when the company have eaten them up, they tell them what they have devoured.

"The present butler is one of the czar's buffoons, to whom he has given the name of *Wiaschi*, with this privilege, that if any one else calls him by that name he has leave to drub him with his wooden sword. If, therefore, anybody, by the czar's setting them on, calls out '*Wiaschi!*' as the fellow does not know exactly who it was, he falls a beating them all round, beginning with Prince Mentschikoff and ending with the last of the company, without excepting even the ladies, whom he strips of their headclothes, as he does the old Russians with their wigs, which he tramples upon; on which occasion it is pleasant enough to see

the variety of their bald pates. Besides these employments or entertainments, the said Wiaschi is also surveyor of the ice, and executioner for torturing people, on which occasion he gives them the knout himself; and his remarkable dexterity in this detestable business has already procured him above 30,000 thalers, the sixth part of the confiscated estates of the sufferer being his perquisite."

CHAPTER XXVI.

ATTEMPT TO PLACE PETER'S GRANDSON ON THE THRONE; CATHERINE BECOMES EMPRESS; POPULARITY OF HER EARLY PROCEEDINGS; HER LICENTIOUSNESS; LIBELS CONCERNING HER; HER DEATH; PETER, THE SON OF ALEXIS, ASCENDS THE THRONE; DISGRACE OF MENTSCHIKOFF; PREMATURE DEATH OF THE CZAR.

THE old party, which clung to the perishing customs of the past, was not extinct in Russia. Peter had awed the factious among the nobles, and the perversely bigoted among the people, into silence; but he had not convinced them of the efficacy of his reforms. The czar knew this, and, doubtless, looked to the next generation for an appreciation of his changes.

While the speechless, delirious, and paralysed emperor lay on his bed awaiting the moment which released him from his sufferings, secret cabals were in progress for the purpose of bestowing the sceptre on the party identified with the interests of those who composed these political conclaves. The old party, amongst whom were many of the principal nobility, desired to place Peter Alexievitch upon the throne; to arrest Catherine; to abolish the institutions that had been established by the dying czar; to banish all the foreigners who had assisted in the introduction of novelties; and to restore the empire to its primitive barbarism. The mean origin of Prince Mentschikoff, added to the insolence of his bearing, made them resolve to include him in the ruin of the empress. It was therefore the intention of the conspirators to send her to the dreary solitude of a convent, and him to the frozen deserts of Siberia.

Mentschikoff was informed of these designs, and his interests were thus more completely identified with those of Catherine. His measures were prompt and effective. As soon as he knew that the czar was actually dying, he seized the royal treasures, caused them to be conveyed into the citadel, and secured the officers of the guards to his interest by bribes and promises. Then assembling a council of some of the principal clergy, senators, and officers in the palace, he led Catherine into their presence. Briefly addressing them, she claimed the throne in right of her coronation at Moscow; referred to the dangers which might be anticipated should it be occupied by a minor; and promised that, "so far from depriving the grand-duke of the crown, she would receive it only as a sacred deposit, to be restored to him when she should be united, in another world, to an adored husband, whom she was now upon the point of losing." This address, the utterance of which was broken by tears, had considerable effect; yet, when Catherine withdrew and left the meeting to deliberate, the general opinion was not altogether favourable to her claim.

As soon as Peter was dead, the great nobles and the most influential of the clergy thronged to the palace, with the intention of carrying out their views respecting the proclamation of the new sovereign. The adherents of the son of Alexis were confident of success, and the cause of Catherine seemed doomed. Yet it was stronger than her enemies believed. Count Bassevitz, one of her most active partisans, whispered to a chief of the opposite party—"The empress is mistress of the treasure and the fortress; she has gained over the guards, the synod, and many of the chief nobility. Even here she has more followers than you imagine. Advise, therefore, your friends to make no opposition as they value their heads."

The rapid circulation of this statement produced a considerable effect among the worldly, the timid, and the irresolute mem-

bers of that distinguished meeting. The signal was then given for the two regiments of guards—who, won by heavy bribes, had declared for Catherine, and were stationed around the palace—to beat to arms. A pause of excitement and consternation was followed by some angry words between Marshal Repnin (the commander-in-chief) and General Butterlin, who had ordered out the troops, as he said, "in obedience to the commands of my most gracious mistress." At this moment Catherine entered, preceded by Mentschikoff, and supported by her son-in-law, the Duke of Holstein. After some struggle to subdue her emotion (which we have no right to assume was not perfectly sincere), she said—"I come, notwithstanding the grief which now overwhelms me, to assure you that, submissive to the will of my departed husband, whose memory will be ever dear to me, I am ready to devote my days to the painful occupations of government, until Providence shall summon me to follow him." Then, after a brief pause, she added—"If the grand-duke will profit by my instructions, perhaps I shall have the consolation, during my wretched widowhood, of forming for you an emperor worthy of the blood and the name of him whom you have now irretrievably lost." Mentschikoff then observed—"As this is a crisis of such importance to the good of the empire, and requires the most mature deliberation, your majesty will permit us to confer without restraint, that this great business may be transacted without reproach, not only in the opinion of the present age, but also of posterity." Catherine readily assented; and having gratuitously promised to submit to the decision of the assembly, whatever it might be, she retired.

Mentschikoff, who had arranged what followed, then demanded of the secretary of the deceased emperor, whether his late master had left any written declaration of his intentions with respect to who should succeed him. The secretary answered according to his instructions. He said—"That the emperor, a little before his last journey to Moscow, had destroyed a will, and that he had frequently expressed his design of making another; but had always been prevented by the reflection, that if he thought his people, whom he had raised from a state of barbarism to a high degree of power and glory, could be ungrateful, he would not expose his final inclinations to the insult of a refusal; and that if they recollected what they owed to his labours, they would regulate their conduct by his intentions, which he had disclosed with more solemnity than could be manifested by any writing." This ambiguous reply was not generally regarded with satisfaction; some confusion arose, and several of the nobles of the old party opposed the accession of Catherine. At this point, Theophanes, one of the high dignitaries of the church, reminded all present of the oath which they had taken in 1722, to acknowledge the successor appointed by the late emperor; whose sentiments, just delivered by his secretary, clearly pointed to Catherine as the person whom he desired to fill the throne after him. The opposite party declared the sentiments of the late emperor, as enunciated by his secretary, were not so clear as he assumed them to be; and maintained, that as Peter had failed to nominate his heir, the election of the new sovereign should revert to the empire.

The archbishop Theophanes again interfered in favour of Catherine, and testified, that the evening before her coronation at Moscow, he had heard the czar declare that he should place the crown upon her head with no other view than to leave her mistress of the empire after his death. This statement was confirmed by other persons present; and Mentschikoff then cried aloud, "What need have we of any testament? A refusal to conform to the inclination of our great sovereign, thus authenticated, would be both unjust and criminal. Long live the empress Catherine!" This shout was repeated by the majority of those present, and vehemently responded to by the troops without, to whom Catherine presented herself at the windows of the palace, while Mentschikoff scattered handfuls of money amongst them. Thus, it has been observed, was the empress raised to the throne by the guards, in the same manner as the Roman emperors by the prætorian cohorts, without either the appointment of the people or of the legions.

The accession of the low-born Catherine to the imperial throne, though it was greatly in opposition to the desires of the proud old nobility of the empire, was yet welcomed with acclamations by the people. The late emperor had been much attached to her, and she had repaid his affection by an entire devotion to him, and also by such heroic services as are seldom per-

formed by women. What so natural as for them to transfer to her the loyalty they bore towards him. Besides, the army loved her; for she had often accompanied the soldiers in their marches, and shared their toils.

The satisfaction of the people was augmented by the popularity and humaneness of the early acts of the reign of the new sovereign. The annual capitation-tax, which was regarded as a heavy burden, she reduced one-eighth. Most of the persons whom Peter had banished to Siberia she pardoned and permitted to return. The numerous gibbets which, during the late reign, had been erected in various parts of the country, were cut down, and the decaying bodies suspended upon them, buried. The army was paid all the arrears due to it, and many privileges of which the Cossacks had been deprived by Peter, were restored to them. The various officers of state were retained in their situations, and all parties conciliated. Thus every precaution was taken to secure peace within the empire; while, as a defence against external enemies, Catherine augmented the army, maintained the navy in a state of efficiency, and, in the first year of her reign (1726), contracted a treaty with the emperor of Germany, by which these two potentates reciprocally guaranteed to assist each other with an army of 30,000 men in case of necessity. By the last arrangement Catherine hoped to obtain for her daughter's husband, the Duke of Holstein, the succession to the throne of Sweden, and to compel the king of Denmark to restore to him the duchy of Schleswig. She even contemplated resorting to arms to obtain for the duke those possessions to which she considered him entitled; but she was induced to forego these threatened hostilities by the indifference of her senate to a dispute which they considered merely personal.

The brief reign of Catherine was not distinguished by any event which can be regarded as important by the historian. Indeed, it has been designated the reign of Mentschikoff; for that active and ambitious minister directed the chief affairs of state, which the empress herself showed neither ability nor inclination to guide. Mentschikoff had, to some extent, been the means of introducing her to fortune, and she placed the most implicit confidence both in his ability and his faithfulness to her interests. But it was not to indolence alone that Catherine now gave way. Either from the influence of early habits, or powerful passions, from which the check of a husband's presence was now removed, she became very irregular and dissipated in her conduct. Extremely intemperate, she frequently indulged to excess in Tokay wine, while from among the gentlemen of her court, she selected two favourites at once, on both of whom she bestowed her caresses. So open was this licentiousness, that the rival candidates for her favours met each other without reserve, made it their sole business to please their mistress, and alternately received proofs of her tenderness, without suffering their tranquillity to be marred by mutual jealousy.

This unbecoming behaviour strengthened the dislike borne to Catherine by the old anti-reform party, and gave their cause a fictitious appearance of being associated with that of public morality. Satirical papers were constantly circulated, with the object of depriving her of the respect of the people, and the grossest observations were made concerning her birth, her family, and her early career. So bitter and offensive did these slanderous papers become, that at length the empress, stung into a resentment scarcely natural to her whose sweetness of temper had become almost proverbial, threatened to punish with death any person who spoke or wrote disrespectfully of herself or her family. This threat did not silence the libellers of the empress, whose irregularities of life further excited the enmity of her traducers. One circumstance that gave a colour to the popular scandals, was the arrival at St. Petersburg of her brother, who had never been heard of before, and on whom, for the sake, it was supposed, of averting further discoveries, she conferred the title of Count Skavronski. Something of suspicion attached to this event, in consequence of the general belief that prevailed, that the empress had no knowledge whatever of the members of her family.*

* Voltaire says that Peter was acquainted with this presumed brother of Catherine; and on the authority of a person at that time in the service of the czar, he relates the following story, which though usually discredited, has in it nothing improbable, or inconsistent with the character of such a sovereign as Peter:—"An envoy from King Augustus to the czar, returning to Dresden through Courland, overheard in an inn a man, whose apparel betraying necessitous circumstances, was the cause of his being treated with that contempt and insult to which such a condition is too often exposed. The stranger, with proper resentment, said to them, that could he but once come to the speech of the czar, they who made

During the reign of Catherine two impostors arose, each assuming the name of the deceased Prince Alexis, and, in imitation of the Dmitris, attempting to dispute the claim of the empress to the throne. Their claims were, however, too transparently impudent to obtain credence, and the authors of them both expiated their vulgar fraud upon the scaffold.

The life of Catherine was doubtless shortened by dissipation; but the atmosphere of slander and ill-will with which she was surrounded, preyed upon her mind, and probably increased those intemperate habits which proved so fatal both to her reputation and her life. The rise of Prince Mentschikoff from the streets to be the most powerful man in the empire; the insolence of his behaviour to the old aristocracy; the story of his former connexion with the empress, and his present position near her person—all contributed to aggravate the malice of the discontented, and to give greater bitterness and point to their sarcasms. During the life of Peter, Catherine exhibited many virtues; but her character, exalted by her connection with him, seemed to lose strength when he was removed from her. It has been correctly said, that the latter period of her short reign discovered not only the abandonment of that admirable line of conduct which had secured to her the attachment of the nation, but the adoption of habits which, if death had not removed her from the throne, must have ultimately rendered her unfit to sustain the imperial duties. It is probable that, had she continued much longer to preside over the affairs of the empire, she would have committed herself to such acts of impropriety as would have finally led to her dethronement.

Catherine expired on the 17th of May, 1727, a little more than two years after her accession to the throne, and about the thirty-ninth year of her age. Her death is usually, and most likely correctly, attributed to a cancer and a dropsy, induced by her irregularities. Suspicious rumours, however, prevailed concerning the cause of her demise, which some writers attribute to poison. It is commonly supposed that the diseases brought on by her intemperate habits, in conjunction with her eccentric custom of passing whole nights in the open air, either walking or riding in sledges, produced the fatal result.

In person, the empress was below the average height of women. She was delicate and graceful in youth, but became rather corpulent as she advanced in life. With

so free with him, would change their note, as at that prince's court he should find greater friends than was imagined. At this the envoy had the curiosity to question the person who pretended to such interest at court; and on his vague answers, viewing him more attentively, he thought that in many of his features, he discerned some resemblance to the empress. Arriving at Dresden, he could not forbear writing to a friend of his at St. Petersburg, about this adventure. The letter was shown to the czar, who sent instructions to Prince Repnin, governor of Riga, to make an inquiry after the man mentioned in the letter; and by the diligence of a person whom the prince dispatched to Mittau in Courland, he was found out. His name, he said, was Charles Scavronski; he was son to a Lithuanian gentleman who had been killed in the Polish wars, leaving two children in the cradle, a boy and a girl; both had no education but from nature, being destitute of every thing. Scavronski having been separated from his sister in their childhood, all he knew of her was, that she had been taken at Marienburg in 1704, and he believed her still to be with Prince Mentschikoff, in whose family he imagined she might have mended her condition. Prince Repnin, according to express orders from his master, had Scavronski brought to Riga under pretence of some state crime; and a kind of charge being drawn up against him, he was sent under a strong guard to St. Petersburg, but with directions that he should be well used on the road. At St. Petersburg, he was immediately carried to a steward of the czar's, named Shepleff, who being instructed in the part he was to act drew from this man several particulars relating to his condition, after which he told him, that the charge sent against him from Riga was of a very serious nature, but that he should have fair play; that his best way would be to present to his majesty a petition, which should be drawn up in his name, and that ways and means should be found out for him to deliver it himself. The next day the czar dining with Shepleff, as had been concerted, Scavronski was brought before him: his answers to the czar's questions being perfectly natural and consistent, Peter was fully convinced of his being the very brother of the czarina. In their childhood they had both been in Livonia; all Scavronski's answers to the czar's questions perfectly coincided with what his spouse had told him about her birth, and the early misfortunes of her life. The czar having now no longer any doubt about Scavronski, proposed to his spouse the day following to go and dine at Mr. Shepleff's: after dinner, he ordered Scavronski to be brought in; he appeared in the same clothes which he had worn in his journey, it being the czar's order that he should not be seen in any other garb than that to which his misfortunes had habituated him. He again questioned him before his consort, and according to the manuscript, on finishing his question, he said these very words:—'This man is thy brother; come Charles, kiss the empress's hand, and embrace thy sister.' The author of this account adds, that the empress fainted, and that on her recovery the czar said to her, 'There is nothing in this that is in the least mysterious. This gentleman is my brother-in-law: if he has merit, we will make something of him; if not, we must leave him as he is.'"

dark eyes, she possessed a fair complexion and light hair, which she had the bad taste to dye black. It is asserted that she could neither read nor write, and that Count Ostermann signed her name to all the despatches. Her natural abilities did not rise much above the average of those of women generally; but in her connection with Peter, she exhibited much of that fidelity, self-denial, and personal fearlessness which ever mingles largely with the heroic. Her influence over the czar arose from a source purely womanly; it was the soft charm of sweetness of temper, not the proud spell of mental power. Men of such laborious habits as Peter, and whose minds are almost always stretched upon the rack of excitement, usually love those women in whose society they can find repose. Stern as they may be to the world, yet, in the brief placid hours they yield to domestic life, they also perhaps inwardly murmur, "Blessed is the woman who consoles." This was the part of Catherine; to cheer the great man in those gloomy hours when his strong nature yielded to sadness, or, almost overwhelmed with difficulties, staggered with uncertain steps near the sharp precipice of despair. When enclosed within living walls on the banks of the Pruth; when tortured by the mental blindness and ingratitude of a son whom he sought in vain to convert into a worthy successor; or racked by an agonising disease which wrung groans from his iron frame—the czar ever found Catherine at hand to speak those soothing words, render those tender courtesies, which tranquillise and console. It was to this, and not to strength of intellect or quickness of imagination, that she owed the affection borne to her by her illustrious husband. Motraye observed—"She had in some sort the government of all the czar's passions; and even saved the lives of a great many more persons than Lefort was able to do. She inspired him with that humanity which, in the opinion of his subjects, nature seemed to have denied him. A word from her mouth in favour of a wretch just going to be sacrificed to his anger, would disarm him; but if he was fully resolved to satisfy that passion, he would give orders for the execution when she was absent, for fear she should plead for the victim." The celebrated Munich also declared, that "she was the mediatrix between the monarch and his subjects."

It is much to be regretted that the later incidents of the career of Catherine should sully the period of her life which had been passed without reproach. The irregularities of her early life it requires no great exercise of charity to pardon, but those of her later days do not admit of apology. "The power of early habits," says a writer to whom we have been much indebted, "unless it be restrained by strong motives, or curbed by the presence of overruling authority, extends to the last moments of life, even should it have been suppressed during a long interval of years. Such seems to have been the case with the empress Catherine; nor shall we find, upon a close analysis of her history, that she was exactly placed in a situation to discourage the lurking propensities of the class from which she sprung, until a very short period before her death. Her connection with Peter, if not actually ambiguous, was at least private, and graced by none of the privileges of the nominal eminence to which it apparently elevated her. Her coronation invested her, for the first time, with authority; previously to that event she was the chamber confidant of the czar, the creature of his will, and the nurse of his distempers. It is true that he married her privately; but, unlike Madame Maintenon, she could not confer upon that secret union those ennobling embellishments of feeling and of intellect that would have rendered it respectable. The blemishes of her private life, worse than the blemish on her birth, could never be obliterated. It cannot, therefore, excite much wonder that, when she came at last into the possession of unbounded authority, released from the surveillance of a rigid sovereign, and left to the free play of her natural tendencies, she should have terminated her course in a way consistent with the spirit of its opening."

Catherine, by will, bequeathed the throne to the grandson of her late husband, and son of the bigoted and unfortunate Alexis. Thus, in the year 1727, Peter Alexievitch, then in the eleventh year of his age, became, both by hereditary right and the will of the late sovereign, emperor of Russia under the title of Peter II. By the will of Catherine, the young czar was placed under the guardianship of the princesses Anne and Elizabeth, the Duke of Holstein, and certain members of the council, until he should attain his sixteenth year. The will had evidently been drawn up either by, or under the dictation of, Mentschikoff, for he was appointed president of the council of

regency; and it also provided that the young emperor, when of proper age, should be united to his daughter. The commission of regency soon became powerless and inoperative; no member dared to vote except as Mentschikoff desired, and he continued to sway the almost absolute power he had held during the life of Catherine.

Prince Mentschikoff paid great court to the young emperor, and adopted a parental tone towards him, labouring earnestly at the same time to obtain an absolute ascendancy over the boy-czar. By this means he embittered still further the jealous feelings entertained towards him by those nobles of high birth whom he kept at a distance from the person of their sovereign. Many of these had long looked with anxiety for his fall; and several incidents now combined to promote it. Indeed, a secret cabal of some of the most distinguished persons at court was formed against him, and his eventual ruin became almost a matter of certainty. They placed about the person of the emperor a youth named Ivan Dolgoruki, a member of one of the most ancient families in Russia. This lad, as it was anticipated, obtained the confidence of Peter, and, in hours of familiarity, poured into his ear those feelings of bitterness against Mentschikoff which the old aristocratic party entertained. Young Dolgoruki represented that the low-born adventurer usurped an authority which it was neither becoming nor safe for him to possess; that he kept the sovereign in a state of vassalage; and that both the nobles and people expected the emperor would release himself from an authority which degraded him and injured the state. These arguments were the more effective from the fact that Peter had taken a dislike to his proposed bride, Maria Mentschikoff, and sought to be released from her by any means that offered. Every action of the hated president was watched, and he was soon detected in appropriating to himself a considerable sum of money which Peter had sent as a present to one of his relatives. He unexpectedly taxed Mentschikoff with this offence, and observing the confusion of the minister, angrily ordered him from his presence. A sentence of confiscation and banishment was immediately pronounced against the arrogant and grasping statesman. His enormous wealth, accumulated by corruption and oppression, and consisting of 9,000,000 roubles in bank notes and obligations, 1,000,000 in cash, 105 lbs. of gold utensils, 420 lbs. of silver plate, and precious stones to the value of about 1,000,000, besides his estates, his palace, and his costly furniture, were all seized for the advantage of the imperial treasury. He himself, together with his family, including even the betrothed wife of the young emperor, were compelled to leave Russia in September, 1727, for Beresof, in Siberia. The miserable statesman bore his merited punishment with fortitude, and died two years afterwards, poor and forlorn, in his place of exile.

The young emperor only got rid of one faction to fall beneath the influence of another. The Dolgoruki family now grasped the principal authority of the state, and even contrived to engage the affection of Peter to Catherine, a young lady of that house, to whom he was soon afterwards publicly affianced. It is probable that this attachment hastened the ruin of Prince Mentschikoff; for it was arranged that the coronation should take place early in the following year to that in which he departed for the wastes of Siberia.

The education of Peter had been entrusted to the able Count Ostermann, of whose talents and integrity the illustrious grandfather of the young sovereign had, while on his death-bed, expressed so high an opinion. The count laboured to discharge his high responsibility with that zeal and wisdom which usually characterised him. He led the young sovereign through a course of instruction, consisting chiefly of history, political codes, the rights of magistrates, the relations existing between the ruler and the ruled, international obligations, and military art.

But from these studies Peter was decoyed by the members of the Dolgoruki family, who did not desire him to become personally either very accomplished or powerful. They sought to save him the labour of thinking for himself, by preventing him from acquiring the power of doing so. It was their intention so to train him, that he should lean upon them for support, and that they should transact the affairs of state. With this object they lured him into excesses, especially with regard to the sports of the field, to which he was greatly attached. To such an extent did they induce him to indulge in these exhausting pastimes, that his strength began to sink beneath the fatigues he encountered. In

this condition Peter was attacked by the small-pox, which made hasty ravages in his enfeebled frame, and terminated his life on the 29th of January, 1730.

We are inclined to believe that his death was a fortunate event for Russia. The Dolgoruki belonged to the old nobility, and were prejudiced against the reforms of Peter the Great. Though it is impossible to say, with absolute certainty, what course the czar would have taken, yet the future of this young monarch, had his life been prolonged, may be inferred. The Dolgoruki had obtained his confidence, and he was continually subject to their influence. They still resided at Moscow; and the czar had already expressed an intention of restoring to that city the distinction arising from the imperial residence. This would have been materially to injure the prospects of St. Petersburg, and to retard the progress of the empire. From this incident, it is to be feared that the errors of the father might have reappeared in the son; and Peter, like Alexis, have striven to overthrow the reforms of their distinguished progenitor. This was no improbable apprehension; though, on the other hand, the young emperor might perhaps, in maturer years, have thrown off the debilitating tutelage to which he was subjected, and been aroused to a just appreciation and a worthy imitation of the virtues of his grandfather. The death of Peter II. was, notwithstanding, much regretted in Russia; and doubtless the more so, from the fact that he was the last male representative of the line of Romanoff.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ANNA, DUCHESS OF COURLAND, BECOMES EMPRESS; CONDITIONS EXACTED FROM HER; SHE ANNULS THEM; SHE CONFIDES GREAT POWER TO HER FAVOURITE BIREN; RUSSIA PLACES HER CHOSEN CANDIDATE ON THE THRONE OF POLAND DESPITE THE OPPOSITION OF FRANCE; JEALOUSY AND INTRIGUES OF THE LATTER POWER; RUSSIA, IN CONJUNCTION WITH AUSTRIA, WAGES A PROFITLESS WAR AGAINST TURKEY; AUSTRIA MAKES A PRIVATE AND DISHONOURABLE PEACE WITH THE SULTAN; RUSSIA ALSO MAKES PEACE WITH TURKEY; COURT OF THE EMPRESS; SAVAGE AND CAPRICIOUS DESPOTISM OF BIREN; DEATH OF THE EMPRESS ANNA.

Russia was again agitated by the question —"Who should wield the sceptre of the empire?" The Dolgoruki family made a vain and foolish attempt to secure the imperial crown for Catherine, the young lady of their own family, who had been affianced to the late emperor. One of them forged a document, which he pretended to be a will of Peter II., wherein Catherine was named as the successor. With this spurious instrument in one hand, and a drawn sword in the other, the shallow schemer rushed into the hall where the senators were assembled, and shouted, "Long live the empress Dolgoruki!" As he observed nothing but looks of cold and stern reproof upon the faces of those present, he abandoned his fraudulent design, and withdrew the forged will. This baffled attempt, however, eventually brought a heavy penalty upon himself and his family.

The Russian nobles and counsellors resolved to be guided, in the matter of succession, by the will of the empress Catherine I. By this it was arranged, that if Peter II. should die without heirs, Anne, Duchess of Holstein (eldest daughter of Peter the Great), and her heirs should succeed, or, on failure of them, the Princess Elizabeth, second daughter of Peter and Catherine. Anne had died two years before in Germany, where she and her husband had retired in consequence of the persecutions to which they were subjected by Mentschikoff. Though Anne had left a young prince, yet as he was a foreigner on the father's side, and the council entertained a great aversion to the introduction of foreigners into the state, they decided that his claim should not be even taken into consideration. As to the Princess Elizabeth, she had no desire to ascend the throne; and notwithstanding some entreaties to that effect, she declined the

sceptre, preferring to resign herself to a private life, in which indolence, sensuality, and piety were incongruously mingled.

It was therefore necessary for the council to look in some other direction in this search for an imperial sovereign. There were other female members of the Romanoff family yet living. The feeble and imbecile Ivan, who during his short life shared the throne with his subsequently illustrious brother, Peter I., had left three daughters. Catherine, the eldest, had been married to, and afterwards separated from, the turbulent Duke of Mecklenburg; the second, Anna, Duchess of Courland, was a widow, residing at Mittau; while the third was unmarried, and had made St. Petersburg her home. Of these three princesses, the council resolved to offer the throne to the second, Anna of Courland. This council was a body established by Catherine, with the assumed object of offering advice to the sovereign; but it soon proved itself to be both intriguing and despotic. Its members now hoped to obtain an empress who should be their instrument, and permit them to enjoy, in fact, the power which they intended her to possess only in name. With this object they drew up the following conditions, which, if carried into operation, would have materially diminished the imperial power; and, in fact, changed it from an absolute into a limited, and, in some respects, constitutional monarchy:—"That the empress should govern solely by the resolves of the high privy council; that she was not, of herself, to declare war or to conclude peace; that she should not, of her own authority, impose any new tax upon the people; that she should not dispose of any important office, or inflict capital punishment on any nobleman, or confiscate his estates, unless he had been previously convicted of the crime laid to his charge; that she should not alienate any lands belonging to the crown; and that she should not marry, or nominate an heir, without first obtaining the consent of the council." Another stipulation was added, to the effect that her chamberlain and favourite, Ernest Von Biren, should not accompany her into Russia.

These conditions were not intended to soften the rigour of the government with respect to the people, but merely to convert an unlimited monarchy to an irresponsible oligarchy. This aim was soon understood by the great body of the nobles who did not form a part of the council of seven. They saw, also, that the Dolgoruki had the chief voice in the council, and they resolved not to permit their interests, and those of the empire, to be sacrificed to a family compact. A rapid reaction took place, in which the army and the people sided with the nobles against the restrictive conditions; and declared that they would rather have one master than seven. The Princess Anna, however, accepted the conditions; for General Yagujinski had sent a secret message to her, advising her to do so, and assuring her that means would soon be found for having them annulled.

Anna speedily arrived at Moscow, bringing with her her obnoxious favourite, Biren; by which circumstance she broke the conditions on the very moment of her appearance. Had the council been strong enough to insist on the instant expulsion of the low-born adventurer, and either to dismiss or awe the guards who were opposed to their views, they might, at least for a time, have exercised the imperial power. But, as they were unable to do this, their overwhelming influence, and consequently that of the Dolgoruki, was doomed. The downfall of the usurping oligarchy was a rapid one. Scarcely had Anna passed through the ceremony of coronation, before a petition, signed by several hundred noblemen, was presented to her, entreating her to abolish the restrictions placed upon her authority by the council, and to assume the unlimited power that had been exercised by her predecessors. The empress understood the proceeding, and called an assembly of the deputies and representatives of the nobles and the army. Presenting herself before them, she caused the conditions to be read, and then desired to know whether they were in accordance with their desires. The great majority of those present responded in the negative, and demanded the restoration of the old form of government. Anna expressed great surprise that the conditions forced upon her were so opposed to the wishes of the Russian people; and taking the objectionable document, she tore it to pieces before the assembly, saying, "Then there is no further need of this paper." Shortly afterwards a proclamation was issued, which declared that the empress ascended the throne not by election but by hereditary right, and exacted an oath of allegiance to her as unlimited sovereign.

The first use the empress made of her

unfettered authority was to abuse it, by raising her unworthy favourite, Biren, to the post of grand chamberlain, and confiding to his hands the chief power of the state. This man was the grandson of a groom; but having contrived to ingratiate himself with Anna's master of the household when she was Duchess of Courland, he obtained a position near her person. His handsome figure and polite address attracted her attention, and she made him her secretary and chief favourite. Biren soon acquired an unbounded influence over her mind, and became, in fact, an absolute tyrant to his mistress.

Anna abolished the council of seven, and resigned herself to the directions of a cabinet composed of Biren, Count Ostermann, and General Munich. Ostermann was the presumed head of this cabinet; and Munich, a soldier of great ability, was appointed generalissimo of the army. The favourite behaved with courtesy to these two able men; for he was aware that his own abilities were not of a character to enable him successfully to direct the affairs of a great empire. The latent ambition, insolence, and cruelty of this man's nature, were not yet fully developed: for a time he acted with discretion; and the first three years of the new reign were regarded as those of a mild sovereign, who justly enjoyed the attachment of her people. Anna admired the wisdom of Peter the Great, and desired, as far as her capacity permitted her, to follow in his footsteps. In this temper she encouraged the military reforms of Marshal Munich, who completely remodelled the army; and, amongst other valuable alterations, placed the emoluments of Russian officers on an equality with those of foreigners, which had hitherto been double, and thus proved an incessant source of enmity and discontent. He established a corps of engineers, which, until that time, was unknown in Russia; and founded a military institution for the instruction of cadets of noble families, with a view to the formation of a body of able commanders.

Poland was still convulsed by the struggles of rival candidates for the throne; and these were of a kind that threatened not only to disturb the peace of Russia, but that of France and Sweden also. The Russian cabinet still maintained the cause of Augustus, the elector of Saxony, whom Peter the Great had placed upon the throne of Poland, which France desired to see in the possession of Stanislaus Leczinski, the father-in-law of Louis XV. But the influence of Russia over Poland was greater than that of France, and Stanislaus was compelled to fly the country and abandon the throne to his more fortunate rival. This circumstance excited a sense of irritation on the part of France against Russia; added to which, she had other cogent reasons for desiring to restrain the still increasing power of that empire. France had long desired to place on the throne of Poland a monarch who should be the instrument of her will; and, although hitherto baffled, she yet trusted ultimately to accomplish her design. Besides, the French government were jealous of the rise of so powerful an empire as Russia, which threatened to surmount and destroy the influence they had hitherto exercised over a considerable part of Europe. Actuated by these motives, France stirred up Sweden—yet bleeding from her recent wounds—against Russia, to which the people of that despoiled and humiliated country entertained emotions of the bitterest hatred. So successful were the diplomatic arts of the French court, that Russia was compelled vigilantly to watch the movements of a dangerous neighbour.

Frederic Augustus died in the February of 1733, after a reign which had been one prolonged scene of misery to the Polish people. The philosophical Stanislaus, then residing at the peaceful court of Lorraine, was reluctantly induced by the French court to proceed to Warsaw, where he was received with acclamation; while in the diet of election, 60,000 voices pronounced him king of Poland. But Russia, backed by the power of Austria, declared in favour of the son of the late king, and arbitrarily interfered to displace a sovereign who was the choice of the majority of his people. A Russian army, consisting of 50,000 men under the command of Marshal Munich, entered Poland; and, under their protection, a party of nobles, opposed to the French interest, proclaimed Frederic Augustus II. as their king. Frederic shortly afterwards entered Cracow in triumph, where he and his queen were crowned. Stanislaus was driven forth as a fugitive, and pursued by the Russian troops to Dantzic, in which town the bravery of the inhabitants enabled him to stand a siege of five months. He relied upon receiving aid from France; but when it arrived, it was too small to render any material service.

The city was at length compelled to capitulate; and then the dethroned Stanislaus stole away in disguise, and after many surprising adventures and escapes, contrived to reach the Prussian territories. The phlegmatic and incapable Frederic Augustus gave himself up entirely to his favourite occupations of smoking and hunting, and scarcely bestowed a thought upon the miserable people whose welfare had been committed to his charge. France was baffled, and Russia triumphant. The empress Anna also received a private gratification, the obtainment of which had been her chief motive for interfering so capriciously in the internal arrangements of another nation. In consequence of the influence thus gained, her favourite, Biren, was shortly afterwards chosen Duke of Courland by the nobles of that duchy; and thus he acquired a distinction which the wealthy and able Mentschikoff had sought for in vain.

The territories which Peter the Great obtained by treaty from Persia, had been found to be a burden rather than an acquisition. The Russian government discovered that it was quite possible to be embarrassed by an extension of the empire in an unprofitable direction. Peter, in his desire to possess, had for once overlooked the necessity of ascertaining whether the new provinces were likely to produce advantages in the way of revenue, or to add strength to the frontiers. To retain the possession of them, it was necessary to keep a considerable garrison in the interior, even in times of peace. These were exposed to frequent attacks and desultory warfare; and the climate was so injurious to the Russians, that they lost, in a few years, no less than 130,000 men. Such a drain as this began to be seriously felt; and Anna wisely resolved on relinquishing her Persian dependencies to the shah on the best terms she could get for them. She therefore opened a negotiation, and proposed to restore the ceded provinces, on condition that the Persian monarch would conclude a commercial treaty of an advantageous kind to the Russians. The offer was accepted; and, in 1735, Anna formally surrendered her Persian territories to the shah. At the same time, the two countries entered into a defensive treaty; Russia being induced to propose this, because she was about to commence a new war with the Turks. Peter I. had himself contemplated such a war, with the object of effacing the disgrace he had sustained at the Pruth, and of recovering the valuable territory he had been compelled to sacrifice on that occasion. The czar had been further irritated by the haughty refusal of the Porte to acknowledge the imperial title which his people had conferred upon him. As a necessary preparation for his hostile design, he had fortified the Russian frontiers in the direction of Turkey; but his death arrested the execution of his project, which was entirely laid aside by his successors, Catherine and Peter II.

The empress Anna had many inducements to attempt to carry into execution the design of her illustrious predecessor. The Tartars of the Crimea, who were under the protection of the Turks, had for some time made many predatory inroads upon the Russian territory; the loss of Azoff, and the destruction of the fortifications at Taganrog, had the effect of destroying the Russian trade on the Black Sea; the insolence of the Ottoman government also rankled in the minds of the Russian authorities; and, most important with the empress, Biren was anxious for the war. His desire for it has, by some writers, been attributed to a wish to preserve the Russian army in the high state of discipline to which it had been brought; but the suggestion, that it rather arose from a jealousy he entertained towards Marshal Munich, and a hope to send him to a distance, is far more probable.

Anna was further encouraged to hope for success in her intended hostilities against Turkey, in consequence of the treaty of alliance existing between Russia and Austria, by which either nation was to assist the other with 30,000 men against any foe. The first step of the empress was to remonstrate with the sultan on the subject of the ravages made by the Tartars, and to demand satisfaction. As was anticipated, the sultan declined to interfere, and excused himself from doing so on the pretence, that although the Tartars were under his protection, yet that it was impossible to keep these predatory people under the desired restraint. This was what was desired, because, as the sultan refused satisfaction, the Russians had a pretext for endeavouring to obtain it for themselves.

Before the year 1735 had expired, a Russian army marched into the Crimea, where they overran a part of the country, and slew a great number of the Tartars. Their success led them to penetrate further than

was prudent; where, from want of provisions and incessant attacks, they experienced a loss of 10,000 men, and were compelled to retire.

Notwithstanding this reverse, Marshal Munich, at the head of a powerful army, scoured the Ukraine, and entered the Crimea in the following year (1736), with a free commission to retaliate upon the Tartars. The latter, unable to compete with the now disciplined Russians in the open field, fled before them, and took refuge behind some formidable intrenchments they had erected, and which extended from the Sea of Azoff to the Euxine. As these lines had been raised to protect the Crimea from any attack on the land side, and were strongly fortified with cannon, the Tartars regarded them as impregnable. This illusion was soon dispelled. The impetuosity of the Russian troops enabled them to burst through the intrenchments, and to slay or scatter the hordes that defended them. But a short time elapsed before a great part of the Crimea was in the hands of the victors. The Russians could not retain what they had seized so rapidly. The Tartars, as they fled, devastated the country they passed through, and the Russians again began to feel the difficulty of obtaining provisions. Marshal Munich, therefore, found it necessary to return to the Ukraine, where he took up his winter quarters.

During the expedition of Munich to the Crimea, General Lascy had proceeded with another army against Azoff, to which he laid siege, and reduced to submission on the 1st of July. The Porte was roused from a contemptuous apathy, and compelled to employ some measures to arrest the progress of the Russian arms. Not desirous of entering on a war with a powerful enemy, the sultan endeavoured to enlist the mediation of Austria for the restoration of peace. Russia, however, was not disposed to listen to pacific overtures, and therefore demanded the fulfilment of the treaty existing between her and Austria, by which the latter power was bound to furnish 30,000 men to fight against the Turks. Austria was unwilling to supply a contingent which would have the effect of enabling Russia to extend its conquests without the production of any advantages to herself. She therefore decided on making war on the Turks, in alliance with Russia; as a result of which arrangement, any conquests would have to be divided between the victors.

Though such a formidable alliance necessarily imperilled the safety of Turkey, the sultan felt that it must be resolutely encountered for the maintenance of the honour of the Ottoman empire. He therefore raised new levies, put his army on a war footing, and equipped a fleet for the protection of the Black Sea.

The Russian and Austrian forces entered on their campaign against Turkey in the year 1737, but the efficiency of it was marred by the jealousies and dissensions existing between the respective commanders and officers of these novel allies. The Russian army was divided into two portions, one of which, under the command of General Lascy, again penetrated into and desolated a portion of the Crimea. The other was led by Marshal Munich, who carried his aversion to the Austrians to such a dangerous extreme, that he stood almost aloof from active proceedings; and, although Russia lost about 50,000 soldiers during this campaign, yet all that she obtained in recompense was the fortress of Otchakoff, on the Black Sea. The condition of the Austrian army was worse; for, besides encountering severe losses, it scarcely escaped untouched by disgrace. The Turks poured out their strength against the German army, broke through its ranks on several occasions, and obtained many advantages.

Some attempts were made to bring about a peace; but the Turks, encouraged by the results of the campaign of 1737, took so high a tone, that the war was resumed, though with very little animation on the part of Austria. During 1738, Marshal Munich seemed anxious to redeem his reputation; but, with the exception of some vigorous marches through the territories of the Tartars, he effected nothing of any importance. General Lascy was not more fortunate in the Crimea, where he found the country desolated in every direction as he approached; and his troops suffered from a terrible mortality, which thinned their ranks with a far greater rapidity than the swords of the enemy could have done, and at length compelled them to retire.

The campaign of 1739 opened more favourably for the Russians. Marshal Munich, with a larger army than before, penetrated into Moldavia, where he engaged and entirely defeated an army of Turks and Tartars, capturing forty pieces of cannon, and the whole camp of the enemy. The fortress of Khotzim surrendered on the approach of

the Russians, who also made themselves masters of Jassy, the capital of Moldavia, the whole of which territory was awed by the terror of their arms. Returning into Bessarabia, Munich then prepared for a descent upon Bender, when his further progress was arrested by the intense disgust he experienced on learning that Austria had concluded a separate peace with the Turks, and dishonourably left Russia to carry on the war alone.

Jealous of the triumphs reaped by their rivals, and suffering from a contagious disease, which tended greatly to paralyse their activity, the Austrian troops were heartily tired of the war. At the same time the emperor, Charles VI., was suffering from a dangerous illness; and his daughter, shrinking with apprehension from the future, was anxious by any means to make peace with Turkey. Proposals were therefore made by Austria, which the sultan was glad to accept, and a treaty of peace between them was hurriedly drawn up, and signed at Belgrade on the 1st of September, 1739. By this disgraceful treaty, Austria escaped from all further responsibility in the war; but she purchased peace at a price which, but a short time before, would have been regarded as incredible. Austria restored to Turkey Belgrade, Shabatz, the whole of Servia, a portion of Bosnia, and Austrian Wallachia. It has been remarked, that "the infatuation which tempted Austria into this step, can be referred only to her jealousy of Russian aggrandisement. She desired, above all things, to embarrass that power, whose ambition, stretching to all points, appeared to be boundless. Had she, however, preserved her good faith with Russia, she might have shared in the spoils which she feared her growing rival would monopolise, and partitioned with the empress the fields of their mutual victories. But it was fortunate, perhaps, that the jealousies of the Austrian army, and the timidity of the court, led to this unexpected result; for, had the combining powers prosecuted their design with unanimity, they might have ultimately established a league subversive of the repose and independence of the rest of Europe."

Russia did not feel inclined to carry on the war alone against the formidable power of the Porte, the more especially as she feared that while her armies were engaged with Turkey, she might be exposed to an attack from Sweden, which was secretly urged to that course by the French court; Russia therefore followed the example of Austria, and that, too, with such promptness, that by the 18th of September, she too had concluded a peace with Turkey. Though the conditions of this treaty involved some sacrifices on both sides, yet, as a whole, they were highly favourable to the sultan. Azoff and the territory surrounding it, together with Kabardia, were to be abandoned, and remain uncultivated, as a neutral boundary between the two empires. It was settled that Russia should be allowed to erect a fortress on the Don, and Turkey another in the Kuban. The Russians also surrendered some minor conquests, and consented to the exclusion of their fleets from the Palus Mæotis and the Black Sea; and to the irritating condition that all their commerce in the latter should be carried on in Turkish ships. Such was the abrupt and disastrous termination of a war which had cost the Russian empire upwards of 100,000 men, and an enormous expenditure of money. All that Russia gained was an increase of reputation for her troops, who, under the improved discipline to which they had been subjected by Marshal Munich, had become both efficient in attack and enduring in suffering. The Turkish government supposed the Russian soldiers had degenerated during the interval of peace that had elapsed since the death of Peter I.; but they now admitted that the Russians were not baffled by the superior courage or skill of the Turkish troops, but by excessive fatigues, want of provisions, and exposure to a climate altogether unsuited to them.

The restoration of peace enabled the empress to pay more attention to those internal reforms, in the carrying out of which she strove to imitate the example of Peter the Great. The canal from the Lake of Ladoga, designed to facilitate the transport of provisions to St. Petersburg, was finished in the year 1738. Anna also dispatched an expedition from Kamschatka towards the north, with the object of discovering whether Siberia was connected with North America. She attracted to Russia great numbers of artisans, who were skilful in such trades and arts as her people were most ignorant of. She also entered into a commercial treaty with England, with the object of furthering this view; and by obtaining the submission of the Kirghises, a wandering tribe on the borders of China,

extended her commercial intercourse with that ancient empire.

The empress, during her residence in Courland, had imbibed tastes of a character more refined than those which prevailed at the yet uncouth Russian court. The social improvement introduced by Peter, though not of a very exalted kind, had not altogether superseded the barbarous old customs. Drunkenness, even amongst the highest aristocracy, including the female members of it, was still not unfrequent, and the revels of the palace frequently degenerated into coarse and offensive orgies. Indeed, traces of the grossest barbarism continually mingled with the greatest splendour and the most immeasurable extravagance. Anna was greatly averse to this vulgar rioting; and with the natural emulation of a woman in matters of ceremonial observance, she entertained the ambition of making her court the most brilliant in Europe. By fostering music, dancing, the courtesies inseparable from intellectual intercourse, and the tranquil pleasures of social life, she diffused a somewhat softer tone of society around her, and contrived to curb the boisterous and licentious amusements in which the Russian nobles had hitherto indulged. Yet social improvement is necessarily a matter of slow growth; it cannot be raised suddenly; and it is not until past barbarism slowly perishes and moulders away, that the gracefulness of refined manners, and that high tone of courtesy and honourable feeling which prevails in the best society, can effectually take its place. This it requires the lapse of more than one generation to accomplish; and therefore it is not surprising that it should have been said, that the empress only succeeded in gathering around her an incongruous display of profusion without elegance, finery without taste, and pomp sometimes without even personal cleanliness. Gross gluttony and drunkenness disappeared from her court; but dissipation of every other kind, ruinous gambling, and uncouth extravagance, supplied their places, and rioted without any check except that which nature ever lays on vice.

Even the empress Anna herself was deficient in that refinement of mind which is almost invariably exhibited by ladies occupying positions of exalted rank in these days. A sense of humanity is the basis of the highest courtesy; and the empress, during the latter part of her reign, sufficiently showed that she was not influenced by any active emotions of benevolence. This was sometimes even perceptible in her amusements. She preserved the ancient custom of keeping buffoons, and had six attached to her household. Some of these were men of high rank, who were condemned to the exercise of a feigned mirth and folly, as the expiation of some real or presumed offence. If these victims of a capricious tyranny, overcome by some recollection of their past dignity, refused to perform the fooleries that were required of them, they were sometimes severely beaten, with the object of stimulating their wit, and dispelling their melancholy or unwillingness.

Prince Galitzin, for having changed his religion, was punished by being deprived of his rank, and reduced to the position of a buffoon. In his case, the degradation was made the more bitter by the coarse and eccentric cruelty with which it was accompanied. As he had lost his wife, the empress commanded him to be married to a girl of the lowest birth; and herself sanctioned, if she did not devise, the extravagances attending the wedding. Though it took place in a winter of more than customary severity, yet a house, built entirely of ice, was prepared for the reception of the married couple. The furniture, even to the nuptial bedstead, was composed of the same frozen material. Four cannons and two mortars of ice were also placed in front of the house, and fired several times without bursting. The governors of all the provinces in the empire were commanded to send some persons of both sexes, chosen from all the nations subject to Russia, and dressed in the costume of their respective countries. The procession, consisting of more than 300 persons, passed before the imperial palace, and through the principal streets of the city. The unfortunate prince and his bride were placed in a great cage on the back of an elephant. Some of the guests were mounted on camels, while others were drawn in sledges by reindeer, dogs, oxen, goats, pigs, and other animals. At the dinner which had been prepared for the guests, each of them were treated to their food cooked in the manner which prevailed in their own country. A ball followed, at which the representatives of each nation had their own music and their own style of dancing. All this practical joking, though low and foolish, need not excite censure, if the object of the merriment had not been to heap degradation on a victim of intolerant and unjust legislation. But the conclusion of this proceeding was both offensive and cruel. The degraded prince and his bride were conducted to the ice-house, and with derisive ceremoniousness shown to the frozen bed; and in this dismal place they were compelled to pass the night, though their lives might have paid the penalty of exposure to so much cold in such a climate. It was also during the reign of this princess, who has been commended for her gentleness, that a Russian nobleman who had embraced Judaism, was burnt at the stake with a gag in his mouth, along with the wretched Jew who had been the means of his conversion.

Indeed, the latter part of the reign of the empress Anna was a period of terror, in consequence of the savage and furious despotism which she permitted her favourite, Biren, to exercise. Such was his influence over the empress, that it is affirmed, that though she often fell on her knees before him in the hope of moving him to clemency, yet that both her entreaties and tears were alike unavailing. After the first three years of Anna's reign, the dictatorial temper of this low and bad man broke out into the excesses to which he afterwards gave himself up without restraint. So vindictive was he, and to such an extreme was his tyranny carried, that it diffused terror throughout the empire. On the disgrace of the Dolgoruki family, they were banished; but the bitter hate of Biren pursued them even in the sad loneliness of their exile. To satisfy his revengeful nature they were recalled, and then accused of forging the pretended will (to which we have already alluded) of Peter I., in favour of Catherine Dolgoruki; and also of a conspiracy, with the object of placing the Princess Elizabeth, daughter of the last-named monarch, on the throne. Being found guilty, some of the family were beheaded, and two unhappy members of it broken upon the wheel. Biren brooked no opposition, and regarded it as an unforgivable offence. In the year 1740, a cabinet minister named Boluinski, ventured, at a council in which Biren took the part of the Poles, to observe sarcastically, that as he was not a vassal of Poland, he did not think himself obliged to defend the cause of the enemies of Russia. Biren felt that this remark was directed against him, as holding from Poland the fief of Courland, the dukedom of which his mistress had procured for him. In retaliation he brought a number of petty charges against Boluinski, one of which was, that he had dared to present a Russian translation of Machiavelli's *Prince* to the empress. Such was the influence of Biren, that he procured the record of a sentence of death against the minister. The empress justly refused to confirm the warrant for the execution, and burst into tears when it was repeatedly brought for her signature. Biren at length obtained it by a threat, that if it was longer withheld he would leave Russia for ever. The weak empress granted it with many tears, and the upright Boluinski perished on the scaffold.

By this exhibition of reckless vindictiveness, Biren crushed any opposition that might have been offered to him in the cabinet. Abandoning himself, therefore, to extravagance and tyranny, he became so grasping, and accumulated so much treasure in his own coffers, that the plundered revenues of the state were insufficient to support the requisite expenditure; and taxes were collected by the most violent means. Soldiers were directed, instead of receiving pay, to live at free quarters. Whole villages were laid waste; many were burned, and the inhabitants sent to Siberia. It is estimated that, during the period of Biren's authority, no less than 20,000 persons were driven into this species of exile. This came even to be regarded almost as a mild punishment: many unfortunate persons who incurred the anger of the savage favourite were punished with the knout; numbers had their tongues cut out; many perished beneath the axe of the executioner; and not a few were broken on the wheel. The number of persons put to death in consequence of the tyranny of this monster is computed at 11,000.

The empress was distressed at the perpetration of the cruelty which she was weak and wicked enough to permit to be transacted in her name. It is said that her conscience was wounded by the death, or rather murder, of Boluinski, whom she much respected, knew to be innocent, and yet sacrificed to the malice of the incarnate fiend who, through the instrumentality of a coarsely sensual affection, had obtained such a tyrannous influence over her. It is supposed that her remorse at the sacrifice of Boluinski was so acute, as to bring her to the grave. She died at St. Petersburg,

on the 29th of October, 1740, in the forty-seventh year of her age, and the tenth of her reign. Shortly before she expired she bequeathed the crown, by the advice of Biren, to the infant prince, Ivan, the grandson of her elder sister Catherine, and son of the Princess Anne and Ulric, Duke of Brunswick. The little prince had been born only in the August preceding, and Biren directed the dying empress to nominate him, instead of his mother, to the imperial crown, because he calculated that, under those circumstances, there must inevitably follow a long minority, during which, by the will of the empress, he was to act as regent and guardian of the prince; in case of whose death he might, perhaps, be enabled to mount the throne himself. This gorgeous day-dream, promising as it seemed, was not to be fulfilled; the long-silent but unresting spirit of retribution was at work; the clouds were gathering around the ferocious and insolent man who grasped the executive power of the empire, and the storm was ready to burst over his head.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

BIREN ASSUMES THE REGENCY DURING THE MINORITY OF IVAN; FALL OF BIREN, AND EXALTATION OF THE PRINCESS ANNE TO THE REGENCY; WAR WITH SWEDEN; CONSPIRACY TO RAISE THE PRINCESS ELIZABETH TO THE THRONE; OVERTHROW OF THE REGENT ANNE AND THE INFANT EMPEROR; ELIZABETH PROCLAIMED EMPRESS.

IVAN, the infant to whom the empress Anna had bequeathed the imperial sceptre, was but two months old. The ambitious Biren had attempted to prevent the marriage of the father and mother of this unfortunate babe—the Princess Anne and Ulric, Duke of Brunswick; but as he failed in this, his next object was to derive advantage from it, by persuading the empress to nominate the new-born Ivan as her successor, instead of his mother (the daughter of Anna's elder sister Catherine, and granddaughter of the imbecile Ivan, elder brother of Peter I.), through whom he derived such imperfect right as he possessed.

The father and mother were the natural protectors of the baby emperor, and should have been chosen to act together as a joint regency; but, as we have mentioned, the crafty Biren had induced his doting mistress, the late empress, to appoint him regent during the minority of Ivan. By the will of Anna it was further arranged, that if the young emperor died before attaining his seventeenth year, Biren should continue guardian to his brethren born after him, who should succeed him on the throne; but in the event of none of them surviving, then the regent, with the concurrence of the state, was to elect and confirm a new emperor, as unlimited monarch. This opened up a brilliant view to the ambitious Biren, who immediately assumed the title of "his highness, regent of the Russian empire;" laid his grasping hand upon the revenues of the state, and resolved to uphold, by the exercise of despotic cruelty, that dazzling position which he had acquired by fraud.

The Russian nobles and people were irritated at this assumption on the part of a foreigner; discontent became general, and a large party was formed against the tyrannical upstart. Biren endeavoured to awe his opponents into passive submission by an exhibition of the most savage and wanton cruelty. He had a legion of spies under his direction; and all who were detected in any act adverse to his government were exiled to Siberia, cast into dungeons, or tortured with the knout. Such was his vindictiveness, that he was dreaded as much as he was detested. But now that the protecting hand of the empress was removed, his ruin was even more rapid than could have been anticipated. A cabal was secretly formed against him, and Marshal Munich, whom he had offended, took the lead in it. Measures were concerted for the arrest of the regent, and he was seized in his house, during the night, by a detachment of the

guards. The following morning Anne was acknowledged by the senate as grand-duchess of Russia, and guardian of her son the infant emperor. Thus, within a month after the death of the empress Anna, Biren fell from power, and not a hand was raised in his defence. The wretch had made himself so detested, that scarcely a Russian existed who did not rejoice in his ruin. One of the conspirators observed, that the secret means by which the arrest was accomplished were quite unnecessary, for that Biren might just as safely have been publicly arrested in open day. Hurried from his bed to the castle of Schlusselburg as a prisoner, he was afterwards placed on his trial on the charges of having improperly obtained the regency; of having squandered the imperial treasures, treated the parents of the emperor with contumely, and violated the statutes and ordinances of the empire. Being found guilty, he received sentence of death, which, by an undeserved lenity, was mitigated to exile for life to Siberia. Thus he shared the fate to which he had consigned many thousands of his victims, to whose vengeance it is surprising he did not fall a sacrifice. Yet, strange to say, he was afterwards restored to liberty by Peter III.; while Catherine II. gave back to him the duchy of Courland.

Biren was arrested on the 28th of November, 1740, and the Princess Anne became regent; yet, within a year and a few days, power had passed from her hands also; and she, her husband and her child, were numbered among the ranks of the obscure and the unfortunate!

Anne commenced with the sad mistake of placing the duke, her husband, at the head of the army, instead of Marshal Munich. The latter was naturally very discontented; and, to appease him, she removed Count Ostermann, and made Munich first minister in his place. This was a second error, by which the services of another able man were lost, and a new enemy created. Duke Ulric was devoted to the interests of Austria; and Munich detested Austria, and desired to enter into a close alliance with Prussia: therefore dissensions arose between them; and when the veteran soldier (in March, 1741) tendered his resignation, it was accepted. Thus Anne thoughtlessly threw away the second great support of her regency.

In the August following, Sweden declared war against Russia—a proceeding to which it was incited by the court of France, and by a belief that the Russians themselves, discontented with their government, were ripe for revolution. Notwithstanding all that the Swedes had suffered at the hands of the Russians during the time of Peter I., they were so confident of success, that before a sword was drawn or shot fired, they drew up the articles on which they would grant peace to the enemy, who, they concluded, would be ready to accept the terms they were prepared to impose. Russia, they presumed, should be compelled to surrender Carelia, Ingria, and Livonia; that she should not be allowed to keep any vessels on the Livonian or Esthonian coasts; and that she should be made to grant the free importation of corn. To enforce these extravagant ideas, Sweden had an empty treasury, a fleet not seaworthy, and an army clamorous for pay, and almost destitute of provisions. But the Swedish government trusted to enlist on its side the antipathy which the Russian people entertained towards foreigners. With this object it issued a manifesto, which thus appealed to the emotions of nationality of the Russian population:—"The sole intention, on the part of Sweden, is to defend herself by arms against the oppressions exercised against her by the arrogant foreigners, the ministers of the Russian court; and at the same time to deliver the Russian nation from the yoke which these ministers have imposed on it, by assisting the Russians to regain their right of electing for themselves a lawful ruler." This document, peculiarly calculated to arouse a sensitive people, either was unable to overcome the stolid apathy of the Russians and their indifference to liberty, or it was counteracted by a national jealousy at the interference of other countries in their affairs. At any rate, it fell perfectly harmless—was disseminated and forgotten.

Notwithstanding the discord that prevailed in the Russian cabinet, the forces of the empire anticipated the efforts of the Swedes; and General Lascy, advancing against the Swedish army, which was encamped under Wrangel, near Vilmanstrand, attacked and defeated it on the 3rd of September, 1741. The fortress of the place immediately surrendered to the Russians; but the latter were compelled to withdraw on the approach of winter, in consequence of the rapid reinforcements of the Swedes.

Before the next campaign a new change

had been effected in the government of Russia; but it was not accomplished by the people, but by a court faction. The Russian populace felt no attachment to the infant emperor, whose father was a German; or to his mother, who, though descended from a member of the house of Romanoff, was yet the daughter of a German prince. A jealousy of German influence already existed among the Russian nobles; but had the regent been a woman of enlarged understanding, she would have succeeded in reconciling them to the sway of her family. But the conduct of the Princess Anne was such, that the people had nothing to divert them from the fact, that neither she nor her son were true Russians. She was a woman whose mildness of temper merged into apathy. Once installed as regent, she neglected the duties of her high position, and allowed them to be performed by the advisers of her husband, from whom, nevertheless, she seemed almost estranged. She created great dissatisfaction by withdrawing for weeks from public affairs, and shutting herself up with a Countess Mengden, who had obtained a remarkable ascendancy over her. The aversion which the Russians entertained towards foreigners broke out with increased violence, and complaints were made by the disappointed nobles, that the administration of affairs had passed altogether out of the hands of their countrymen. When the indolence of the regent permitted her to display her inclinations, they were found to tend to a discouragement of Russian customs, and a lavish patronage of foreigners.

Under these circumstances, some eyes were again turned towards the Princess Elizabeth, the surviving daughter of Peter the Great. She was Russian by birth; regarded as national in her habits and ideas; nearer by blood to the throne than the infant Ivan; and the immediate descendant of an illustrious and popular sovereign. Yet she had lived so retired a life, that she was without a party in the country, and her friends were few in number. Indeed, so limited were they, that the chief agent in the conspiracy which was set on foot in her favour, was her French physician, Lestocq; and the money required to conduct it, was supplied by the Marquis la Chetardie, which, at the direction of his government, he gave with the object of distracting Russia with internal commotions.

Elizabeth, during her previous life, appeared to be devoid of ambition; and she had even refused the imperial sceptre. Occupied by her amours and her devotions, she either did, or at least seemed to, prefer the irresponsibility of a private station to the gorgeous uncertainty of a throne in a great but unsettled empire. While the empress Anna occupied the throne, Elizabeth was indifferent to politics, and avoided the society of the statesmen of the day. The empress reposed in her a confidence which appears not to have been misplaced. But when Elizabeth beheld an infant emperor consigned to the regency of an unprincipled and cruel foreigner, the small amount of ambition existing in her, and which had hitherto remained latent, became aroused. It was not checked by the ruin of Biren; for then the guardianship of the baby-czar was transferred to its parents, of whom the father was a German by birth, and the mother by descent. Elizabeth was doubtless further stimulated to the adoption of the course which had been suggested to her, by the rumour that the Princess Anne (the mother of the infant Ivan) intended to cause herself to be proclaimed empress, and to establish the succession in the line of her daughters.

Elizabeth was without a party, but she was the representative of a principle—that which, springing from the nationality of the people, demanded that the sovereign should be a native of the empire he ruled. Lestocq (Elizabeth's physician), Grimstein, a corporal, and Schwartz, a trumpeter, were the active agents of the conspiracy in her favour. The latter two were instrumental in gaining over to Lestocq's purpose a strong party of the guards; the French Marquis la Chetardie, as we have said, supplying the money required to bribe the latter. The means appeared strangely insufficient for the end proposed; and Elizabeth, influenced by a natural timidity, hesitated and shrunk back from the dangers which stood between her and the imperial sceptre. Delays thus arose, and rumours were spread abroad concerning the existence of the plot. Count Ostermann warned the regent Anne of her danger, who received similar instructions from the English and Austrian ambassadors. Anne was incredulous, and would not take any step to frustrate the design of those who were preparing for her overthrow. Her indolent and unsuspecting nature was not even aroused by her receiving an anonymous letter, denouncing the conspirators. Instead of causing them to be instantly arrested, she merely read the letter before her court, and in the presence of Elizabeth, who, bursting into a flood of tears, asserted her innocence with such an appearance of sincerity, that the regent was satisfied, and made no further inquiry.

Lestocq saw that unless the conspiracy was put into instant practice, failure and ruin would be inevitable. He therefore urged Elizabeth to fix the following night for the execution of the scheme, which, if successful, was to place her on the throne. She still hesitated, when he drew from his pocket a card, on one side of which was a representation of herself, in the costume of a nun, while the reverse bore a portrayal of her wearing the imperial crown. He then demanded which fate she preferred, and added that the choice depended entirely upon herself, and the promptitude, or otherwise, with which she then acted. This argument was conclusive, and Elizabeth consented to fulfil her part in the plot, which was to be carried into execution on the following night, the 5th of December, 1741.

At the appointed hour, having first made a vow before the crucifix that no blood should be shed in the attempt, Elizabeth entered a sledge, attended by Lestocq and her chamberlain, and drove to the barracks of the guards. On arriving there she advanced amongst the soldiers with the cross in her hand, and addressed them at some length, stating her claims to the throne, reminding them that she was the daughter of their great emperor Peter, that she had been illegally deprived of the succession, that an infant of foreign birth had been placed upon the throne, and that native Russians were excluded from the highest offices of the state, which were conferred alone on foreigners. Elizabeth was well known to the guards, and a great favourite with them. They had been extensively bribed, and intoxicating liquors were distributed freely amongst them. The result was, that the great majority responded to the address with enthusiasm, and placed in confinement those who adhered to their duty. Then, with the Princess Elizabeth and her attendants, they marched to the palace, where the regent, her husband, and her infant son resided. Seizing the sentries at the gates, they rushed into the sleeping apartments of the regent and her family, and dragging them out of their beds, scarcely allowed them time to dress before they were hurried away as prisoners to the palace of Elizabeth. The infant emperor, when roused from sleep, on hearing the shouts of the soldiers in front of the palace, clapped his little hands, and endeavoured to imitate their vociferations. Elizabeth was touched, and exclaimed, "Poor babe! thou knowest not that thou art joining in the noise that is raised at thy undoing."

During the night, many persons connected with, or supposed to be favourable to, the government of the regent, were arrested, and amongst them Count Ostermann and Marshal Munich. The news spread rapidly through the city; the troops, generally, declared for Elizabeth, and, by eight in the morning, she was proclaimed empress, and the revolution was accomplished. A manifesto was then issued to the people, to explain what had taken place. It contained the following passage:—"The empress Anna having nominated the grandson of her sister, a child born into the world only a few weeks before the empress's death, as successor to the throne; and during the minority of whom various persons had conducted the administration of the empire in a manner highly iniquitous, whence disturbances had arisen both within the country and out of it, and probably, in time, still greater might arise; therefore, all the faithful subjects of Elizabeth, both in spiritual and temporal stations, particularly the regiments of the life-guards, had unanimously invited her, for the prevention of all the mischievous consequences to be apprehended, to take possession of the throne of her father, as nearest by right of birth; and that she had accordingly resolved to yield to this universal request of her faithful subjects, by taking possession of her inheritance derived from her parents, the emperor Peter I. and the empress Catherine."

Thus easily was an unpopular government swept away, and a revolution effected in the succession. Even in the most despotic countries, public opinion is an instrument of remarkable power. Such public opinion as existed in Russia at that period was averse to German influence and a foreign rule, and it welcomed Elizabeth as the representative of a national government. It was only necessary for her, therefore, to grasp the imperial sceptre, and the empire recognised her as its sovereign. As to the

regent Anne and the infant emperor, no weapon was drawn in their favour, no voice raised in their behalf. They passed away like a shadow, and were soon almost as unremembered as they were unregarded. Elizabeth stated that she had sent the Princess Anne and her husband, Duke Ulric, back to their native land; but this was not the truth. They were thrown into captivity, and removed from fortress to fortress at her pleasure or caprice. Their child, the late baby-emperor, was allowed to remain with them until he attained his eighth year, after which he was consigned to solitary confinement; first in the fortress of Oranienburg, and then in that of Schlusselburg. The consequences of a life of confinement rendered him almost idiotic, and he was eventually murdered, in conformity with a conditional order given by the empress Catherine II., who regarded him as a pretender to the throne whom circumstances might render dangerous.* The parents of this most unfortunate youth lingered out their lives in captivity; the mother dying after a few years, during childbirth; and the father surviving her, and reaching a sad and embittered age. As to the advisers and friends of the regent and her husband, most of them were exiled to Siberia. Amongst them was the wise statesman Ostermann, and the able general Munich. The latter was, after a mock trial, condemned to death as a traitor; but Elizabeth commuted his sentence into one of perpetual imprisonment. His captivity was of a mild kind—he being confined in an astrog or prison, of which he himself had drawn the plan, and ordered to be constructed for the reception of Biren, the ferocious favourite of the empress Anna. It was an area about 170 feet square, and enclosed with high palisades. Within was a wooden house, inhabited by himself, his wife, and a few servants; and a small garden, which he cultivated with his own hands. He received a daily allowance of twelve copecks (about sixpence) for the maintenance of himself, his wife, and domestics; which miserable pittance he increased by keeping cows and selling part of their milk, and by instructing lads in geometry and engineering. Strange are the vicissitudes which attended those who, in unsettled times, fulfilled the highest and most responsible offices of the state. In this case, the hand which had forced a king upon Poland, and carried on a fierce war against the might of the Ottoman empire, was employed in tracing mathematical figures for children. It is much to the honour of the veteran soldier, that he bore his misfortunes with tranquillity, and proved himself a moral no less than a military hero. He was ultimately recalled by Peter III., whom, it will be seen, he faithfully served; enjoyed the favour of Catherine II., and died in 1767, in his eighty-fifth year.

* The following touching account is given of a visit subsequently paid by the emperor, Peter III., to the dungeon of this unhappy prince:—"General Ungern Sternberg was aide-de-camp to Peter III., and accompanied him in a secret visit to the unfortunate Ivan at Schlusselburg, where he had been confined by Elizabeth. They found this wretched young man in a dungeon, the window of which admitted but a faint gleam of day, the light being intercepted by piles of wood heaped up in the court. He was in a very dirty white jacket, with a pair of old shoes on his feet. His hair was very light, and cut short like that of a Russian slave. He was tolerably well-made, and his complexion had a paleness which showed that the sun had never shone on his face. He was then upwards of twenty, and had been confined ever since he was fourteen months old; but he had received some impressions and ideas which he still retained. Peter III., affected at his condition, put several questions to him; among the rest, 'Who are you?'—'I am the emperor.'—'Who put you into prison, then?'—'Vile, wicked people.'—'Would you like to be emperor again?'—'To be sure; why not. I should then have fine clothes, and servants to wait upon me.'—'But what would you do if you were emperor?'—'I would cut off the heads of all those who have wronged me.' Peter III., having then asked whence he learned what he told him, he answered, that he had it from the Virgin and the angels; and began to enter into long stories of these pretended visions. Though alone, and confined from his infancy, he did not appear terrified at the sight of the emperor and his officers. He examined his dress and weapons with much curiosity and pleasure, as a bold child would have done. The emperor asked him again what he wished for, and he answered in his vulgar Russian dialect, 'To have more air.' Ungern was left some time at Schlusselburg to gain his confidence, and find out whether his apparent imbecility were only assumed. He was soon convinced, however, that it was the natural consequence of his mode of life. He gave him, from the emperor, a silk morning gown. Ivan put it on with transports of joy, running about the room, and admiring himself as a savage would have done who had never been dressed before. As all his wishes centred in the requisition of more air, Peter III. sent the plan of a little palace, in the centre of which was to be a garden, with orders to have it built for Ivan in the court of the fortress. It was cruel that this act of humanity towards an innocent man should have served as a pretext against the unfortunate Peter. He was charged with having intended to build a prison for his wife and son, and this was made a pretext for his own assassination."

CHAPTER XXIX.

CLEMENCY OF THE EMPRESS ELIZABETH AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF HER REIGN; BRIEF WAR WITH SWEDEN; THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR AND ITS ORIGIN; ELIZABETH JOINS A LEAGUE AGAINST FREDERIC OF PRUSSIA; PROGRESS OF THE WAR; THE GRAND-DUKE PETER FEDOROVITCH; HIS MARRIAGE WITH THE PRINCESS SOPHIA AUGUSTA OF ANHALT-ZERBST, AFTERWARDS CATHERINE II.; BATTLE OF KUNERSDORF; ILLNESS, DEATH, AND CHARACTER OF ELIZABETH.

ELIZABETH became possessed of the imperial power on the 6th of December, 1741. Though she punished all who had been instrumental in keeping her from the throne, she liberally rewarded those by whose agency she had been placed there. Lestocq was made head physician of the court, president of the college of the faculty, and privy councillor, with a magnificent income. Grinstein, the corporal, was first created adjutant, and then major-general; and Schwartz, the trumpeter, received the rank of colonel, and a considerable estate. The favourites and paramours of the new empress, who were mostly incapable and vulgar persons, were all handsomely provided for. Rasumoffski, her most favoured admirer, she afterwards privately married; Vorontzoff (whose descendants are generally called Woronzow), another of them, showed a considerable capacity for business, and became vice-chancellor, and finally high chancellor. All the grenadiers who had obtained the smiles of the new empress, received the rank of officers, and were formed into a body-guard, of which she herself became captain. But the conduct of these people was so intolerable, that most of them fell into disgrace and were ruined. Even Lestocq, the physician, in consequence of his avarice and arrogance, was eventually banished. Grinstein shared the same fate; and Schwartz was ordered to retire to his estates.

Elizabeth soon confided the business of the state to those who were able to direct it, instead of to the incompetent crowd of unknown and mostly uneducated persons by whom she was surrounded. The grand-chancellor, Bestuchef, became her chief minister, and the principal affairs of the empire were managed by him. One incident shed a lustre over the advent of Elizabeth's reign, and caused great expectations to be raised of her clemency. She pardoned and liberated more than 20,000 persons who had been banished or imprisoned. Yet, strangely enough, an enormous number of people were exiled during her sway. This arose from her having made a vow not to sanction the death of any criminal; but this measure, even if wise in itself, was too much in advance of the ideas and habits of the Russian people. The judges, deprived of the power of directly sentencing a malefactor to death, adopted the practice of awarding such severe inflictions of the knout, and other punishments, as amounted to an indirect sentence to that effect; for the sufferer often died, as a result of the merciless chastisement which he had been made to endure. Minor punishments, of a savage and revolting kind, also came much into use; dislocation of the arms, slitting of the tongue, cutting off the ears, and other mutilations, were extremely common under the reign of an empress to whom many have awarded the praise of clemency, but of whom, in justice, scarcely more on this point could be said, than that she was good-tempered to those who had the fortune to please her. When personally offended, she could be both cruel and remorseless. Women, and even ladies of rank, were made to feel the severity of her vengeance, by being condemned to the hideous torture of the knout. Some crude conspiracy, for the purpose of restoring the infant Ivan to the throne, was discovered soon after her accession, and those implicated in it were first punished with the knout, and then exiled to Siberia. Amongst the victims was one of the ladies of the court, whose personal beauty had inspired the empress with feelings of jealous envy, and who thus permitted the law to mangle, and for ever to sweep from her path, both the rebel and the rival.

Through the wisdom of Bestuchef, France soon found herself entirely deceived concerning the advantages she had expected to derive from the revolution which raised Elizabeth to the throne. No national commotion or popular discontent had followed; and the secret cabals of France were met and neutralised by the superior

state-craft of Bestuchef. The French cabinet, however, succeeded in exciting Sweden to a renewal of hostilities with Russia. Frederic I. demanded the restoration of Finland; which, as he must have anticipated, was refused. Hostilities were therefore resumed; but the military glory of Sweden seemed to have departed, and her sons possessed neither the territory, wealth, population, or vigour of former years. Sweden, indeed, suffered from the influence of the gold, as well as the sword, of Russia, and she was slowly sinking into a position not much above that of a province of her great imperial neighbour.

The war recommenced in the spring of 1742. The Russian forces were under the chief command of Marshal Lascy; those of the Swedes were headed by Lewenhaupt and Buddenbrock. The latter, by their want of readiness, betrayed the interests of their country, and sacrificed the fortress of Fredericshaum, together with all their stores and munitions of war; which, in the impaired condition of the Swedish finances, it was impossible to replace. As if labouring under some infatuation, the Swedes left the passage of the Kymene undefended, and retired rapidly to Helsingfors, whither they were pursued by the Russians. The Swedes, imagining themselves secure on account of the woods by which they were surrounded, neglected any further precautions. Under these circumstances, a Finlander who was much incensed against the Swedes, led the Russians to a path cut by Peter I., but since completely overgrown by bushes, which enabled them to surround and cut off their enemies. The Swedish generals, after their troops had suffered a blockade of fourteen days, abandoned them, under pretence of yielding obedience to the commands of the diet. They trusted, through their influence in the council, to evade the penalty of this desertion; but such was the irritation both of their sovereign and their countrymen at their unworthy conduct, that they suffered death for it. Their deserted troops were compelled to conclude a capitulation with the Russians, and the whole of Finland fell into the power of the latter.

The Swedes perceiving that the war was a hopeless struggle, which they had not the means of continuing, endeavoured to conciliate the empress Elizabeth. In order to induce the Russians not to insist on the cession of Finland, they had, at an earlier period, offered the crown of Sweden to her relative, the young Duke of Holstein-Gottorp, the grandson of Peter the Great, by his favourite daughter Anne Petrovna, who had been married to the Duke of Holstein shortly before the death of her illustrious father. Charles Peter Ulric, the young duke (afterwards the unfortunate Peter III.), declined the offer, in consequence of his having been summoned to Russia by the empress Elizabeth, who announced her intention of making him her successor. Under these circumstances, the Swedes purchased peace from the Russian empress, by adopting a recommendation to elect her relation, the Bishop of Lübeck, as their king; in consequence of which, that prelate ascended the Swedish throne on the death of Frederic I.

The majority of the Swedish people were, however, so dissatisfied with this arrangement, that the peace negotiations were delayed, and, in the year 1743, Russia again resorted to hostilities, and a Russian fleet made some descents upon the coasts of Sweden, though without producing as much effect as was anticipated. In the same year peace was concluded at Abo. Adolphus Frederic, duke of Holstein and bishop of Lübeck, was elected king of Sweden. Finland, then in the possession of the Russian troops, was restored to Sweden, which was only compelled to cede the province of Kymmenegard, together with the branches and mouths of the river Kymene Nyslot, and all the district around it in the province of Savolar. Yet, in accordance with the spirit of Russian policy, which enfeebles that which at some future time it may be necessary to engulph, the Russian troops, before quitting Finland, took care, according to Mannstein, "to squeeze from it everything they possibly could; the intention of the court being to ruin that province totally, and reduce it, notwithstanding the peace, into so wretched a condition as not to be able for a long time to hold up its head again; the generals had even repeated orders not to fail of attending to this point. The empress, however, feigning a desire to restore a good harmony with her neighbours, ordered some thousands of bushels of grain out of the magazines which had been established in Finland, to be distributed to the peasants of that country for sowing their grounds."

Several uneventful years rolled on, and proved barren of incidents of value or interest

to the historian. Elizabeth then engaged in that celebrated struggle known as THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR, which shook and seriously affected the interests of the whole of Europe. A history of it is, in fact, the history of Europe during the period over which it extended. It must be sufficient that we mention the cause from which it arose, and relate the part that Russia took in it. Frederic II. of Prussia, who won from his contemporaries and from posterity the title of "the Great," had wrested Silesia from Maria Theresa, archduchess of Austria, who had succeeded her father, Charles VI., on the imperial throne. "Maria Theresa" (we quote the brilliant language of Macaulay) "had never for a moment forgotten the great wrong which she had received at the hands of Frederic. Young and delicate, just left an orphan, just about to be a mother, she had been compelled to fly from the ancient capital of her race; she had seen her fair inheritance dismembered by robbers, and of those robbers he had been the foremost. Without a pretext, without a provocation, in defiance of the most sacred engagements, he had attacked the helpless ally whom he was bound to defend. The empress-queen had the faults as well as the virtues which are connected with quick sensibility and a high spirit. There was no peril which she was not ready to brave, no calamity which she was not ready to bring on her subjects, or on the whole human race, if only she might once taste the sweetness of a complete revenge. Revenge, too, presented itself, to her narrow and superstitious mind, in the guise of duty. Silesia had been wrested not only from the house of Austria, but from the church of Rome. The conqueror had, indeed, permitted his new subjects to worship God after their own fashion; but this was not enough. To bigotry it seemed an intolerable hardship that the catholic church, having so long enjoyed ascendancy, should be compelled to content itself with equality. Nor was this the only circumstance which led Maria Theresa to regard her enemy as the enemy of God. The profaneness of Frederic's writings and conversation, and the frightful rumours which were circulated respecting the immorality of his private life, naturally shocked a woman who believed with the firmest faith all that her confessor told her; and who, though surrounded by temptations, though young and beautiful, though ardent in all her passions, though possessed of absolute power, had preserved her fame unsullied even by the breath of slander. To recover Silesia, to humble the dynasty of Hohenzollern to the dust, was the great object of her life. She toiled during many years for this end, with zeal as indefatigable as that which the poet ascribes to the stately goddess who tired out her immortal horses in the work of raising the nations against Troy, and who offered to give up to destruction her darling Sparta and Mycenæ, if only she might once see the smoke going up from the palace of Priam. With even such a spirit did the proud Austrian Juno strive to array against her foe a coalition such as Europe had never seen. Nothing would content her but that the whole civilised world, from the White Sea to the Adriatic, from the Bay of Biscay to the pastures of the wild horses of the Tanais, should be combined in arms against one petty state."

The exertions of Maria Theresa led eventually to a secret alliance against Frederic, and that monarch learned from his agents at foreign courts, that an alarming league was formed for the purpose of ruining him and partitioning his dominions. With this view he was to be attacked at once by Austria, France, Russia, Saxony, and Sweden. "It was not," says the eloquent writer from whom we have just quoted, "to any political theory that the strange coalition between France and Austria owed its origin. The real motive which induced the great continental powers to forget their old animosities and their old state maxims, was personal aversion to the king of Prussia. This feeling was strongest in Maria Theresa; but it was by no means confined to her. Frederic, in some respects a good master, was emphatically a bad neighbour. That he was hard in all dealings, and quick to take all advantages, was not his most odious fault. His bitter and scoffing speech had inflicted keener wounds than his ambition. In his character of wit he was under less restraint than even in his character of ruler. Satirical verses against all the princes and ministers of Europe were ascribed to his pen. In his letters and conversation he alluded to the greatest potentates of the age in terms which would have better suited Collé, in a war of repartee with young Crébillon at Pelletier's table, than a great sovereign speaking of great sovereigns. About women, he was in the habit of expressing himself in a manner which it was impossible for the meekest women to for-

give; and, unfortunately for him, almost the whole continent was then governed by women who were by no means conspicuous for meekness. Maria Theresa herself had not escaped his scurrilous jests. The empress Elizabeth, of Russia, knew that her gallantries afforded him a favourite theme for ribaldry and invective. Madame de Pompadour, who was really the head of the French government, had been even more keenly galled. She had attempted, by the most delicate flattery, to propitiate the king of Prussia; but her messages had drawn from him only dry and sarcastic replies. The empress-queen took a very different course. Though the haughtiest of princesses, though the most austere of matrons, she forgot, in her thirst for revenge, both the dignity of her race and the purity of her character, and condescended to flatter the low-born and low-minded concubine, who, having acquired influence by prostituting herself, retained it by prostituting others. Maria Theresa actually wrote with her own hand a note, full of expressions of esteem and friendship, to her dear cousin, the daughter of the butcher Poisson—the wife of the publican D'Etioles—the kidnapper of young girls for the harem of an old rake: a strange cousin for the descendant of so many emperors of the West! The mistress was completely gained over, and easily carried her point with Louis, who had, indeed, wrongs of his own to resent. His feelings were not quick; but contempt, says the eastern proverb, pierces even through the shell of the tortoise; and neither prudence nor decorum had ever restrained Frederic from expressing his measureless contempt for the sloth, the imbecility, and the baseness of Louis. France was thus induced to join the coalition; and the example of France determined the conduct of Sweden, then completely subject to French influence."

The ruin of Frederic was confidently anticipated, and he himself expected no less. Yet he was not dismayed, but acted with that energy which is ever characteristic of great minds. Having resolved to anticipate his enemies, he demanded an explanation from Maria Theresa; and on receiving a haughty and evasive one, he, on the 24th of August, 1756, invaded the rich electorate of Saxony with an army of 60,000 men. Thus commenced "the seven years' war"—a contest the most extraordinary and important in modern times, previous to those of the French revolution. Frederic defeated Augustus at Pirna, and then captured Dresden, where, among the state papers, he discovered abundant evidence of the secret designs of the coalition against him. Some of these documents he published, and thus showed the statesmen of Europe that, whatever might have been the character of his former proceedings, he was now the injured party, and had merely anticipated a blow intended to destroy him.

It was not Elizabeth's interest to take part against Frederic; but, as has been observed, she was animated by a personal dislike towards him, on account of the satires in which he had indulged respecting her irregularities. Moreover, she professed, and perhaps entertained, a feeling of commiseration for the Polish king, whose Saxon dominions the Prussian monarch treated as a conquered and enslaved province. Another of Elizabeth's reasons for entering on a war which she might wisely have viewed as a spectator, instead of taking part in as a principal, was the prospect of certain ulterior advantages which she hoped to derive with respect to Courland and other Polish provinces.

The second year of the war (1757), Frederic advanced into Bohemia; and, on the 5th of May, gained a great victory over the Austrians, led by Prince Charles of Lorraine and Marshal Brown. Frederic purchased his triumph at the terrible cost of a loss of 18,000 men; but no less than 24,000 of the enemy were killed, wounded, or taken. Part of the defeated army took refuge within the walls of the city. There they were relieved by the approach of another Austrian army under Marshal Daun, who, however, on Frederic's advance to meet him, sheltered his troops within an intrenched camp at Kolin. There he awaited the attack of the Prussians; and on the 18th of June—"a day which, if the Greek superstition still retained its influence, would be held sacred to Nemesis"—Frederic was defeated with a frightful carnage; no less than 13,000 of his soldiers having perished before he could be persuaded to quit the field. Abandoning the siege of Prague, he was compelled to retire hurriedly from Bohemia, and his enemies concluded that his final ruin was at hand. He himself was so depressed, that his health was seriously impaired, and he contemplated suicide as an escape from the heavy troubles which environed him on all sides. He even

carried a certain and speedy poison about his person.

But Frederic never lost his courage or his energy, which enabled him to retrieve his apparently desperate affairs. "At this very time the scanty leisure of the illustrious warrior was employed in producing odes and epistles, a little better than Cibber's, and a little worse than Hayley's." The autumn seemed as if about to bring with it the pall that should cover both the fortune and the life of the heroic Prussian. Silesia was overrun by the Austrians; a great French army, under Marshal Soubise, was advancing from the west; and a Russian army, under Marshal Apraxin, was in the field. Frederic first marched against the French, and, on the 5th of November, obtained a brilliant victory over them at Rosbach. He then marched into Silesia; and, one month after his triumph at Rosbach, defeated 60,000 Austrians under Prince Charles of Lorraine at Breslau. This battle was, in later times, pronounced by the great Napoleon as a masterpiece, and sufficient of itself to entitle Frederic to a place in the first rank amongst generals. The Austrians lost, in killed, wounded, and prisoners, 27,000 men, together with 50 stand of colours, 100 guns, and 4,000 waggons. Silesia was reconquered, and Charles of Lorraine retired to Brussels to hide his shame and sorrow. As for the Russians under Apraxin, they invaded Prussia, took Memel, were guilty of shameful cruelty to the poor inhabitants of the districts through which they passed, and defeated a body of Prussians under the aged field-marshal, Lehwold. But having done this, Apraxin not only omitted to follow up his success, but even retired precipitately across the Russian frontiers.

For this remarkable proceeding there was a double cause. Elizabeth's nephew—the grand-duke Peter, and successor to the imperial throne—entertained a romantic and most extravagant attachment to Frederic, and the Russian officers knew, that to inflict defeat upon the Prussians, was to incur the displeasure of one who, perhaps, at no very remote date, would become their emperor. The other cause of Apraxin's retreat was a secret order from the chief minister, Bestuchef, commanding him to do so. The motive of the chancellor was hatred to the grand-duke Peter, to whom he rightly conjectured this movement, so discreditable to the Russian arms, would be attributed. Bestuchef was plotting to induce the empress to deprive the grand-duke of the succession; and, as Elizabeth was earnest in the war, it was likely that she would be seriously offended with Peter, to whose secret interference she would attribute the disappointment of her hopes, and the loss of credit by her troops. Bestuchef is also supposed to have expected the death of the empress, and to have desired the presence of the troops for the purpose of effecting the conspiracy by which he hoped to exclude the grand-duke Peter from the throne.

It is here necessary to retrace our steps, and to dwell briefly on the career of this well-meaning, but unwise and unfortunate prince. In 1742, when only in his fourteenth year, he obeyed the summons of the empress Elizabeth, and went to St. Petersburg, where he adopted the Greek form of the Christian religion, and received the name of Peter Fedorovitch. Elizabeth assigned him the palace of Oranienbaum, not far from the capital, where he resided when not at court. The empress—or, more probably, those about her—excluded the young grand-duke from any participation in public affairs. Though his youth and neglected education by no means qualified him to take part in matters of such importance, yet Peter felt a dissatisfaction which he did not care to conceal. He exhibited an aversion to study, and devoted his time chiefly to training some Holstein troops, whom he had obtained permission to keep at Oranienbaum. He had a perfect passion for military exercise; but he gave a preference to the Prussian system over that of Russia; and, indeed, showed plainly enough that all his sympathies were German, and that he held in contempt the people whom he would be called upon to rule. His companions were young German officers—men of low birth and dissipated and sensual habits. In their society Peter indulged, without control, in excessive drinking, smoking, and licentious amours. He was encouraged in this course by Bestuchef, who hated him; and some add, by the empress also, with the view of preventing her successor from acquiring a popularity which might be displeasing to her. It would be difficult to credit this statement if the conduct of Elizabeth did not give it a colouring; for Peter's German partialities and known dislike of all those customs and ideas which Russians regarded as national, had made him more than sufficiently un-

popular for that purpose. The empress appears to have been somewhat attached to him; and, dissipated as she herself was, she endeavoured to withdraw him from his career of thoughtless sensuality, by inducing him to marry. But towards Peter, as in other cases, she exhibited a remarkable capriciousness.* The lady she selected was Peter's cousin, the Princess Sophia Augusta von Anhalt, daughter of the Prince of Anhalt-Zerbst, governor of Stettin, in Prussian Pomerania. The marriage took place in 1745; the lady also being received into the Greek communion, and taking the name of Catherine Alexiewna.

The princess was born on the 2nd of May, 1729, and brought up in the most simple manner by her mother, who was, notwithstanding, a scheming and artful woman. It is said that, in girlhood, good humour, intelligence, and spirit, were the most striking features of the young princess who was afterwards to play so distinguished a part as the imperial ruler of a great people. A lady of quality, who frequently saw her during this phase of life, has left the following sketch concerning her:—"Her deportment, from her earliest years, was always remarkably good: she grew uncommonly handsome, and was a great girl for her years. Her countenance, without being beautiful, was very agreeable; to which the peculiar gaiety and friendliness which she ever displayed gave additional charms. Her education was conducted by her mother alone, who kept her strictly, and never suffered her to show the least symptoms of pride, to which she had some propensity; accustoming her, from her earliest infancy, to salute the ladies of distinction who came to visit the princess, with all the marks of respect that became a child."

The marriage between this young princess and the grand-duke was an ill-assorted, unhappy, and, indeed, fatal one. Catherine, as we shall for the future call her, was handsome, inordinately fond of pleasure, possessed of considerable talents, ambitious, bold, and unprincipled. She was a most unlikely woman to have effected the reformation of Peter, even had there been an affection between them. But such an emotion did not exist on either side. Peter, when first introduced to his affianced bride, was just recovering from the small-pox, which had terribly disfigured a countenance originally plain almost to ugliness. Though Catherine was carefully prepared for the interview, yet her disappointment and repugnance were so great, that, though she fell on his neck and embraced him with affected joy for his recovery, no sooner had she returned to her own apartment than, unable to keep up the deception, she fainted away, and remained for three hours in a state of insensibility. But ambition prevailed; the lady suppressed her feelings of dislike, and the union was accomplished. Peter's manners were so unpolished, and even vulgar, that Catherine frequently blushed for him in society, while he himself often felt deeply pained at her superiority in this respect; and although he was neither without good qualities nor deficient in understanding, yet she was greatly his superior, both in intellect and resolution. This was soon discerned by the courtiers, who, perceiving that though Peter might be emperor, yet that the imperial power would be grasped by his more able consort, were even more assiduous in their attentions to her than to him.

Naturally, this widened the gulf between the ill-matched pair. Peter turned with indifference from the society of a wife who,

* Tooke observes—"By one of those strange perversions of judgment which often appear in the uncultivated mind, Elizabeth pretended to think that her nephew was too well-informed, and that he was in danger of becoming too amiable by his manners, and too enviable by his knowledge. From the very moment of her choosing him for her successor, she regarded him as a rival. For this reason it probably was that she took him from under the tuition of the enlightened Brummer, who had begun his education in Holstein, and placed about him Tshoglokoff, a man of mean talents and a narrow mind. In vain did a few disinterested persons at the court of St. Petersburg (for there are some such in all courts)—in vain did some estimable women (for there were some such even about Elizabeth)—in vain did these persons, lamenting the ignorance and the sort of desertion in which the young Peter was left, endeavour to represent to his aunt the danger he incurred. The empress was deaf to their remonstrances, and even on some occasions repulsed them with harshness. Among many examples one need only be mentioned—that of a woman of the bedchamber, who had the spirit to ask this princess why she kept the grand-duke from all the deliberations of the council. 'If you permit him not to know anything of what is necessary for governing the country,' added she, 'what do you think will become of him, and what do you think will become of the empire? All the answer she got was, that Elizabeth, looking at her angrily, said, 'Johanna, knowest thou the way to Siberia?' However, the generous Johanna escaped with only the fright, and took care for the future to make no more remonstrances on that head to her mistress." Thus, by an assumption of anger, Elizabeth evaded a disagreeable topic.

to him, possessed no charm, and, mingling again with his boon companions, sought to forget his disappointment in renewed dissipation. Neglect turned Catherine's indifference into absolute dislike, and the insulted wife became the ambitious schemer. While Peter was strengthening his unpopularity, she was forming a political party around her. But she did not give herself entirely to ambition. Those powerful animal passions which eventually made her conduct the astonishment of Europe, soon manifested their influence over her. For a time her behaviour was at least outwardly decorous; but the unchaste examples set before her in the court of the lascivious Elizabeth, fostered and ripened the germs of voluptuous abandonment in the young and neglected wife. She received into her favour a person of humble birth and fortune, named Soltikoff, who was one of her husband's chamberlains and boon companions, and who had obtained such a reputation for his gallantries, that the husbands of St. Petersburg regarded him as the most agreeable and most dangerous man in town. With this man, the first of her known lovers, Catherine soon sullied the purity of the nuptial couch. As this person was the immediate cause of Catherine's entrance upon that strange career of sensuality by which her name is sullied, we will quote from the pages of Tooke,* who relates them at length, and in a manner pregnant with interest, some particulars of his intimacy with the grand-duchess:—"Soltikoff was not long ere he lifted his eyes even to the spouse of his master; and vanity yet more than love led him to conceive the bold design of captivating her heart. He began by sedulously studying the inclinations of the princess. He perceived that, notwithstanding the constraint in which she lived, Catherine had always a propensity to pleasure; and that the solitude of Oranienbaum rendered dissipation necessary to her. He accordingly procured her some new amusement with every returning day. He engaged the grand-duke to give frequent entertainments; he took upon himself the task of inventing and directing them, secretly giving the grand-duchess to understand that she was the sole object for which they were made, and that it was to him alone she was indebted for them. Catherine was not insensible to such gallant, such continued attentions. The seducing figure of Soltikoff, and the vivacity of his wit, had made an impression on her mind. His assiduities made him master of her affections; but Soltikoff, sensible that the heart of the grand-duchess was no ordinary conquest, was afraid of betraying himself by an imprudent explanation. It is even not impossible that, at first, he meant only to feign a passion which, in the sequel, grew up into a real attachment. In short, for a considerable time their fondness was mutual, without any declaration on the part of either.

"An unfortunate event was the occasion of accelerating this declaration. Soltikoff lost his father. His duty obliged him to repair to Moscow. He obtained the grand-duke's permission to depart; and at taking leave of Catherine, he was not sufficiently master of his feelings to prevent his discovering how much this parting cost him. The princess, who saw his tears, was no less touched herself at the cause whence they flowed; and fixing her eyes with a look of extreme significance on Soltikoff, she conjured him to shorten his absence as much as he could, and to return and forget his grief in the midst of a brilliant court, where, without him, there could be no such thing as pleasure.

"The character of Soltikoff renders it easy to judge what effect these words must have produced. He thought he perceived that he was beloved, and his conscious pride redoubled. His journey occupied him but a few days. What were domestic concerns when balanced with the felicity he expected? What was Moscow to him in comparison to St. Petersburg? He abandoned all for the sake of returning to secure his triumph.

"However, on approaching the grand-duchess, all the flattering ideas with which he had regaled his delighted imagination began suddenly to dissolve and vanish. His audacity forsook him. He found himself a prey to the most serious and gloomy reflections. He saw at once all the danger of his amour. He could no longer presume to flatter himself that Catherine would so far forget what she owed to her rank, to her spouse, as to accept the assiduities of a simple chamberlain. But if he were so happy as to see her vouchsafe to correspond to his passion, could he imagine that he should deceive the penetrating eyes of the jealous and humiliated courtiers by whom she was surrounded? In a word, how risk a confession which might be repaid by a perpetual imprisonment, or even with the

* *Life of the Empress Catherine II.*, vol. i.

loss of life! He shuddered, he trembled; he had resolved to renounce the fallacious hopes his unbounded arrogance had made him cherish.

"In this state of perturbation and despondency, Soltikoff no longer displayed that brilliant gaiety for which he had hitherto been always distinguished. In vain did he sometimes affect an air of easy elegance which he now no more possessed. A settled melancholy corroded his heart, and was depicted on his face; his health was visibly declining. The grand-duchess took the alarm; and one day, on finding herself alone with him, desired him to reveal the cause of so sudden an alteration. Soltikoff, unable at that moment to stifle or resist a passion thus preying on his vitals, avowed it in expressions of the tenderest emotion. Catherine heard him without anger; she seemed even to pity him; but, with a collected air, she counselled him to renounce an inclination of the irregularity and danger of which he ought to be sensible. Although still very young, Soltikoff knew but too well the female heart to be ignorant that she who allows herself to listen to a lover has already began to approve him. He took courage. He threw himself at the knees of the grand-duchess, and embraced them with boldness. The princess was agitated; she let fall some tears; and retiring precipitately from the transports of Soltikoff to go and shut herself in her cabinet, she addressed to him that verse which Monimia speaks to Xiphares in the tragedy of *Mithridates*:—

"'Et méritez les pleurs que vous m'allez coûter.'*

From that moment the chamberlain resumed his wonted gaiety with returning hope; and the alteration in his behaviour was felt by all around him." The conclusion of this adventure may be more readily conceived than described.

Peter, blinded for a time, at length suspected this domestic treachery, and complained to the empress of the man who had dared to inflict this dishonour upon him. Elizabeth was incensed, and would have banished the offender to Siberia; but, at the suggestion of the chancellor Bestuchef, Soltikoff was sent abroad under the veil of an honourable embassy.

Catherine did not long regret the absence of her paramour, whose place was soon supplied by another. This was Count Stanislaus Poniatowski, a Polish adventurer, whose grandfather had been a steward on a small estate of one of the nobles of his country, but whose father had acquired distinction by the services he rendered to Charles XII., whom, as we have related, he led, when wounded and helpless, off the field at Pultawa, through the ranks of the opposing Russians. The archduchess, in writing to the old count, observed—"Charles knew how to distinguish your merit; I also can distinguish that of your son, whom I may one day raise, perhaps, even above Charles himself." To dignify her new lover she contrived to obtain for him the post of ambassador from the king of Poland to the empress Elizabeth. The open sensuality of the latter was continually increasing—a circumstance which tended to make Catherine less guarded in her amours. Her husband, who lived apart from her, now acknowledged Elizabeth Vorontzoff as his mistress; an event which the archduchess rather rejoiced in, as furnishing some indirect apology for her own irregularities. So careless did she become, that she was surprised by Peter in a situation with Poniatowski which left no doubt of her guilt. Irritated at this painful confirmation of what he had previously merely suspected, the grand-duke complained to the empress, and, when exhorted to moderation, threatened to cudgel Poniatowski to death. The latter, fearing the consequences of his crime, fled from St. Petersburg, and returned to Poland.

Catherine's estrangement from her husband had ripened from dislike into hatred. He had the imprudence to talk of repudiating her as soon as he came to the throne—a circumstance which she resolved to anticipate by a bolder movement. Assisted by the wily Bestuchef, and by several of the Russian nobles, she lent herself to a conspiracy for the purpose of excluding her husband from the succession, and the elevation of herself as regent during the minority of her infant son Paul. It was with this object, then, that Bestuchef had laboured to make the grand-duke unpopular, and had reported to the empress every indiscretion he committed, every hasty expression he uttered.

Cautious as the high chancellor was, he had proceeded in his criminal design with too much rapidity. General Apraxin was tried for his retreat from the Prussian troops whom he had defeated, but acquitted—only, however, to die immediately afterwards. But the intrigues of Bestuchef were revealed,

* And merit those tears you are about to cost me.

and he was arrested. His letter, directing Apraxin to retreat, was produced against him, and found to be written in the name of the empress, though it was dispatched without her knowledge, and in contravention of her will. Amongst his papers, also, was found a copy of the deed of renunciation, which he intended to compel Peter to subscribe in the event of the conspiracy being successful. His guilt was evident, and he was sentenced to banishment.

In the spring of 1758, the Russian army again invaded the Prussian dominions. By his successes, towards the close of the preceding year, Frederic had to some extent retrieved his fortunes, and he received an enormous subsidy from England, where his heroism had excited as much enthusiasm as it had elicited from his own subjects. After some operations against the Austrians, Frederic marched to meet the Russians, who slaying, burning, and destroying wherever they went, had penetrated into the heart of his realm. Frederic attacked them at Zorndorf, near Frankfort, on the Oder. The battle was a long and bloody one; for not only were the Prussian soldiers irritated by the wanton ravages of their half-savage invaders, but a feeling of deep animosity existed between them and the Russians. The loss on both sides was immense, but that of the Russians was the most severe. Yet both armies claimed the victory, and the Russians maintained their position for several days after the battle; but they gave Frederic no further trouble that campaign.

Elizabeth still resolved on the ruin of Frederic. In the fourth campaign (1759), the most disastrous of all during this fiercely-contested war, the Russians, under Count Soltikoff (not the banished paramour of Catherine), spread themselves over the Prussian territory, and commenced their customary devastations. The Russian army, consisting of nearly 70,000 men, and aided by a powerful artillery, was intercepted in an attempt to effect a passage of the Oder by a Prussian army, consisting only of 30,000 men, under General Wedel. Besides this inferiority in numbers, the position of the Prussians was very disadvantageous. They had to pass a bridge and a defile, so narrow that scarcely the third of a battalion could march in front. From the nature of the ground, also, the cavalry could not support the infantry. Yet the engagement was resolutely maintained, though it terminated in a defeat of the Prussians, who lost 4,700 men in those killed and taken prisoners, while the wounded were estimated at 3,000 more. The disheartened Prussians were compelled to retire: their victorious adversaries seized on the towns of Krossen and Frankfort, effected a junction with 12,000 Austrian cavalry and 8,000 infantry, under General Laudohn, and intrenched themselves strongly at Kunersdorf.

Frederic, joined by the discomfited forces of General Wedel, and by some other reinforcements, was at the head of an army of 50,000 men. That of the Russians, since the junction of General Laudohn, was upwards of 90,000, whose intrenched camp was defended by a prodigious number of cannon. Yet Frederic hastened to attack them; and notwithstanding the disadvantages arrayed against him, it was imperative that he should give them battle. Berlin was threatened by the Austrians, under General Daun; Saxony was also exposed to the ravages of the imperial troops; while the Russians were encamped before his eyes in Silesia, the best and richest part of his dominions. It has been observed, that "the sanguine temper of other generals has often obliged them to fight under disadvantages; but the king of Prussia's circumstances were such, that, from the multitude of his enemies, he was neither able to consult times nor situations. Rashness could hardly dictate anything which, in his condition, would not have been recommended by prudence."

The battle was fought on the 12th of August, and after a fierce cannonade, Frederic's troops attacked the left wing of the Russian army with an impetuosity which carried everything before it. Great slaughter ensued, the Russian intrenchments were forced, and seventy-two pieces of cannon captured. Several redoubts which covered the Russian camp were successively attacked and taken by the Prussians. The former fought with extraordinary obstinacy; but they were driven back with immense loss; and Frederic concluded that the day must be his own. So satisfied was he of this, that he dispatched a courier to Berlin with a note to the queen, saying, "Madam, we have beat the Russians from their intrenchments. In two hours expect to hear of a glorious victory." The king's conclusion was a precipitate one; the Russians, shattered and almost defeated as they were, rallied and made a stand at a redoubt which had been erected in a position re-

garded as almost impregnable. Frederic saw that if he could drive them from this point, that utter defeat must await them. But with an army which, though beaten, was still numerically superior to his own, and prepared to dispute every inch of ground with a dogged courage that seemed insensible of danger, the enterprise was both hazardous and uncertain. Frederic's generals expostulated with him; as they were unanimous in their opinion that it was unwise to attempt to push any further the advantages they had obtained. They represented to him that the enemy was still very numerous, their artillery considerable, and the post they occupied one of great strength; that his troops, who had been engaged for some hours in a severe action, during an exceedingly hot day, were too much exhausted for a new attempt, especially one of such difficulty as might daunt even troops that were fresh. They added, that he would reap all the effects of a victory, as the enemy would be obliged to retire into Poland, and thus leave him free to act in other quarters where his presence was just as necessary.

Admitting the force of these arguments, Frederic yet decided upon hazarding a blow which might effectually scatter the Russian forces. His infantry, almost fainting from heat and the fatigue of six hours' fighting, were again led to the attack, but repulsed with great slaughter. Frederic led two charges in person, had two horses killed beneath him, and his coat pierced by several bullets. It was in vain; and so fearful was the massacre, that a feeling of terror began to spread through the Prussian ranks. Frederic then put the matter in the hands of his cavalry, who spent their remaining strength in several unavailing attacks. When on the point of abandoning their fruitless efforts, a large body of Russian and Austrian horse, which had been hitherto unengaged, charged their jaded ranks. The Prussian cavalry was broken, hurled back upon the foot, and the whole army thrown into confusion. A panic spread from rank to rank, and the men fled in disorder. The king acted with wonderful energy and heroism, and nearly fell into the hands of his enemies. The approach of night, and a judicious use of some eminences, alone saved the Prussian army from total destruction. All their artillery was lost, 20,000 of them had perished or been taken prisoners, and many thousands more were hopelessly scattered. Exhausted in body, and shattered in mind, Frederic reached a ruined and deserted farmhouse, where throwing himself on a heap of straw, he dictated another despatch to the queen. This second missive differed widely from the one sent earlier in the day, and ran thus:—"Remove from Berlin with the royal family. Let the archives be carried to Potsdam. The town may make conditions with the enemy." So complete did the king's ruin appear, that he again thought of suicide, and even wrote a farewell to some of his friends. In one of these letters he observed—"I have no resources left; all is lost. I will not survive the ruin of my country. Farewell for ever!"

The Russians and Austrians lost some time in congratulations and rejoicings, and more in disagreements arising from jealousy. Marshal Daun, the Austrian general, was for pushing forward and passing the Oder; but Soltikoff, the Russian general, said he had done enough, and declined to move far from Poland for fear he should be without the means of provisioning his troops. He therefore retired into winter quarters in Poland, while his soldiers committed such atrocities in their progress, that Frederic, on learning the particulars, exclaimed—"We have to do with barbarians who are digging the grave of humanity." The king so profited by the delays and dissensions of his enemies, that, at the close of 1759, he still stood on the defensive, with a considerable army at his command; but his prospects for the future were gloomy in the extreme.

Some fruitless negotiations for peace took place in the following spring (1760.) Hostilities were therefore resumed, and the campaign opened unfavourably for Frederic. The Russians and Austrians entered Berlin, took up their quarters in the royal palaces, emptied the arsenal, and levied contributions on the inhabitants; but they deemed it prudent to retire on the approach of the king. As his presence was no longer required at Berlin, Frederic entered Saxony, where he was induced, by the desperate situation of his affairs, to attack the Austrians under Marshal Laudohn at Lignitz, where, after an obstinate battle, he gained a victory, and compelled them to retreat. Shortly afterwards he gained a sanguinary triumph over another Austrian army under General Daun, which compelled the imperial troops to retire from his dominions.

Their example was followed by the Russians, to the dissatisfaction both of Elizabeth and the Austrian court, who were each surprised that the combined imperial forces had not accomplished more. A feeling prevailed, both at Vienna and St. Petersburg, that the fault lay with the Russian general; therefore Soltikoff was recalled, and the command given to Count Butterlin.

At the commencement of 1761, it was evident that the position of the king of Prussia was most critical; and probable that the great soldier who had so long held at bay a most formidable and ungenerous combination, would soon be hunted to his ruin. The resources of Prussia were becoming exhausted; and though in this campaign no great battle was gained by the enemy, yet, "in spite of the desperate bounds of the hunted tiger, the circle of pursuers was fast closing round him." Occupying a strong camp in Silesia, he remained watching, with rage and bitterness of heart, the proceedings of his enemies, who, spread over his defenceless territories, carried on the work of extortion or desolation. His strong mind was much affected by the seemingly desperate nature of his position, and he felt his misfortunes more heavily than ever. He became reserved, and seldom talked even with his most confidential officers; indeed, he afterwards admitted that he began to look around him with blank despair at the desolated state of the country, unable to imagine where recruits, horses, or provisions were to be found. Towards the close of the year his misfortunes received an addition by the death of George II., king of England, who expired suddenly on the 25th of October, and the abandonment of the Prussian interests by his youthful and narrow-minded successor. The first Mr. Pitt was compelled to retire from the ministry, and his successors sought to make peace with France, and to shake off any continental alliance that interfered with their project. "The policy then followed," observes Mr. Macaulay, "inspired Frederic with an unjust but deep and bitter aversion to the English name, and produced effects which are still felt throughout the civilised world. To that policy it was owing that, some years later, England could not find on the whole continent a single ally to stand by her, in her extreme need, against the house of Bourbon. To that policy it was owing that Frederic, alienated from England, was compelled to connect himself closely, during his later years, with Russia, and was induced to assist in that great crime—the fruitful parent of other great crimes—the first partition of Poland."

But the despondency of Frederic was greatly lightened by another event which occurred shortly after the death of George II. and the defection of England. This was the death of his powerful and persevering enemy the empress Elizabeth, which took place on the 25th of December, 1761, after a reign of twenty years.

The health of the empress had been for some time declining; and she doubtless accelerated the progress of natural decay in vain endeavours to evade the results of illness by a recourse to her customary dissipation. Festivities, balls, masquerades, and brilliant shows still yielded a faint amusement; and, dreading to lie down upon a restless pillow, she frequently went to the opera or play at eleven, passed the rest of the night at table, and went to bed at five in the morning. At other times she listened with avidity to the idle tales brought to her concerning the amorous revels of the grand-duke Peter with his mistress, the coarse, ugly Countess Vorontzoff, to whom she scornfully gave the nickname of *la Pompadour:* and in such amusements as these did the empress of Russia seek for some alleviation of the infirmities that were rapidly terminating her life. As the close of her existence approached she was tormented with violent pains in the stomach, which no medicines had power to alleviate. To procure some respite from suffering she had frequent recourse to her usual means of stifling sensibility in the stupefaction brought on by the use of strong waters. In vain did her physicians represent to her that she herself was contributing to frustrate their efforts, and accelerating the period of her days. In vain did her attendants, by sacrificing obedience to affection, secretly remove or destroy the intoxicating beverage; she would constantly have a case of it in her chamber, of which the key was always kept within reach.

The enemies of the grand-duke had recently so blackened his character to the empress, that she was even induced to entertain a ridiculous fear that he might be led to accelerate her death by poison. Influenced by this feeling, she ordered him to be denied admittance to her apartment, and also extended this prohibition to Catherine, with whom she had been for some time displeased. If Elizabeth died without seeing the grand-

duke and his consort, it was feared injurious rumours might be circulated among the people. Count Panin, therefore, the governor of Catherine's infant son, Paul Petrovitch, devoted himself to bringing about an interview and a reconciliation. The count, therefore, concerted arrangements with the confessor of the empress, who, approaching the bedside of his mistress, commenced a religious discourse to her. He spoke of the Supreme Sovereign by whom earthly monarchs reign—of his justice, his clemency, and his tribunal, before which only they who forgive can obtain forgiveness; and of that kingdom of God, of which the terrestrial paradise was but a faint resemblance; but where only the charitable can obtain admission, where only the merciful can hope for mercy. Touched by fears for her salvation, the dying empress consented to see her nephew and his consort. At this instant the grand-duke entered, leading Catherine by the hand, and they both fell upon their knees by the bedside. Then Elizabeth, in an indistinct tone of voice, and as if her lips only spoke the words, uttered whatever was dictated to her by the priest. Addressing herself to the prince and princess, she said, "that she had always loved them; and that, with her dying breath, she wished them all kinds of blessings." Every witness of this scene saw that the pardon came only from the lips of the empress; but Peter was satisfied with the appearance of a reconciliation, and his partisans repeated, through the city, the affectionate words pronounced by the empress, together with several additional embellishments of their own.

The partiality of the grand-duke Peter to Frederic we have alluded to: it was more than a friendship; it amounted to a perfect infatuation in favour of the monarch he admired and sought to imitate. He even went so far, amongst his Holstein associates, as to allude to him by the title of "the king *my master*." Frederic knew that, from Russia, he had no more to fear during this terrible struggle, and he was at liberty to direct his efforts entirely against his other enemies.

Elizabeth died during the autumnal phase of life, in her fifty-second year. She was one of those comparatively negative characters who do little harm, and less good. The business of the empire was conducted for her by others; for she was too indolent to arrive at any judgment of her own. When, as in the case of the war with Prussia, she formed any strong opinion, it arose not from a dispassionate examination of conflicting facts, but from motives of an entirely personal nature. Though not deficient in intellect, yet her mental power was paralysed by her constitutional indolence. This was so great, that even for months together she could not be induced to give the least attention to the affairs of state. Sometimes, for a considerable period, she refused even to sign her name. The three great points in her character were indolence, voluptuousness, and superstition. Perhaps the greatest harm she did, was the immoral example she set to the ladies of her court and empire—an example which, sustained as it afterwards was by the empress Catherine, produced abundance of pernicious fruit.

The oppressions and tyranny carried on during her reign, were, with a few exceptions, rather permitted than transacted by her. Such was her superstition, that the most abandoned licentiousness and the most shameless orgies were alternated with prayers and devotional exercises. The violation of a fast threw her into pangs of remorse; and the sight of a person in mourning awoke in her very painful emotions. Profligacy of the most abandoned kind remained unchecked by her; for how could she reprehend that which her own example created? But she punished with great rigour the assumed offence of eating an egg on a day which the church had appointed for abstinence.

"The empress Elizabeth," observes Tooke, "had insensibly proceeded from moderate pleasures to the extravagance of sensuality; and her taste for devotion augmented with her voluptuousness. She continued whole hours on her knees before the picture of some saint, to which she spoke, which she even consulted; and passed alternately from acts of bigotry to the intemperance of lust, and from scenes of lasciviousness to the opiates of prayer. She would frequently drink to excess; and, at such times, too sensual, too impatient for the delays of unlacing, her women used to effect the same purpose by means of the scissors. In what manner such nights were passed, it becomes not the historian to undraw her curtains to reveal."

Amongst her follies—for the word vice is perhaps too harsh for these minor imperfections of character—were the girlish vanity and wanton extravagance of the empress. She regarded it as a crime against the state, if one of the ladies of her court presumed to

wear dresses of the same pattern as those which adorned her, or received the newest French fashions before she did. After the death of Elizabeth between fifteen and sixteen thousand dresses were found in her wardrobe; some of which had been worn but once, while others had never been put on at all. In addition to these were two large chests full of silk stockings, two others of ribands, some thousand pairs of shoes, and several hundred pieces of French and other rich stuffs. These were neither given away nor sold, although the empress was constantly in pressing want of money; but left undisturbed until they spoiled.

The greatest virtue of Elizabeth was her aversion to the shedding of blood; but her much-praised clemency was sullied by many acts of oppression, and even of cruelty. If she did not sanction the infliction of death, she permitted that of torture, which was used to a frightful extent during her reign; she also established a detestable system of espionage, which crushed all public, and poisoned all private, freedom. It is computed that, every year, about 1,000 of her subjects were privately arrested and consigned to prison. It was an easy thing for one of the numerous favourites and parasites who swarmed around the empress, to obtain a secret order, granted without inquiry, for the arrest of some one who had incurred their displeasure. Even if one of the ladies of the court considered herself slighted, she could obtain an order by which the object of her anger was forced out of bed at night, gagged, blindfolded, and hurried away to some dungeon, where such unhappy victims frequently dragged out the remainder of their lives without being charged with any crime, or even knowing in what part of the country they were. It was dangerous for the family to pursue inquiries after the lost one. "He has disappeared," was held to be a sufficient answer to their distracted questions. Probably much, if not all, of this dark tyranny was transacted without the knowledge of the empress, who was generally goodnatured, and even amiable, to those who had the address to please her, but unforgiving and vindictive when offended. Even her good temper was chilled and largely neutralised by a vivid consciousness of what was due to her as empress. It is related of her, that one day she was waited on at her toilet by a lady of the court, who remained standing only at the expense of great and visible effort. This was at length discerned by Elizabeth, who inquired what was the matter with her. "My legs are very much swelled," was the reply. "Well, well," returned the empress, "lean against that bureau; I will seem as if I did not see you." Notwithstanding her personal indolence, she had some taste for literature, and established a university at Moscow, and an academy for the fine arts at St. Petersburg. She also exerted herself to forward the compilation of a code of laws for the Russian empire—a task which was begun under Peter the Great, but not completed until the reign of Catherine II. Though Elizabeth was never married, she left several natural children. One of these was the unfortunate Princess Tarrakanoff, to whom we shall have occasion to allude hereafter, and whose sad fate, brought about by the jealousy of Catherine II., forms one of the most touching episodes of Russian history.

CHAPTER XXX.

ACCESSION OF PETER III.; HE MAKES PEACE WITH PRUSSIA; HE EFFECTS RAPID BUT IMPORTANT REFORMS; RECALL OF MARSHAL MUNICH AND OTHER EXILES FROM SIBERIA; PETER'S CONDUCT TO HIS CONSORT CATHERINE; HE SEIZES ON THE PROPERTY OF THE CHURCH; CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE EMPEROR; HE MAKES PREPARATIONS FOR A HOSTILE EXPEDITION TO DENMARK; OUTBREAK OF THE CONSPIRACY, AND APPEAL OF CATHERINE TO THE ISMAELOFFSKI GUARDS; SHE IS PROCLAIMED EMPRESS; VACILLATING CONDUCT AND COWARDICE OF THE CZAR; HE SURRENDERS TO CATHERINE; SIGNS A FORM OF ABDICATION; TRIUMPHAL ENTRANCE OF CATHERINE INTO ST. PETERSBURG; REACTION OF THE POPULAR FEELING; MURDER OF PETER III.; ESTIMATE OF HIS CHARACTER.

THE conspiracy against the grand-duke Peter was not sufficiently ripe to be carried into execution. No sooner, therefore, were the eyes of Elizabeth closed in death, than the courtiers pressed in crowds around Peter, and accosted him as their sovereign.

Laying aside the weakness and indecision which so frequently characterised him, he accosted them with dignity, and at once received the oaths of the officers of his guards. He then rode through the streets of St. Petersburg, and distributed money to the people, who, notwithstanding the attempts that had been made to bring him into contempt, received him with acclamations. The soldiers also mixed their shouts with those of the populace; and, flocking around the new monarch, exclaimed, "If thou take care of us, we will serve thee as faithfully as we served our good empress." Still it was plainly observable that there was no enthusiasm or affection on the part of the people towards Peter; none of that real joy which is commonly manifested by a people on the accession of a young prince to the throne. The absence of this feeling was universal, and the new sovereign did not find any more affection in the larger circle of his court, than in the smaller one of his family. An ill-feeling towards foreigners prevailed in Russia; and although the blood of Peter the Great ran in the veins of the new emperor, and he had so far a claim upon the national affection, yet he was a German on the father's side, and had resided so little in Russia, that he was regarded as almost a foreigner. Unhappily, also, his confidence and familiarity were confined to the Germans from his dukedom; and neither in manners, language, nor in religious profession, did he seem a complete and genuine Russian. He was also suspected of a design to remodel the whole system of the empire, and to put everything on a German footing. In addition to this, it was believed by the friends of his consort Catherine, that he intended to divorce her, deprive her son Paul of the succession, and raise his mistress, Elizabeth Vorontzoff, to the imperial throne.

The young, energetic, brilliant, but we fear unprincipled Princess Daschkaw, who was the chief agent of the conspiracy which so soon deprived Peter of his throne and life, in a work* written for the purpose of vindicating herself from the aspersions cast upon her, especially by the French authors, assigns no reason for the part she took in conducting this conspiracy, further than her attachment to Catherine, and her fears that Peter might divorce his erring consort, or consign her to a convent or other prison.

* *Memoirs of the Princess Daschkaw, Lady of Honour to Catherine II.; written by herself.*

A few days after the accession of the emperor, he sought an interview with the princess, whose sister was, as we have mentioned, his mistress, and a singular contrast in manners and intellectual culture to herself. The princess thus relates what passed:—"The emperor, as soon as I had appeared in his presence, began to address me on a subject which seemed very near his heart, and in a manner which confirmed all my suspicions and alarm on account of the empress. He spoke in a low voice and in half-sentences, but in terms unequivocally expressive of his intentions to displace *her*, as he indicated the empress, and to raise *Romanovna*, as he said, when speaking of my sister, to the throne. Having thus declared himself, he proceeded to give me some salutary cautions. 'If, my little friend,' said he, 'you will take my advice, pay a little more attention to *us;* the time may come when you will have good reason to repent of any negligence shown to your sister; believe me, it is for your interest alone I speak; you have no other way of making yourself of any consequence in the world than by studying her disposition, and striving to gain her countenance and protection.'" Without aspersing the truthfulness of the Princess Daschkaw, it is evident that she wrote with a strong bias against the unfortunate Peter, and she omits no relation that can place him in a contemptible light. "To act as corporal-major every morning on the grand parade," she observes, "to eat a good dinner, to drink Burgundy, to spend the evening among buffoons and a certain set of ladies, and to do everything which the king of Prussia ordered him to do, was what formed the felicity and glory of Peter III., and is an epitome of his mode of life for the seven months which constituted his reign."

Peter announced his accession to the king of Prussia before he communicated this important information to any other power. He even liberated all the Prussian prisoners, and gave them money to defray their expenses home. An armistice with Prussia was soon concluded, attended by a manifesto, in which Peter declared, that his first duty being the welfare of his people, that welfare could not be consulted so long as hostilities were continued; that the war had produced no advantage to either party, but done incredible harm to both; that he would no longer sanction the wanton destruction of his species; that, in

conformity with the divine injunction relative to the preservation of the people committed to his charge, he terminated the unnatural and impious strife; and that he was resolved to restore the conquests made by the Russian troops. The emperor would deserve high commendation for these generous sentiments, but that they were uttered to colour the peace he was about to conclude with Frederic, and not from any abstract love of peace itself. At this very time he was not only loud in his expressions of enmity to Denmark, but he had resolved on war with that kingdom to resent some injury done to his father, and to wrest from it the duchy of Schleswig, which he regarded as being his by inheritance. Frederic gave his admirer some good advice, and urged him not to engage in a war with Denmark, or to leave the empire before he was firmly seated upon the throne; but Peter never listened to good counsel until it was too late to follow it.

The emperor was regardless of the interests and intentions of his allies. The Austrian court was merely informed that he was about to conclude peace with the king of Prussia. Peter hurried forward the proceedings; and, on the 5th of May, the treaty was signed at St. Petersburg, and shortly afterwards proclaimed in Berlin. By it the emperor not only concluded such a peace with Frederic as the latter could only have hoped for after a series of victories, but entered into an offensive and defensive alliance with him; and 15,000 Russian troops were sent to join the shattered Prussian army, against which they had been so recently opposed. Frederic made great use of this timely assistance. He reconquered Silesia, gave the Austrians a defeat, and soon presented to the forces of Maria Theresa a front as formidable as before the great reverses of 1759. Sweden followed the example of Russia, and concluded a peace with Frederic shortly after the czar had done so.

Peter's conduct towards Frederic was both precipitate and unwise, when we consider the strong anti-German feeling existing among the Russian people. It was well to make peace with the Prussian monarch, with whom the empress Elizabeth had gone to war without a sufficient cause; and, indeed, for hardly any other reason than that of personal animosity. But that peace should have been concluded with sobriety, and, if possible, in conjunction with the allies of Russia. Assuredly Peter should have abstained from rendering direct assistance to Frederic, and from permitting his troops to act against those of his ally, Austria. To such an imprudent extent did he carry his admiration of that monarch, that one evening, when he had been drinking to excess, he directed his conversation, according to custom, upon the great soldier-king. Fixing his eyes suddenly on Volkoff, one of the ministers of state, he exclaimed—"You must agree that he is a magician, a sorcerer, that king of Prussia! He knew all our plans for the campaign as soon as we had resolved on them." Volkoff coloured; but Peter resumed—"Why that embarrassment? You have no longer any need to fear Siberia. Is it not true that, notwithstanding the dread you had of it, you communicated to me all the plans and projects that were resolved on in the council, and that I sent them off to his majesty the king?"

Other circumstances, also, contributed to place the emperor in a false light with respect to his people. Instead of remaining at home to win their affections, he, at this critical period, made preparations for a visit to Germany, merely for the sake of obtaining an interview with the distinguished monarch, the contemplation of whose genius seems to have disturbed the balance of his intellect. It was observed, also, by the numbers who were interested in the fate of Catherine and her son, the grand-duke Paul, that neither of them were mentioned in the manifesto by which Peter proclaimed his accession to the throne. This circumstance strengthened the suspicions of those who believed that he intended to repudiate Catherine and deprive Paul of the succession, and gave additional activity to the discontented courtiers who were conspiring against him. He had also neglected to make preparations for his coronation at Moscow, which ceremony was viewed as deriving a peculiar sanctity from its being performed in that ancient city, which the people regarded with something of superstitious reverence.

Yet Peter's errors were such as produced little or no injury to the empire; while he possessed some estimable qualities. Though he censured the late empress for having abolished capital punishment, and declared that it was necessary to put great offenders to death, yet he was one of the mildest and least revengeful of sovereigns who ever occu-

pied the Russian throne. Though he had many personal enemies, he pardoned them all on his assumption of the imperial crown, and seemed, in his capacity of emperor, to have forgotten the wrongs inflicted on the grand-duke. Though some of his notions of reform were extravagant, yet he effected many changes of a beneficial character. He abolished that hateful system of espionage which, under the name of the "Secret Chancery," was the terror of every family in Russia. He prohibited the use of torture—a very necessary regulation, after the frightful extent to which it had been carried during the reign of Elizabeth. He made a generous sacrifice to the interests of his nobility, by making them independent of the caprices of the sovereign. Prior to his reign no boyard could enter on any profession, or forsake it when once embraced, or retire from public to private life, or dispose of his property, or travel into any foreign country, without the permission of the czar. Peter resigned these checks upon the liberty of his nobles, and thus added an important step to the career of social emancipation. Though in the army he endeavoured to introduce many changes which were considered objectionable—such as the introduction of the Prussian drill and costume—yet he enhanced the dignity of the officers, by rescuing them from the degrading punishments to which they had been previously subjected. He instituted a court to take cognizance of all offences committed against the public peace, and to punish the delinquencies of those who were entrusted with the general police of the empire. He made arrangements for the promotion of commerce, and he constantly showed himself the protector and friend of the poor. An elaborate historian of this period remarks, that a complete and sudden transformation occurred in the character, or rather the behaviour, of the new monarch. "Gentleness and humanity took the place of violence, and reflection succeeded to passion. The grand-duke had been inconsistent, impetuous, and wild: Peter III. now showed himself equitable, patient, and enlightened." Unhappily, this seeming reformation was very transient, and the czar soon acted as if he actually desired to win the contempt of his nobles, and the indifference, if not dislike, of his people.

Peter also recalled from Siberia most of those who had been sent there during the reign of Elizabeth. Amongst the exiles who returned was Marshal Munich, then eighty-two years of age. The venerable old soldier was met, on his approach to the capital, by his one remaining son and thirty-two of his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Accompanied by them, he presented himself before the emperor, dressed in the rough sheepskin pelisse which he had worn in the deserts of Pelim. Peter restored to the aged soldier his rank of field-marshal; and expressed a hope that, notwithstanding his advanced age, he might still serve him. "Since your majesty," replied Munich, "has brought me from darkness to light, and called me from the depths of a cavern to admit me to the foot of the throne, you will find me ever ready to expose my life in your service. Neither a tedious exile, nor the severity of a Siberian climate, have been able to extinguish, or even to damp, the ardour I have formerly shown for the interests of Russia and the glory of its monarch."

Notwithstanding the clement temper of the emperor, Catherine entertained a dread that he might punish her for her infidelities towards him. Though she had long ceased to reside with him as his wife, yet she was compelled to wear a peculiar dress at the time of his accession, in order to conceal her pregnancy. But Peter was remarkably forgiving, and appeared not to discern those faults in her which were patent to every one else. He appeared to forget the wrongs he had suffered, in the attractions of her person and the power of her mind. He frequently passed many hours in her apartments, and discoursed with her, in a confidential manner, on important matters. Yet, with the inconsistency which ever characterised him, he would sometimes refer with bitterness to the wrongs she had done him, and treat her with harshness and disrespect. At one time he would bestow on her the most profound marks of respect; and at another, treat her in a manner which no lady could bear with patience. Thus, on the occasion of the benediction of the waters, which is regarded as one of the most sacred ceremonies of the Russian church, he made her appear adorned with all the marks of imperial dignity; while he followed in her train as a simple colonel. Not long after, while seated with Catherine at a public entertainment, he called to his mistress, the Countess Vorontzoff, who was passing by, and made her come and sit down beside them. The

empress immediately retired, and Peter made no attempt to detain her. The same evening, while at supper, he loudly called her a fool before a number of guests. Catherine burst into tears; and Peter injured himself more in the estimation of the spectators by this one act of temper than he would have done by some public tyranny.

Scenes of this kind kept alive the dislike which Catherine bore towards her husband, and revived her hopes of supplanting him on the throne. She made it her chief business to gain those hearts which he was losing. A perfect mistress of the art of dissimulation, it cost her no effort to assume, when in the presence of the multitude, sentiments the most opposed to her own secret convictions. Though a student of the sceptical philosophy of France, and an admirer of Voltaire, she assumed the manners of a fanatic. Every day she sedulously repaired to the churches of St. Petersburg, and prayed with all the semblance of a fervent devotion. She became punctual in the performance of the most superstitious practices of the Greek church. She accosted the poor with benignity, and treated the priests with reverence. As a natural result of this, the latter proclaimed her praises from house to house, and the populace regarded her as a benevolent princess. Catherine also kept her court with a mixture of dignity and affability which charmed all who approached her. Peter, on the other hand, soon relapsed into his old dissipated habits. To such an extent did he forget his rank, as to live familiarly with buffoons, and to allow them to sit at table with him. One evening, while at the Countess Narishkin's, after having attended the theatre, he caused the comedians to sit down promiscuously with the ladies and grandees of the court, and seated himself beside a dancer, whom he called his little wife. These acts of imprudence not only displeased his nobles and people, but caused injurious reports to be made by the ambassadors from foreign courts.

But the most dangerous of the emperor's indiscretions was the sudden and sweeping alterations he effected with respect to the property of the church. He seems to have been bent upon following the example of his illustrious grandfather, without reflecting that he had neither the power nor the patience that was possessed by the wise czar. Great was the difference between the conduct of the two monarchs with respect to the church. Peter I. did not endeavour to abolish its notorious abuses until, by a long career of great and brilliant actions, he had laid the foundations of his throne in the hearts of his people. Peter III. had no sooner laid his hand upon the imperial sceptre than he struck at the root of all the power of the church, by depriving it of its wealth—an act which, as it was of the nature of a confiscation, he had no right to do unless the priesthood had, by some great offence, deserved to lose what was taken from them, and which even then would have been imprudent and dangerous, when the intensely superstitious character of the Russian people is remembered.

Without reflecting on these matters, the emperor seized the vast possessions of the church, and made them into domains of the crown. The clergy he placed upon yearly salaries, varying from 5,000 down to 100 roubles. He even proceeded still further to irritate the clergy, by taking from the churches the figures of the saints, which both priests and people regarded as objects of profound veneration, and made certain arbitrary regulations concerning the beards and costume of the secular clergy. The Bishop of Novgorod, who exclaimed against this conduct as an impious violation of the sanctuary, he condemned to banishment, but afterwards showed his weakness by recalling in obedience to popular clamour. Peter cared but little for religion; but he had exhibited a bias towards Lutheranism rather than to the Greek form of Christianity used by the Russian church. The incensed priests therefore spread a report throughout the empire, that the emperor had only pretended to embrace the Greek communion to qualify himself for filling the throne, but that he was still a Lutheran at heart, of which he was every day giving proofs by showing a profound contempt for the rites, the ceremonies, and the religion of the Russians. Frederic of Prussia, with whom Peter constantly corresponded and informed of all he did, recommended him to be cautious with respect to the possessions of the church, and not to meddle with the dress of the monks, as small matters were of great consequence in the eyes of the ignorant and fanatical. Fearing what might happen, Frederic also urged him to maintain the respect which was due to his consort, the more especially so for his own security. The unsuspicious Peter, who was surrounded by traitors, and breathing an air

tainted by duplicity and conspiracy, replied, "In regard to the concern you take in my safety, I beseech you to give yourself no uneasiness. The soldiers call me their father, and say that they had rather be governed by a man than by a woman. I take my walks alone about the streets of St. Petersburg; if any one designed to do me harm, he would have executed his purpose long ago. But I am continually doing good on all occasions that offer, and I trust in the protection of God alone. With that I have nothing to fear."

The Countess Vorontzoff, Peter's mistress, had obtained a considerable amount of influence over him, and she now had the address to cause him to renew the promise he had made when only grand-duke—that he would marry her, and place her on the throne instead of Catherine. Elated with the prospect of this distinction, she had the imprudence to boast of it—a circumstance which led to her own ruin, and accelerated that of the czar. The latter, equally indiscreet, seemed to authorise by his conduct the reports she spread, and appeared no longer to take any pains to conceal his intention of repudiating Catherine, and proclaiming the illegitimacy of the grand-duke Paul, whom it is commonly supposed was the son, not of the emperor, but of his handsome chamberlain, Soltikoff. Peter imagined that, by publishing the proofs of Catherine's infidelity, she would sink in the estimation of the people, and that his conduct would elicit the approbation, not only of his subjects, but of every court of Europe. With this view he recalled Soltikoff from Hamburg, where the latter had resided since his dismissal from the court of Elizabeth; and, loading him with caresses and benefits, put every stratagem in practice to draw from him an authentic avowal of the criminal interviews which had formerly passed between him and the empress. It was at this period that Peter visited the unfortunate prince, the dethroned Ivan III., at the fortress of Schlusselburg. It is presumed that the emperor designed to adopt Prince Ivan—to declare him his successor, and to unite him in marriage with the young Princess of Holstein-Beck, then resident at St. Petersburg, and whom he cherished as a daughter. As it may excite surprise, and perhaps incredulity, that Peter, yet in the summer of life, should adopt a stranger for his heir, it may be mentioned, that although he had an ardent passion for women, yet he suffered from some physical disqualification which he appeared convinced incapacitated him from again becoming a father.

On leaving the cell in which the unhappy Prince Ivan was confined, the emperor directed that a new edifice should be constructed, in which the prince could be lodged in a manner more befitting his exalted rank. "Let the building," said Peter to the commandant, "run in a straight line from one wall to the other of this angle of the fort, so as to form nine rooms in front; and the rest of the space, to the extremity of the angle, may be made into a little garden, with which he may amuse himself in the air, and find some alleviation of the severity of his confinement. When the building is finished, I will come myself and put the prince in possession." This building, it was surmised, was not for the confinement of Ivan, but intended for the reception and imprisonment of Catherine after her disgrace and divorcement. The supposition, though probable, was not, however satisfactorily established. Peter caused Ivan, for the meantime, to be removed to the fortress of Kexholm, which stood on an islet in the great lake of Ladoga, and was much nearer to the imperial residence than Schlusselburg.

The suspicions of the empress were now converted into alarm. Peter dismissed her from the court, and caused her to be lodged, though not in actual confinement, in one of the most retired apartments at Peterhoff, where she passed her time in meditating how to escape from the fate that threatened her, by hurling her husband from the throne. It was here that she was assisted by one of the most active of the conspirators, her yet secret lover Gregory Orloff. This man was descended from one Ivan Orel, or Eagle, who, in the reign of Peter the Great, was a private soldier in the ranks of the Strelitz. When this body of troops was broken up in 1698, in consequence of its insubordination and repeated rebellions, an immense number of the men were beheaded; the czar himself, as we have related, occasionally acting the part of executioner. It is a current story in Russia, that this Ivan Orel, on being called to kneel down to receive his death-stroke, kicked away a head which still remained on the beam of timber on which the victims were decapitated in rows, coolly observing as he did so, "If this is my place, it ought to be clear." Peter, struck with the courage of

the man, spared his life, and placed him in a regiment of the line, where, by his bravery, he won his way to the rank of officer, which brought with it that of noble. His son rose to be governor of Novgorod, and had five sons, of whom Gregory, the lover of the empress, was one, and Alexis, who afterwards rendered himself infamous as the chief of the murderers of the unfortunate Peter III., was another.

Gregory Orloff, though he was destitute of the advantages of birth and education, yet possessed considerable courage and great personal beauty. To such an extent was he favoured by nature, that although he only possessed a post in the artillery, the Princess Kourakin, one of the handsomest women of the court, bestowed upon him her embraces. The discovery of the amour made some noise; and the curiosity of Catherine led her to wish for an acquaintance with the young officer who had become the topic of public discourse. An interview was brought about by an ingenious and unscrupulous waiting-woman, to whom Catherine confided the management of her intrigues of this nature. Gregory Orloff was introduced to the empress, and it is said that several interviews took place before he was acquainted with the name and rank of the fair lady who had bestowed her affection upon him. After a time, Catherine, pleased with the boldness and apparent discretion of her *inamorata*, disclosed to him who she was, and unveiled to him her ambitious designs. Orloff entered readily into the conspiracy, into which he soon after drew his companion Bibikoff, Lieutenant Passik, and other officers. By this means he was enabled to win over some companies of guards, though without imparting to them his secret design. Catherine's real character now rapidly disclosed itself. Not content with the attentions of her new lover Orloff, she pursued other intrigues with no less art than success. Her duenna, Ivanova, behaved with so much address, that those whom she presented to the empress, enjoyed her favours without knowing who she was. At the very time that she received the attentions of Gregory Orloff, she carried on amours with several other officers and courtiers; but as she did not expect to find in them the devotedness and genius that she required, she never disclosed her secret to them.

During this time the Princess Daschkaw kept up a correspondence from St. Petersburg with the empress in her retirement at Peterhoff. In this she gave an account of all that was passing at court, and suggested such means as she considered should be employed for preventing the designs of the czar. The Princess Daschkaw does not herself, in her *Memoirs*, give a satisfactory reason for the enmity which she entertained towards Peter, and the vehemence with which she participated in the conspiracy against him. "Her attachment to Catherine," says Tooke, "was not the sole motive which excited her zeal. She was principally jealous of the glorious elevation that awaited her sister; and neither the menaces of that sister and of her father, nor the authority of the chancellor her uncle, in whose house she had been brought up, were able to detach her from a party of which she fondly made it her pride to be the prime mover. She had studied the languages, and read many of the works of foreign authors, during her sojourn at Moscow, which augmented her natural vanity, and taught her to despise the ignorance of the nation to which she belonged. In the hope of arriving at the slippery honour of directing a conspiracy, she openly braved the resentment of her family: she would have braved every danger, and even boldly looked death in the face."

A considerable party was soon engaged to promote the views of the empress, chiefly through the active instrumentality of the Princess Daschkaw. Amongst them were the hetman Cyril Rasumoffski, brother of the secret husband of the late empress Elizabeth; the subtle Count Panin, tutor of the young grand-duke Paul; Prince Volkonski, major-general of the guards; and the Archbishop of Novgorod, who only waited for an opportunity of signalising his vengeance for the impotent sentence of banishment the emperor had pronounced against him. To these were added many officers, who, either disliking Peter's introduction of the Prussian drill and costume into the army, or hoping to acquire fortune in the storm of revolution, were ready to enlist in any conspiracy against the emperor.

To depose Peter was an enterprise of great danger and difficulty, and the conspirators were divided as to the manner in which it should be accomplished. Orloff, and some others, thought it best to begin by seizing on his person at Peterhoff, at the conclusion of one of those orgies which

they felt satisfied would take place on his arrival there to celebrate the anniversary of St. Peter and St. Paul. Lieutenant Passik proposed to stab him to the heart in the midst of his court; and this ruffian actually lay in ambush for two days, that he might accomplish this diabolical purpose, but without meeting him. The conspirators also differed as to who ought to succeed the czar when he should be disposed of. Orloff and the Princess Daschkaw, who were in the entire confidence of the empress, proposed that she should succeed her husband on the throne. Count Panin, and the hetman Rasumoffski, considered that she should be appointed regent, and that the title of emperor should devolve on the young grand-duke Paul.

Panin had the courage, at a meeting of the principal conspirators, to represent to Catherine the objections that existed to placing the crown upon her head. "I know, madam," said he, "what you would have, and what you are able to do; but I know also where your ambition should stop. You have repeated it a hundred times, while as yet grand-duchess, that you were only desirous of the title of mother of the emperor. Does that title at present seem too diminutive to you? You would now remove your son from the throne of Russia; but what right have you to seat yourself upon it alone? Are you of the blood of the czars? Are you even a native of the empire? Think you that this ancient and warlike nation will acknowledge for their sovereign a countess of Anhalt? Think you that they will not be incessantly plotting in favour of the descendants of Peter the Great, while one of them lies languishing at the foot of the throne, and others continue to groan in dark and loathsome dungeons? Ah, madam, give up your pretensions to what you can never obtain. Think it your greatest happiness to be able to escape the extreme danger that presses upon you; and that the only means of justifying our violent undertaking, is to convince the world that your son is, more than yourself, the object of your concern."

The conspirators were struck with the sense and firmness of this address, and, for a short time, all remained in silence. Catherine herself was the first to break it. Turning towards Panin, she said, "Count, your arguments are full of force; but they are not sufficient to produce any alteration in my sentiments. I know the Russians; and you yourself are so well acquainted with them as to know, that, provided they are governed, they care but little about the origin of those by whom the government is administered. This nation knows of nothing but obedience, even when the hand that rules it leans heavily on it. Mentschikoff, Biren, Munich, may serve as proofs of this truth. But it is not thus that I design to reign; far from it. I shall act with lenity, with justice, and in such manner as not to give the slightest pretext to discontent. But you, who tell me of murmurs and rebellions, do you forget that it is chiefly under regencies that rebellions break out? Nay, should we ever have had a thought of that we have now been contriving, if Peter III. were capable of guiding with firmness the reins of government? You are alarmed for my son; but had you rather abandon him to the fantastic humours of a father, by whom he is already disowned, than trust his fortune to a mother who loves him? And, if I aspire to the supreme command, is it not for the welfare of that child? is it not that I may be the better able to recompense those who, like you, assist me to defend him? Doubtless, they may all rely on my everlasting gratitude; but, in order to prove it to my heart's content, I must have the power; and that power is what I expect from you." The conspirators were divided in opinion, and no absolute decision was arrived at by them. Catherine, however, discerned the motive which dictated the opposition of Count Panin. He desired to place his pupil, the grand-duke Paul, on the throne, only that he might himself occupy the second place in the empire, and govern in the imperial name.

Catherine therefore endeavoured to allure Panin to the entire advocacy of her interests, by a promise to appoint him prime minister when she ascended the throne; and it is most probable that this promise led him to adopt the advocacy of her ambitious views. It is said, however, that his conversion was effected by the Princess Daschkaw, who obtained an influence over him in consequence of an illicit passion which he entertained for her. She, however, received the declaration of his love with coldness, and gave him no hope of success. One of the conspirators named Odart, a scheming, unprincipled Piedmontese, is reported to have undertaken to remove her scruples, and that he actually

did so by representing that, if she thought it a fault to yield to the solicitations of the count, that fault would be ennobled by the motive that impelled her to commit it; that no sacrifice should seem too dear in the cause of friendship; and that it would be the triumph of heroism to brave the disgrace of making her charms subservient to her ambition. It is added, that the romantic imagination of the princess was excited by this representation, and that she consented to the proposals of the count; who thereupon withdrew all opposition to the designs of the empress. It is probable the princess did exercise some influence over the count;. but we do not credit the statement that attributes a want of chastity on her part with respect to him. She herself treated the accusation with indignant scorn.*

It was necessary to gain over the soldiers; but Catherine had not the requisite funds for bribing them. Her situation at this time was one of great danger; and had not Peter have acted with perfect infatuation in disregarding the warnings that were given him, the conspiracy must have been discovered and crushed; in which case arrest, dethronement, and perpetual imprisonment, or, perhaps, death itself, would probably have been her doom. Disregarding the intimations he received of the plot against him, the czar made ready to depart with the expedition he had prepared against Denmark. One division of the fleet equipped for this purpose remained at Cronstadt, while the other lay waiting for it at Revel. Some of the land forces were already in Pomerania, and others were on their march to join them; while the czar had fixed his own departure for the day following the festival, which, according to custom, was to be celebrated at Peterhoff, and at the end of which he designed to have the empress arrested on a charge of being implicated in the conspiracy against him.†

In the meantime the emperor, absorbed in indolent security, had gone to enjoy himself in the company of some of the handsomest women at his court, at his country palace of Oranienbaum. The conspirators who had agreed to seize and carry him off on his return to St. Petersburg, considered it more prudent to hasten their movements, and carry this plan into execution on the appearance of the czar at Peterhoff. Suddenly, an event occurred which threatened instant discovery and destruction to all engaged in the plot. The ruffian Passik, who had offered to murder Peter, had gained the soldiers of the company of the guards in which he was lieutenant. One of them supposing that Passik did nothing but in concurrence with his captain, asked the latter on what day they were to take up arms against the emperor. The captain had the dexterity to conceal his astonishment, and, by giving vague answers to the questions of the soldier, he drew out from him the secret of the conspiracy, and at once reported it to the chancery of the regiment.

Passik was immediately arrested, and at first placed in a room, where he contrived to write with a pencil, on a scrap of paper, "Proceed to execution this instant, or we are undone." Giving this to a man who presented himself at the door, and who, though a stranger to him, the desperate nature of his situation made him trust to, he told him that if he ran with it to the hetman Rasumoffski, he would be handsomely rewarded. The fellow was a spy in the employ of the Princess Daschkaw, whose duty it was to watch Passik, and see that he did not betray his fellow-conspirators. The man, therefore, hurried with the paper to his mistress. He found her with Count Panin, who did not regard the arrest of Passik as an incident that threatened danger, but thought it was probably the consequence of some military offence. The princess entertained a different opinion, and desired Orloff to go to the barracks of the regiment, and ascertain whether Passik was guarded as a state criminal, or merely under

* In her *Memoirs* she says—"I seldom saw M. Odart, and not once during the three weeks preceding the revolution. I was glad to procure him a livelihood, but I never asked his advice on any occasion; and I believe he knew me a great deal too well to dare to make any such proposals to me on the part of M. Panin, as some French writers, in their libellous and senseless pamphlets, have thought fit to charge him with."

† Such was the blindness of this doomed monarch to all that was passing around him, that frequently, when in a state of partial intoxication, he talked of schemes of conquest and gave himself up to the transports of an extravagant ambition. Two days before the revolution that hurled him from the throne, he held, it is said, the following discourse:—"Of what use are all those petty sovereigns of Europe? What are they? I am resolved that, in future, there shall be but three powers in this part of the world—Russia, Prussia, and France. I will have all the north; the king of Prussia shall have all Germany; and the king of France the rest."

arrest as a military offender. The information they received was, that Passik was under arrest as a prisoner of state, guarded by four sentinels at the door, and two at each of the windows of his room.

Disguising herself in a man's great-coat, the energetic princess hurried forth, and caused orders to be conveyed to the officers in the conspiracy to repair, without a moment's delay, to their regiment, the Ismaeloffski guards, and remain at their posts in order to receive the empress at the suburbs of the city. She also desired Orloff, or one of his brothers, to fly like lightning to Peterhoff, and entreat the empress to place herself instantly in a post carriage, which she would find in readiness, and drive to the quarters of the Ismaeloffski guards, whom she would find waiting to proclaim her as sovereign, and to escort her into the capital.

After some hesitation, Alexis Orloff undertook the dangerous commission of going to bring the empress from Peterhoff. During his absence the princess yielded to the terrors of her situation. "Plunged in a desponding train of thought," she observes, "scarcely an image presented itself but of the most appalling nature. My imagination, however, constantly at work, would at some moments anticipate the triumphs of the empress; and all these pleasing illusions were hastily succeeded by others which made me shudder with horror. The least sound startled me, and presented Catherine to my view—that idol of my fancy—pale, disfigured, dying—the victim, perhaps, of our imprudence. This dreadful night, which appeared to me a whole life of suffering, at length passed away."

It was two o'clock in the morning when Catherine was roused from a profound sleep, and found a soldier standing by her bedside. To enable her the more easily to escape in the event of the discovery of the conspiracy, she had taken up her lodging at a summer-house in the grounds of the palace. At the foot of this building ran a canal, communicating with the river Neva. Near the door a small boat was fastened, as if without design, but, in reality, with the twofold object, that it might be of service in the secret visits of her favourites, and to facilitate her own escape into Sweden, should such a step become necessary. Gregory Orloff had given his brother Alexis a key to this summer-house, and he it was who had aroused the empress. "Your majesty has not a moment to lose," he exclaimed; "get ready to follow me;" and then instantly retired.

Notwithstanding the astonishment and, perhaps, alarm which seized the empress, she called her confidant, Ivanova. They hastily dressed themselves in such a manner as to avoid being recognised by the sentinels about the palace; and no sooner had they done so than Alexis Orloff returned, and told the empress that a carriage was waiting for them at the garden-gate. It was a coach which, under pretence of having change of horses for an excursion into the country, the Princess Daschkaw had kept for several days in readiness at a house inhabited by one of her peasants, a few miles from Peterhoff, and which Orloff had sent one of his comrades to fetch.

Catherine trusted her safety to the conspirator. She and her companion reached the carriage unobserved. Orloff then took the reins, and drove off with the speed of a madman. So relentlessly did he urge the horses forward, that after a time they fell exhausted upon the road, and remained unable to move. Every effort to rouse them to renewed exertions failed; and although the distance from St. Petersburg was still considerable, such was the imminent danger of delay, that they resolved to proceed on foot. Before they had gone far they met a peasant driving a light country cart. Alexis Orloff seized the horses; the man ran away in alarm; the empress and her attendant got into the vehicle; and again they started with such speed as they could urge the animals to accomplish. Soon they were met by another carriage, containing Gregory Orloff, who, on the rack of expectation, and alarmed at the non-appearance of the empress, had hurried forth to meet her. Recognising her in an instant, he called out that the conspirators only waited for her presence to proceed to action, and then hastily drove on before to receive ner at St. Petersburg. There Catherine arrived at seven in the morning, almost exhausted with fatigue and anxiety, but retaining sufficient command of herself to assume a sedate and tranquil air.

She proceeded immediately to the barracks of the Ismaeloffski guards, where, on the report of her arrival, about thirty soldiers, only half-dressed, ran out and received her with shouts of joy. Struck with alarm at seeing so small a number, Catherine remained silent for a few moments. But the

decisive step had been taken, and there was no choice but to go forward. Addressing the soldiers in a tremulous voice, she said that her danger had driven her to the necessity of coming to ask their assistance; that the czar had intended to put her to death that very night, together with her son; that she had no other means of escaping her doom but by flight; and that she had so much confidence in their dispositions as to put herself entirely in their hands.

The auditors were greatly excited at these words, and swore to defend her to the utmost of their lives. The numbers of the soldiers collected around the empress increased every moment, and before long the hetman Rasumoffski made his appearance. The chaplain of the regiment was then called, and, fetching a crucifix from the altar, he received on it the oath of the troops of fidelity to Catherine. In the tumult some voices were heard proclaiming her as regent; but these were soon stifled by the threats of the conspirators, and the far more numerous shouts of "Long live the empress!"

Other regiments of guards tacitly followed the example of those of Ismaeloffski; the officers placing themselves at the head of their companies with as much docility as if they had been engaged in the conspiracy. General Villebois and the artillery were also gained over; and in less than two hours she was followed by about 2,000 soldiers, and a great number of the inhabitants of the city, who applauded the troops, and appeared favourable to her pretensions. With these she proceeded to the church of Kazan, where the Archbishop of Novgorod (who was animated by a bitter hatred of Peter), arrayed in sacerdotal costume, and a great number of priests, stood at the altar to receive her. Placing the imperial crown upon her head, he proclaimed her sovereign of all the Russias, by the name of Catherine II., and declared the young grand-duke Paul her successor. To render this ceremony the more imposing, a *Te Deum* was chanted; the solemn sound of the music being broken in upon by the excited shouts of the multitude without. Catherine then proceeded to the palace that had been occupied by the late empress Elizabeth, where, for several hours, the crowd was indiscriminately admitted. Many of the people, under the influence of fickleness and excitement, fell on their knees before her, and took the oath of allegiance.

The conspirators were incessantly active in preparing for any resistance from the friends of the emperor, but none was offered. He seems for a time to have been perfectly ignorant of the revolution that was being effected at St. Petersburg. Such was his simplicity, that he had that morning caused a faithful officer to be arrested, who, the evening before, having had some intimation of the conspiracy, had hastened in the night to Oranienbaum to inform him of it. The emperor then set out in a calash, with his mistress, his favourites, and the women of his court, for Peterhoff, that he might be present at the grand festivities designed to take place on the following day.

The Princess Daschkaw was one of the first to congratulate the imperial traitress, who had so easily snatched the sceptre from the feeble grasp of her husband. It was with much difficulty that she contrived to reach the palace, so entirely was every approach to it blocked up by soldiers. But on being recognised by some of the officers, she was borne off the ground, and passed over the heads of all before her, until, with a giddy head and a tattered robe, she was set down safely in an antechamber. From thence she reached the presence of the empress. "We were soon," says the princess, "in each other's arms. 'Heaven be praised!' was all we could either of us for some moments utter."

After some rest and refreshment, the empress resolved on proceeding, at the head of the troops, to Peterhoff, and proposed to the princess to accompany her on the expedition. The latter joyfully consented, and they both equipped themselves in the uniform of the guards, having borrowed the requisite costume of two young officers of diminutive figure. It was on this occasion that Potemkin (afterwards so distinguished as favourite, and eventually minister of the empress, but then only a lad of sixteen, and ensign in the regiment of horse-guards), observing that Catherine had no plume in her hat, rode up, and presented her with his. The horse on which he was mounted, being accustomed to form into the squadron, was some time before it could be brought to quit the side of that of her majesty—a circumstance which afforded her an opportunity of noticing the manly grace and handsome features of him who eventually gained such an influence over her. The troops, who had been incessantly supplied with beer and brandy, expressed their pleasure

on beholding the empress in her male attire, by reiterated shouts of their national cry *hourra*, and by hurling their hats and caps into the air. One regiment of cavalry, of which Peter III. had been colonel when only grand-duke, preserved a sullen silence; but its officers, who refused obedience to Catherine, were placed under arrest, and the men were too few to offer opposition.

The emperor, while on his way to Peterhoff, was informed of the flight of Catherine. When he received the intelligence he turned pale, and betrayed considerable agitation. On arriving at Peterhoff, he ran to the pavilion that had been occupied by the empress, and, in his confusion, looked about for her as if she might have been concealed under the bed, or in one of the cupboards. Every one he met he overwhelmed with questions, but without obtaining any satisfactory information. Turning to his mistress, the Countess Vorontzoff, whom he beheld approaching up the walks of the garden, he called out "Romanovna, will you believe me now? Catherine has made her escape. I told you that she was capable of anything!" Rumours of evil passed among the servants and the women by whom Peter was surrounded, and a gloomy presentiment prevailed among them. At length a countryman approached, and, with a profound bow, delivered a note to the emperor, without uttering a single word. Peter read it to the alarmed courtiers; it was from one yet faithful to him, who had contrived to evade the guards placed on the road from St. Petersburg to Peterhoff, and send him information of all that had occurred in the capital.

Peter was greatly dejected; the courtiers uttered insincere consolations and assurances that all would yet be well; and the wily chancellor, Vorontzoff, represented that this popular excitement could not be really dangerous, and that, with the czar's permission, he would proceed to St. Petersburg, and soon return with the empress. Peter consented, and the chancellor hastened to Catherine, who assured him that she was only yielding to the ardent desires of the nation. Vorontzoff concluded by offering her his services, but begged that she would place him under a guard in his own house, that he might not seem to have abandoned his duty to the emperor. After the departure of the chancellor, Peter strode anxiously about the gardens; formed many different plans, and abandoned them as soon as he had formed them; sometimes uttering violent imprecations against his faithless consort, and at others dictating useless manifestoes. The only really useful thing he did was to dispatch a command to the 3,000 Holstein troops whom he had left at Oranienbaum, to come immediately, and bring their artillery.

The aged Marshal Munich soon afterwards made his appearance, and offered advice which, if acted upon, might yet have effectually crushed the insurrection. "Your majesty's troops are arriving," said the veteran; "let us put ourselves at their head and march straight to St. Petersburg. You have still many friends there; immediately on your appearance they will arm in your defence. The principal part of the guards are only under a momentary alienation, into which they have been misled, and will soon range themselves under your standard. Besides, if we are forced to come to action, be assured that the rebels will not long dispute with you the palm of victory." Peter consented to follow this advice; but, before long, news arrived that the empress was approaching with an army, said to consist of 22,000 men. The courtiers trembled, the women wept, and the timid emperor seemed resolved not to expose himself to danger. Munich then urged that they should retire to Cronstadt. "You have there," said he to Peter, "a formidable fleet and a numerous garrison. It is, in short, from Cronstadt that you will find it an easy matter to bring St. Petersburg back to its duty."

Peter again consented, and two yachts were hurriedly prepared for the departure of himself and his court, who at once embarked. But this step was taken too late. Catherine, aware of the importance of securing the fleet in her favour, dispatched Admiral Talitzen to take the command of it in her name. Having obtained admission into the fortress under the supposition that he was a loyal subject of the emperor, Talitzen excited the sailors to declare for the empress, distributed money and brandy amongst them, and induced them to arrest the commandant and place him in confinement. Many of the soldiers joined the sailors, and Talitzen, assuming the command, ordered the artillery to stand with lighted matches at their guns. As soon as the yacht containing the unfortunate monarch cast anchor, a sentinel demanded, "Who comes there?" "The emperor,"

was the answer. "There is no emperor," replied the sentinel. Peter advanced on deck, and throwing back his cloak, to show the badges of his rank, exclaimed, "What! do you not know me?" A thousand voices responded simultaneously, "No, we know of no emperor. Long live the empress Catherine!" At the same time, Talitzen threatened to sink the yacht if it did not instantly retire. Gudovitch, the emperor's aide-de-camp, took his startled master by the arm, and then grasping one of the timbers at the entrance of the mole, said, "Place your hands by the side of mine, and let us leap on shore. None will dare to fire upon you, and Cronstadt will still belong to your majesty." Marshal Munich reiterated this advice; but the spiritless czar shrunk from all appearance of danger, and retreating to the cabin of the yacht, hid himself among the terrified women. The cables were then cut, and the yachts departed from Cronstadt.

It was a fine starlight night, and Munich and Gudovitch sat upon deck, gazing upon the calm surface of the sea, and reflecting sorrowfully upon the ruinous indecision of the czar. After a time the vessels were stopped, and Peter summoned Munich to his presence. "Marshal," said he to the old man, "I perceive that I was too late in following your advice; but you see to what extremities I am reduced. You, who have escaped from so many dangers, tell me, I beseech you, what I ought to do." "Proceed immediately to join the squadron at Revel," returned Munich; "there take a ship, go on to Pomerania, put yourself at the head of your army, return to Russia, and I promise you, that in six weeks St. Petersburg and all the rest of the empire will be in subjection to you." This sound advice was frustrated by the fears of the timid women and the abject courtiers, who cried out, that the rowers would never have strength to reach Revel. "Well, then," rejoined the generous Munich, "we will all row with them." Peter was more disposed to listen to the representations of the women and the women-like men who formed his companions. They persuaded him that his danger was not so great as he imagined; that Catherine would rapidly come to an accommodation with him; and that it was better to negotiate than to fight. The czar fell in with this cowardly counsel, and gave directions to the rowers to proceed to Oranienbaum.

Peter arrived there at four in the morning; and, after commanding the servants who received him not to mention his return to any one, shut himself up in his apartments. There he wrote a submissive note to the empress, acknowledging his misconduct, and promising to share the sovereign authority with her. Catherine had no intention of sharing her newly-acquired power with any one; she therefore detained the messenger, and left the letter unanswered. At ten o'clock the emperor emerged from his apartments, and was received with enthusiastic affection by his Holstein guards. These faithful men shed tears of joy at seeing him again; they even kissed his hands and embraced his kness, and begged him to lead them against the army of the empress, declaring that, to a man, they were ready to sacrifice their lives in defence of his. Brave old Marshal Munich, also, again strove to rouse the czar to adopt some spirited course. "Come," said he, "march against the rebels. I will go before you, and their swords shall not reach you till they have pierced my body."

The pusillanimous and irresolute monarch seemed incapable of taking any bold course. Learning that the empress and her troops were still in a hostile attitude, he ordered one of his horses to be saddled, with the mad design of escaping alone, in disguise, towards the frontiers of Poland. He also wrote a second and most abject letter to Catherine, in which he implored her pardon, offered to resign to her the crown of Russia, and only desired that she would grant him a pension, with liberty to retire into Holstein.* General Ismaeloff was the bearer of this communication; and he readily entered into the service of Catherine, and even allowed himself to be seduced into an attempt to snare Peter into her power. The traitor returned to the czar,

* The unfortunate czar conducted himself with an utter absence of dignity. The Princess Daschkaw, who saw this note, says—"He declared, in distinct and express terms, his abdication of the crown; and after naming some persons whom he wished to accompany him, he spoke of the supplies necessary for his table, among which he did not forget to stipulate *for a plentiful supply of Burgundy, pipes, and tobacco!*" It is not surprising that the princess, who was a woman of astonishing spirit, and one who would have faced death rather than submit to personal indignity, should have added with disgust—"But enough on the subject of this ill-fated prince, whom nature had formed for the lowest walks of life, and whom fortune had unhappily placed on a throne."

and conjured him to abandon his troops and to repair to the empress, assuring him that he would be well received, and obtain all that he desired. Peter hesitated; but on the assurance of Ismaeloff that delay was most prejudicial to his interests, and that his life was in danger, he entered a carriage, and, accompanied by the Countess Vorontzoff, his mistress, and Gudovitch, his aide-de-camp, proceeded to Peterhoff, where the empress and her supporters were staying for a time.

Peter trusted that he would be enabled to move the heart of the empress; but he was not permitted to see her. As his carriage drove through the ranks of the army, most of the men preserved a gloomy silence, while others vociferated, "Long live Catherine; long live the empress!" The hopefulness he had encouraged was succeeded by despondency, which was greatly increased when coarse insults were added to neglect. His mistress, on stepping out of the carriage, was hurried away by the soldiers, who tore off the riband and order with which she was decorated. Gudovitch received the insults of the soldiers with a dignified tranquillity, and reproached them for their insolence and treason. As to Peter, he was led up the grand staircase, and then stripped of the imperial orders that decorated him, and even of his clothes. For some time he remained in his shirt, subjected to the outrages of a barbarous soldiery. After having robbed him of all his jewellery, they threw an old morning gown over him, and, shutting him up in a room by himself, placed a guard at the door.

There he was waited upon by Count Panin, who, after a conference of some length, in which he assured him that the empress would not keep him long in confinement, induced him to write out and sign the following form of abdication:—"During the short space of my absolute reign over the empire of Russia, I became sensible that I was not able to support so great a burden, and that my abilities were not equal to the task of governing so great an empire, either as a sovereign, or in any other capacity whatever. I also foresaw the great troubles which must thence have arisen, and have been followed with the total ruin of the empire, and my own eternal disgrace. After having, therefore, seriously reflected thereon, I declare, without constraint, and in the most solemn manner, to the Russian empire and to the whole universe, that I for ever renounce the government of the said empire, never desiring hereafter to reign therein, either as an absolute sovereign or under any other form of government; never wishing to aspire thereto, or to use any means, of any sort, for that purpose. As a pledge of which, I swear sincerely, before God and all the world, to this present renunciation. Written and signed this 29th of June (o.s.), 1762." The imbecile monarch was thus worked upon, through the medium of his unworthy fears, to become the assassin of his own reputation; for Catherine well knew that although such an extorted document as this would not bind Peter if he had the power to disregard it, yet that it would draw upon him the contempt of the people, and bury what little was left in him of the emperor beneath a load of self-created obloquy. Peter appeared more composed in mind after he had signed the deed of renunciation, by which act of submission he believed he had purchased the favourable consideration of the false wife who had become his sovereign. He was deceived. Prudent policy united in her mind with bitter personal dislike towards him, and she had no intention of restoring him to liberty. The very evening of the day in which he had signed his abdication, he was removed, with a strong escort, as a prisoner, to the castle of Ropscha, distant about twenty versts from Peterhoff. No presentiment of coming danger, no fear of secret assassination or of open violence, seems to have struck upon the mind of the czar. He supposed that he should shortly be liberated and sent into Germany. To amuse himself during this period, he sent a message to Catherine, desiring that she would permit him to have a favourite negro, who diverted him with his singularities, together with a dog he was fond of, his violin, a bible, and a few romances; at the same time telling her that, disgusted at the wickedness of mankind, he was resolved, in future, to devote himself to a philosophical life. Perhaps this modest application never reached Catherine; certainly it was never complied with.

"Thus," it has been observed, "was a revolution of such immense importance effected in one day, and without shedding a single drop of blood. The unfortunate emperor enjoyed the power, of which he had made so imprudent and unpolitic an use, no longer than six months. His wife, without any hereditary title, was sovereign mistress of the Russian empire; and the most absolute power on earth was now held by an elective monarch."

Two manifestoes were published by the empress, both filled with the strongest declarations of affection towards the Russian people, their interests, and their religion; and interspersed with such strains of piety as must have proved extremely edifying to those who are acquainted with the sentiments of pure religion by which great princes are generally animated on occasions of this nature. Enumerating, in exaggerated terms, all the faults of her fallen husband, Catherine observed—"Inconsiderately and incessantly bent on pernicious regulations, he so alienated the hearts of his subjects, that there was scarcely a single person to be found in the nation who did not openly express his disapprobation, and was even desirous to take away his life; but the laws of God, which command sovereign princes to be respected, being deeply engraved on the hearts of our faithful subjects, restrained them, and engaged them to wait with patience till the hand of God struck the important blow, and by his fall delivered an oppressed people."

The day after the removal of the dethroned Peter to the castle of Ropscha, the booming of cannon announced the triumphal entrance of Catherine, as an absolute sovereign, into St. Petersburg. The citizens, glad to have escaped from the dangers of a prolonged revolution, and the horrors of a military struggle, perhaps, in their very streets, received her with acclamations which were more noisy than sincere; for Peter had many friends in the city who would readily have declared for him if he had been bold enough to have made his appearance at the head of a small force and demanded their assistance. Now, however, the air was filled with shouts and the peals of church bells, the strains of military bands, and the dull roar of cannon, in honour of Catherine. She well understood the little arts by which popularity is won. Entering the city on horseback, she returned the shouts of the crowd by giving her hand to many of the people to kiss. Near the palace a great number of priests were assembled, and as she passed by them, she stooped to salute the cheeks of the principal clergy while they were kissing her hand; a custom which prevailed in that country, and was significant of the highest respect. While the neglected Peter passed his time in obscurity, and almost in solitude, the empress was receiving the homage of the principal nobility, who came flocking around her, and even of the members of the little court which the dethroned czar had held at Oranienbaum. Amongst the latter was the aged Munich, who, now no longer able to aid a master who could not be induced to help himself, came to make his peace with the ruling power. Catherine, on seeing him, called out, "Field-marshal, it was you, then, who wanted to fight me?" "Yes, madam," replied the veteran in a firm and manly tone, "could I do less for the prince who delivered me from captivity? But it is henceforward my duty to fight for you; and you will find in me a fidelity equal to that with which I had devoted my services to him."

For some days Catherine laboured incessantly to ingratiate herself with the different ranks of the people. She enchanted the multitude by the sweetness of her smiles and the condescension of her manners; she attended the senate, and listened to the causes that were tried there; she held her court with a graceful and easy dignity that did much towards effacing the remembrance of the means by which she had acquired the throne; and she had audiences with all the foreign ministers, during which she addressed them in the most flattering terms. Nor did she forget the services of the conspirators who had obtained for her the sceptre she was so well able to grasp. Panin was made prime minister; the title of count was bestowed upon both Gregory and Alexis Orloff: and the former, who was for the time the favoured lover of the empress, was also appointed lieutenant-general of the Russian armies, and chevalier of St. Alexander Nevski. Promotion was bestowed upon many officers of the guards, and four-and-twenty of them obtained considerable estates. The finances of the empress were not sufficient to permit of anything further than a distribution of brandy and beer amongst the soldiers; but Catherine behaved towards them with the greatest affability. She sometimes even subjected herself to restraint to please them. A singular instance of this occurred three days after the revolution. A soldier who had drunk himself into a state of intoxicated sleep, probably at the expense of the empress, dreamed that she had been seized and carried away. Starting up under this

impression, he ran about the barracks crying out that the Holsteiners and the Prussians had got possession of the empress. The alarmed troops took up arms, and hurrying to the palace, insisted on seeing her majesty. The hetman Rasumoffski, on learning the cause of the disturbance, made his appearance at a window, and assured the soldiers that the report was a false one, and that the empress was then taking that repose which the fatigues of the few preceding days had rendered so necessary. The soldiers were not satisfied; they redoubled their clamours, and refused to retire without seeing their imperial mistress. Rasumoffski therefore went to the chamber of the empress, and causing her to be aroused, begged her not to be frightened. "You know," answered she boldly, "that I am frightened at nothing: but what is the matter?" "The soldiers imagine that you are not here," was the reply; "they insist on seeing you." "Well, they must be satisfied," responded Catherine; and hastily dressing herself, she called for her carriage, and ordered it to be driven to the Kasanskoi church. As the vehicle passed on through the crowds of soldiers, they glanced anxiously into it, exclaiming, "Is that indeed the empress? Is that indeed our mother?" On arriving at the church, she showed herself; and addressing the soldiers, thanked them for their solicitude, and dismissed them, greatly satisfied.

Catherine not only rewarded her friends, but she had the policy to forgive those whom she might have regarded as her enemies. As yet no blood was shed in this rapid revolution. Some few of the officers and friends of Peter were forbidden to appear at court, and three, including Gudovitch, the emperor's aide-de-camp, were imprisoned; but there the anger of the sovereign stopped. Peter's mistress, the Countess Vorontzoff, who had at first been roughly treated by the soldiers, was sent to the house of her father. She shortly afterwards retired to a country place in the neighbourhood of Moscow, and eventually married a M. Palianski, with whom she took up her residence at St. Petersburg. Catherine forgot the wrongs of the wife so far as to stand godmother, in person, to the eldest son of this woman. Many years afterwards her daughter, also, was nominated by the empress to be one of her maids of honour.

Peter III., though he had made himself many enemies, had yet no small number of friends among the people, who could not long forget that he had ever been the friend of the poor, and to whom he was perhaps even endeared by that very vulgarity of manners which had disgusted so many of his nobles and courtiers. The revolution had been almost too rapid for its endurance, and the safety of those engaged in it. A reaction took place in favour of the deposed monarch, and his clemency was remembered, while his vices were forgotten. The people pitied his sad reverse of fortune; and, even in the army, some regiments murmured, and began to repent the part they had taken against their lawful sovereign. As to the sailors, they openly reproached the guards that they had sold their master for brandy and beer. Men seemed as if aroused from a sense of intoxication, and, reflecting gloomily upon what had passed, they doubted the probity and wisdom of their own conduct. It was observed that many of the citizens who had been exceedingly active in the tumult of the revolution, were seized with a deep and painful remorse, and lamented the sufferings they had brought upon their monarch. Many of the soldiers, accusing themselves of treason towards their deposed master, cursed those who had led them into it. From abuse and imprecations they proceeded to blows, and several lives were lost in the furious altercations which took place. It only wanted some able and resolute leader to have replaced Peter on the throne from which, but a few days before, he had been so suddenly precipitated; and the minds of the conspirators were filled with apprehensions of a new insurrection.

While discontent prevailed at St. Petersburg, a still more dangerous state of feeling existed among the military at Moscow. The governor of that ancient city, on hearing of the revolution which had placed Catherine on the throne, assembled the troops there, consisting of five regiments, in the great square before the palace of the czars. He at the same time invoked the presence of the people, who assembled in immense crowds. Having read the ukase by which the empress announced her accession and the abdication of her husband, he shouted, "Long live the empress, Catherine II.!" No response followed either from people or soldiers, and a sullen and ominous silence prevailed. This was at length broken by low murmurs, and then the troops, gaining

courage, complained that the regiments of the guards had insolently dared to dispose of the throne. The startled governor then called upon the officers to join the cry of "Long live the empress!" and, having done so, the multitude was dismissed, and the soldiers marched back to their barracks.

Catherine felt much uneasiness and alarm at these indications of popular feeling, so threatening to her interest. To such an extent was she haunted by the spectres of her imagination during this period, that sleep scarcely afforded her any repose; and several times in the course of the night she would quit her bed, and occasionally even her palace. It was not difficult to foresee to what dark catastrophe such a temper on the part of the people, and such a state of mind on the part of the sovereign, would eventually lead.

The deposed emperor had been placed in the custody of Count Alexis Orloff and the two brothers Baratinski, one of whom was marshal of the court, and the other was afterwards sent as envoy from Russia to the court of France. Peter had been six days in his obscure retreat, when Alexis Orloff, and an officer named Teploff, entered his apartment, assured him of his speedy liberation, and requested permission to dine with him. The unsuspicious monarch readily consented, and, according to the Russian custom, wine-glasses and brandy were brought in before dinner. While Teploff amused the czar with some trifling discourse, Orloff secretly poured some poison into the glass intended for the czar. Peter drank the deadly potion offered to him without mistrust, and was immediately seized with most acute pains. The assassins offered him a second glass, saying that it would give him relief; but the unhappy man, who then discerned their diabolical object, refused it, and burst into reproaches against them. Racked with pain, he called loudly for milk, when the two monsters offered him poison again, and urged him to take it. Attracted by the noise, a French valet, to whom Peter was much attached, ran into the apartment. The czar threw himself into the arms of his servant, and said, in a faint voice, "It was not enough, then, to prevent me from reigning in Sweden, and to deprive me of the crown of Russia! I must also be put to death!"

The valet interceded for his master, but the murderers forced the man from the apartment, and renewed their ill-treatment of the czar. A struggle followed, during which the younger of the brothers Baratinski entered. Orloff, who was a man of great strength, had thrown the emperor on to the ground, and was kneeling upon his breast with both knees, while with one hand he firmly grasped his throat. Peter struggled with the force arising from despair, and inflicted a mark on the face of Baratinski, which that villain long retained; but he was rapidly losing strength, when the other ruffians, throwing a napkin round his neck, terminated his life by strangulation.

Some writers have expressed a belief that the empress Catherine was not implicated in this revolting murder; but it is difficult to arrive at that conclusion. Perhaps the crime was not committed in consequence of any command from her; but the assassins evidently knew that its commission would be agreeable to her. The fact that she attempted to conceal the cause of her husband's death, and so far from punishing the murderers, retained them in her service and her favour, is sufficient evidence that she sanctioned the crime, if she did not command it. The Princess Daschkaw, though evidently struggling at the time with a suspicion she had much difficulty in repressing, yet vehemently denies that the empress directed or connived at the murder. Her own language, however, shows that she was not so satisfied on this point as she desires her readers to believe. "I was shocked," she observed, "at the news of this catastrophe—so indignant at such a winding up of this *glorious** revolution, that, although I spurned the idea of the empress being in any degree an accomplice in the crime of Alexis Orloff, I could not bring myself to enter the palace until the following day. I then found the empress with a dejected air, visibly labouring under much uneasiness of mind. These were her words when she addressed me:—'My horror at this death is inexpressible; it is a blow which strikes me to the earth.' 'It is a death too sudden, madam,' replied I, 'for your glory, and for mine.'"

No sooner was the murder effected, than Alexis Orloff mounted his horse, and dashed off at full speed to inform the empress that her husband had breathed his last. He imparted the news to her just as she was about to make her appearance at court.

* Perhaps *infamous* would be a more appropriate epithet.

She received it tranquilly, and then, shutting herself up with Panin, Gregory Orloff, Rasumoffski, and some other of her ministers, she deliberated with them whether the senate and the people should be immediately acquainted with the death of the emperor, or the news withheld until the following day. The latter plan was adopted as the most prudent one; and Catherine, wearing her customary smiles, dined in public as usual, and held a court in the evening.

The following day it was publicly announced that the emperor was dead. The information was communicated to the court while Catherine was at table. Rising from her seat, with her eyes full of tears, she dismissed her courtiers and the foreign ministers, and, retiring to her apartment, appeared for several days to be plunged in the most profound grief. During this time she published the following declaration:—"By the grace of God, Catherine II., empress and autocratrix, &c. * * * The seventh day after our accession to the throne of all the Russias, we received information that the late emperor, Peter III., by means of a disorder to which he was subject, was attacked with a most violent griping cholic. That, therefore, we might not be wanting in Christian duty, nor disobedient to the Divine command by which we are enjoined to preserve the life of our neighbour, we immediately ordered that the said Peter should be furnished with everything that might be judged necessary to prevent the dangerous consequences of that accident, and to restore his health by the aids of medicine. But, to our great regret and affliction, we were yesterday evening apprised that, by the permission of the Almighty, the late emperor departed this life. We have therefore ordered his body to be conveyed to the monastery of Nevski, in order to its interment in that place. At the same time, with our imperial and maternal voice, we exhort our faithful subjects to forgive and forget what is past, to pay the last duties to his body, and to pray to God sincerely for the repose of his soul; willing them, however, to consider this unexpected and sudden death as an especial effect of the providence of God, whose impenetrable decrees are working for us, for our throne, and for our country, things known only to His holy will."

The body of the murdered emperor was brought to St. Petersburg, and exhibited for three days in an open coffin in the church of the monastery of St. Alexander Nevski. The deceased was attired in his Prussian uniform, and, according to custom, persons of all ranks were admitted to kiss his hand. But even the corpse seemed to bear silent witness to the manner in which the life of the unfortunate czar was terminated. The face was nearly black; extravasated blood oozed through the skin, and even stained the gloves worn by the body. So violent was the poison administered, that some persons who, from motives of affection, kissed the mouth of the dead czar, returned with swollen lips. Catherine and her ministers were aware that such dreadful intimations might lead to a discovery of the means by which the unhappy monarch had been deprived of life; but they were less interested in saving appearances, than in preventing the excitement which would have arisen in the event of a supposition getting abroad among the people that Peter was still living. On the 21st of July, the very day that the late emperor had fixed for his departure on the expedition against Denmark, his body was consigned to a grave within the church; but no monument, or even inscription, was placed to mark the spot. The court of Sweden went into mourning for him; but in no other nation was much sympathy shown for his tragic fate. The Russian people pitied their murdered czar; and the day of his funeral was a melancholy one in St. Petersburg. Masses of the people thronged around the church, and reproached the soldiers of the guards with having basely shed the last drop of the blood of Peter the Great.

The character of Peter III. cannot command our respect, but his dismal fate excites our pity. He was misplaced in life, and had neither the mind nor manners requisite for one holding so exalted and highly responsible a station. Vulgar in his demeanour, sensual in his habits, and trifling in his behaviour, he lacked even the ordinary refinement of a private gentleman. It is probable that he gave way to coarse and unbecoming manners, and selected vulgar associates in imitation of Peter the Great; but that illustrious man, who redeemed all his vices by far greater virtues as a ruler, could venture on acts which it was dangerous for common men to perform. The deposed czar, though painfully deficient in energy and resolution, and totally unable to confound his enemies by the exhibition of a commanding will that

would brook no opposition, or a subtle intellect capable of detecting and frustrating their schemes, yet had the imprudence to effect with rapidity a change, with respect to the property of the church, more sweeping than that which his wise ancestor had considered it well to delay until the latter phase of his reign. The great wants of Peter III. were the lack of discretion, by which he was led into danger, and the lack of a courage which would have extricated him from it. During his latter days, contempt for his cowardice often checks the rising pity which we feel for his misfortunes. It has been conjectured that he was of unsound mind, but we do not think that this supposition can be at all established. He was mentally feeble, and rather eccentric; but a weak mind is not a diseased one; nor is the extravagance of conduct which arises from want of reflection, and from frequent intemperance, to be dignified with the name of madness. Yet Peter had gleams of light in the ordinary dimness of his mental faculties. He saw desirable results, but had no clear idea of the manner in which they were to be arrived at. During his brief sway he effected many valuable reforms, and it cannot be doubted that he would have accomplished many more had his reign been prolonged. Personally, he was amiable even to a fault; and most of those who composed his more intimate circle of acquaintance were much attached to him. His gentleness was in excess for a monarch, for he was deficient of the sternness required to crush an enemy or punish a traitor. His conduct to Catherine was, however, an exception to the amiability of character usual with him: from the first he subjected her to occasional rudeness and neglect, and contrived to convert her indifference, first into disgust, and then into fear and hatred. Yet, beyond petty vices, he committed no crime; his intentions were benevolent, though they were mostly deformed by that thoughtlessness and utter want of discretion which enabled a few obscure conspirators to hurl him from his throne, and led him to that tragic death by which he obtained a place among those illustrious unfortunates of the earth who must ever be regarded with deep emotions of pity.

Frederic of Prussia, who had foreseen the probable fate of the unfortunate Peter III., and endeavoured, by the frequent offer of good advice, to prevent it, formed a tolerably accurate estimate of his character. Shortly after the revolution, the Prussian monarch thus wrote to Count Finkenstein, one of his favourites:—"The emperor of Russia has been dethroned by his consort: it was to be expected. That princess has much good sense, and the same inclinations as the defunct. She has no religion, but acts the devotee. It is the second volume of Zeno, the Greek emperor, of his wife Adriana, and of Mary de Medicis. The late chancellor, Bestuchef, was her greatest favourite, and as he has a strong propensity to guineas, I flatter myself that the attachments of the present period will be the same. The poor emperor wanted to imitate Peter I., but he had not the capacity for it."

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE EMPRESS CATHERINE CONFIRMS THE PEACE WITH PRUSSIA; HER CORONATION AT MOSCOW; SHE REFUSES TO RESTORE THE PROPERTY OF THE CHURCH; DANGEROUS INSURRECTIONS, AND INTREPIDITY OF THE EMPRESS; GREGORY ORLOFF; REFORMS EFFECTED BY CATHERINE, AND MILDNESS OF HER ADMINISTRATION; SHE INVITES FOREIGNERS TO COME TO RUSSIA, AND PRESENTS THEM WITH LAND; COUNT PANIN DESIRES HER TO SURRENDER HER ABSOLUTE POWER INTO THE HANDS OF AN ARISTOCRATIC SENATE; INTRIGUE TO INDUCE HER TO MARRY HER FAVOURITE ORLOFF, AND CONSEQUENT IRRITATION OF THE PEOPLE; TERMINATION OF THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR.

It was supposed that the peace and alliance which the late emperor had concluded with Prussia would not long be observed by Catherine. It was unpopular throughout the empire; and as none of the conquests which Peter had stipulated to restore to Frederic were yet abandoned by the Russian troops, they might yet be retained in the event of a renewal of hostilities being determined upon. Catherine was tempted to pursue this course, but chiefly because she believed that Frederic had encouraged the

late emperor in the severe measures he contemplated against her. When, however, she discovered some letters among the papers of her late husband, counselling him to act with more consideration and kindness towards his consort, she abandoned her intention of renewing the war. She was indeed fully aware that the crown as yet stood so loosely upon her head, that it was wise to confine her attention for a time almost entirely to her own safety. She saw that it was expedient to collect within itself all the forces of the empire, that she should be able to oppose the designs of malcontents who might venture on some attempt to revenge the fate of the late czar, or seek their own advancement in the tumult of a fresh revolution. Under these circumstances, she informed the ministers of the king of Prussia, "that she was resolved to observe inviolably, in all points, the perpetual peace concluded under the preceding reign; that, nevertheless, she had thought proper to bring back to Russia, by the nearest roads, all her troops in Silesia, Prussia, and Pomerania."

Towards the empress-queen, Maria Theresa, Catherine behaved with coldness. Louis XV., of France, who had calculated on deriving advantage from her supposed attachment to his country, was surprised at discovering that, notwithstanding her admiration of French literature, she manifested a feeling of aversion towards the court of Versailles. Mr. Keith, the English ambassador, though he did not enjoy the same freedom of access to the empress to which his predecessor was admitted, was treated as the minister of a friendly power, and Catherine soon renewed the treaty which had given to England the chief part of the commerce of Russia. To the king of Denmark, against whom the Russian troops were on their march at the time of the revolution by which Peter was deposed, she gave the assurance that he might make himself easy on the subject of Holstein, as it was her intention always to keep up a good understanding with him. Catherine was wisely desirous of establishing peace abroad, that she might preserve it within the empire, for she knew that she had more to fear from her own subjects than from foreign potentates.

The distribution of bribes and brandy among the soldiery at Moscow effected some change in their feelings towards the empress, and it was difficult for them to refuse to acknowledge so liberal a sovereign. Catherine, therefore, started for that city, for the purpose of celebrating her coronation in the ancient capital of the empire. She took with her, as her attendants, Gregory Orloff, whose influence was daily increasing; the old chancellor, Bestuchef, whom she had recalled from exile; the greater part of the nobles who had shown themselves devoted to her interest, the principal ladies of the court, and the young Grand-duke Paul. She bestowed the government of St. Petersburg, during her absence, on Count Bruce, of whose fidelity she felt satisfied; while the regiments of the guards, to whom, before leaving, she gave further assurances of her approbation, she left under the command of the hetman Rasumoffski and Prince Volkonski, while Alexis Orloff was charged to watch over all with his usual activity.

Catherine and her court entered Moscow with great pomp, were she was, notwithstanding, received with much coldness. Few acclamations welcomed her; and those shouts which were raised at her appearance were suspected of being purchased. Silent as the people mostly were at the presence of the empress, they hailed the appearance of the young Grand-duke Paul, and showed, by the affection they displayed towards him, their regret for the misfortunes of his father. Catherine was crowned at the chapel of the czars on the 22nd of September, in the presence of the soldiers and the court. She lavished the most attractive flatteries on the archbishop and the priests, and prolonged festivities were held for the gratification of the people. She also issued a proclamation, praising the troops that had fought against Prussia, and awarded half a year's pay to the subalterns and common soldiers who had been present at the victories obtained over the armies of that state. Her friends also were gratified by a number of promotions and presents; and the empress herself assumed the rank of colonel in each of the four regiments of life-guards. Yet all these arts did not win the people or soldiers into the expression of any enthusiasm; and Catherine soon left Moscow in disgust, and returned to St. Petersburg.

The empress had other difficulties to surmount before she was firmly seated upon the throne at which she had arrived by such sinister and tortuous ways. But she felt, and soon proved, herself equal to the dangerous task. It was not only because the priesthood were deceived by her habits of assumed devotion that they had favoured

the revolution which deposed her husband and placed the sceptre in her hand. They expected to obtain, as a return for their services, the restoration of the possessions of which Peter III. had deprived them; and they now reminded her of the promises she had made to that effect. Catherine had sought popularity by joining in the outcry against the spoliation of the church; but still she secretly knew that it was prudent to reduce the great wealth and consequent power of the priesthood, which had been, and might again be, employed against the person or interests of the sovereign. She therefore resolved to profit by the very deed she had denounced as sacrilege: her rash husband had incurred the odium of the act, and she determined on reaping the benefit arising from it. Instead, therefore, of revoking the edict of Peter III., she referred it to the examination of a synod, composed of prelates whom she took care should be implicitly subservient to her will. The opposition of the principal members of the clergy was then disarmed by the secret distribution of heavy bribes, and the interests of the rest were sacrificed.

The great mass of the priests were accordingly actuated by a feeling of fury against the empress; and as they had assisted to place her on the throne, they resolved on seeing if their influence could not prevail to hurl her from it. Wherever discontent existed among the populace, there they fanned the embers of sedition, and they succeeded, in some measure, in introducing an insurrectionary feeling among the soldiers. They declared that the imprisoned prince, Ivan, was the only lawful heir to the throne; and they found, or, what is far more probable, forged, the copy of a manifesto, which it was said Peter III. had caused to be drawn up, and then signed with his own hand. In it he enumerated all the weaknesses and faults of Catherine, accused her of adultery, and declared that he would not acknowledge the young grand-duke for his son, since he was the fruit of the scandalous commerce of his wife with Soltikoff. The exasperated priests dispersed copies of this document amongst the people and the soldiers, of whom many repented the part they had taken in the recent revolution, and pitied the sad fate of a prince whose life had paid the penalty of his errors.

Many were soon disposed to avenge the fate of one whom they could not restore; and there was some danger of a new revolution. But Catherine was far more vigilant than her ill-fated husband, and her emissaries quickly discerned the signs and the sources of the spreading discontent. An imperial proclamation was issued, forbidding the soldiers of the guards to assemble, except on receiving orders to do so from their officers. Some, whose violence had betrayed them, were arrested, and suffered the punishment of the knout, or were banished to Siberia. As an intimation to the priesthood, the empress also dismissed the Archbishop of Novgorod from the court, and he retired, with a heart bursting with rage, to the clergy, who hated him for having sold their interests. Several of the officers and courtiers also experienced the displeasure of Catherine, and were compelled to retire from their posts.

But the spirit of insurrection, though encountered, was not suppressed. The priests were still active in exciting discontent among the people and the soldiery. They were so far successful, that great disturbances prevailed in the barracks; and the danger became so serious, that for a whole day it was regarded as probable that the empress would experience a fate similar to that of her husband. But the high spirit of Catherine never forsook her; and without calling her council, she took private measures for calming the revolt. On her ministers testifying their uneasiness, she spoke to them with great confidence, and with a dignity that was peculiar to her. "Why are you alarmed?" she inquired. "Think you that I am afraid to face the danger, or rather, are you afraid that I know not how to overcome it? Recollect that you have seen me, in moments more terrible than these, in full possession of the whole vigour of my mind; and that I can support the most cruel reverses of fortune with as much serenity as I have supported her favours. A few factious spirits, a few mutinous soldiers, are to deprive me of a crown that *I accepted with reluctance*, and only as the means of delivering the Russian nation from the miseries with which it was threatened! I know not with what pretence they colour their insolence; I know not on what means they rely; but, I say it again, they cause me no alarm. That Providence which has called me to reign, will preserve for me the glory and the happiness of the empire; and that Almighty arm which has hitherto been my defence, will now confound my foes."

The two Orloffs were incessantly active in pacifying the guards by presents and promises; and when they had succeeded in reducing the prevalent irritation, four-and-twenty of the disaffected officers were arrested and placed on their trial for high treason. Four of them were declared guilty, and condemned to be quartered; but Catherine, who desired rather to awe than to punish, mitigated the terrible sentence into banishment to Siberia, though, prior to their expatriation, the offenders were scourged by the hand of the common executioner. Combining policy with firmness, the empress stooped to soothe the most dangerous of the priests, and contrived to stop the cabals of the monks. The soldiers and people soon discovered that they were ruled by a vigorous hand, and they learned, first submission, and eventually admiration. Catherine delighted the young and gay among her courtiers by her attachment to pleasure; and the older and more grave of them by her devotion to the business of the state. She assisted at all the deliberations of the council; read the despatches from her ambassadors; dictated the answers that were to be sent to them; and took every pains to observe that her commands were executed. Aiming at the acquisition of fame as well as that of power, she contemplated the example of those illustrious monarchs who, by the grandeur of their actions, effaced the memory of their crimes or follies. She saw that elevation of purpose and firmness of execution were essential to the character of a great ruler. "We should be constant in our plans," she would observe; "it is better to do amiss than to alter our purpose. None but fools are irresolute."

Among the courtiers who incurred the displeasure of the empress was her friend, as she called her, the Princess Daschkaw. A mutual aversion existed between this lady and the two Orloffs, who doubtless misrepresented her to Catherine. The empress had refused to the princess the title of colonel in the Presbrazinski guards, which carried with it certain social distinctions she was anxious to possess. The princess murmured at the ingratitude of her imperial mistress, to whose ears her complaints were carried. The latter first warned the princess, and afterwards kept her at a distance. Desirous of throwing as much light as possible on the interesting subject of the personal character of Catherine, we will quote a passage from the *Memoirs* of the princess, having reference to this period:—"As the days of my illusions," she observes, "respecting the friendship of sovereigns are about to cease, I may be allowed to dwell a moment longer on the recollection of those hours of intimacy which the fascinating powers of the empress could often diversify with the sportiveness of childhood itself. I was enthusiastically fond of music, but she was far from being so; and Prince Daschkaw, though with some taste for it, was as little of a performer as the empress. She was, nevertheless, fond of hearing me sing; and sometimes, when I had done, secretly passing a sign across to Prince Daschkaw, she would gravely propose a duet; which she used to call the music of the spheres, and which, without either of them knowing how to sing a note, they both performed in concert. A sudden burst of the most exalted and ridiculously discordant tones was the consequence; one seconding the other with scientific shrugs, and all the solemn, self-complacent airs and grimaces of musicians. From this, perhaps, she passed to the cat concert, and imitated the purring of poor puss in the most droll and ludicrous manner, always taking care to add appropriate half-comic, half-sentimental words, which she invented for the occasion; or else, spitting like a cat in a passion, with her back up, she suddenly boxed the first person in her way, making up her hand into a paw, and mewing so outrageously, that instead of the great Catherine, nothing but the wrongs of a grimalkin remained upon one's mind. I really believe there never was any one in the world, and certainly never any sovereign, who equalled her in the magic versatility of her mind, the exhaustless variety of her resources, and, above all, the enchantment of her manner; that in itself could give a lustre to the commonest words and most trifling matters."

Catherine's Polish lover, Poniatowski, had kept up a correspondence with her; while she, on her part, affected a romantic constancy in her attachment towards him. Delighted at the exaltation of the empress to the throne, he advanced to the frontiers of Poland, and requested the permission of her majesty to pay a visit to her court. Catherine, who had long transferred her favours to Gregory Orloff, answered that his presence was not necessary at St. Petersburg, and that she had different views in his behalf. Yet, unwilling that he should

be informed of her new connections, she continued to write to him in an affectionate style, and sometimes even carried her dissimulation so far, as to shed tears when in the presence of his confidants. Orloff, however, had no scruples, and no longer concealed the intimacy which existed between him and the empress. As he did not now fear the result of the discovery of his amour, he would not submit to any inconvenient precaution to prevent its disclosure. Coarse in his manners, he even, when in his cups, boasted of his influence over the empress, and his power in the state. Such was the arrogance of this man, and the favour with which she regarded him, that she even permitted insolence from him to pass by unregarded. One evening, when he was at supper with the empress, the hetman Rasumoffski, and some others of the court, he talked of the influence he had over the guards, and boasted of his having solely brought about the revolution; adding, "that his power was so great, that if he chose to abuse it, he could in one month destroy his own work, and dethrone the empress." The courtiers looked offended, and the hetman thus rebuked the braggart:—"You might do so in one month; but, my friend, within a fortnight afterwards we should have hanged you!" Catherine did not resent Orloff's rudeness: she knew the value of his services; and the attachment which commenced in affection, and still had an influence over her, she maintained inviolate through policy.

When early dangers were past, the empress did not relax her efforts for the conciliation of her subjects. Most of the reforms that Peter III. decreed, she sanctioned and caused to be carried into execution. She confirmed the abolition of the secret inquisition chancery, and commanded that all its acts should be brought into the senate, "and there sealed up in the archives consigned to everlasting oblivion." She also ordained that torture should never be employed in the examination of criminals. It must be acknowledged that Catherine, with all her faults, was not a severe or cruel sovereign; a spirit of mildness was usually exercised in the administration of the laws; and throughout her reign, the punishment of death was rarely inflicted. She devoted herself with great assiduity to the administration of her vast estates, the advancement of commerce, the augmentation of the navy, and to the means of recovering the finances of the empire from those derangements into which they had fallen. She published a manifesto, assuring foreigners that they should find welcome and support in her dominions, and instituted a court especially for their protection. She pointed out to them unoccupied districts adapted for cultivation, and offered free lands, sufficient for some hundred farms, to foreigners who would come to Russia and cultivate them. Not agriculturists alone, but merchants, artificers, and workmen of any kind were invited. The proclamation is in some respects curious; and the example of the empress might be advantageously followed by some states in Europe, and especially in Asia, at the present time. The document set forth, that "any one who is destitute shall receive money for the expenses of the journey, and shall be forwarded at the charge of the crown. On his arrival, he shall receive a competent assistance; and, if he want it, even an advance of a capital, free of interest for ten years. All that he brings for his own use is duty free; even for sale, a family may introduce to the value of 300 roubles. The stranger is exempt from all service, either military or civil; even from all taxes and imposts for a certain time: in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and the Livonian towns, he enjoys five free years; in the inland towns, ten; on the hitherto uncultivated districts, thirty. In these new tracts of land, the colonists live according to their own good-will, under their own jurisdiction, without any participation or cognizance of the imperial officers. ALL RELIGIONS ARE TOLERATED."

This proclamation was the cause of an extensive immigration, chiefly from the German states, though settlers came also from Poland, Sweden, and even from France. Thousands of Germans, dissatisfied with their government and the religion to which they were forced to conform, hastened to accept the invitation of the empress. Obscure literary men, artificers, mechanics, projectors, vagabonds, and beggars, old and young, set out in haste to take ship at Lübeck and other Baltic ports. Some of the petty sovereigns of Germany issued prohibitions against these emigrations, which they regarded with a jealous and uneasy feeling, forgetful that, in many instances, it was their misgovernment which had driven their subjects to seek a home in a foreign land. But after many thousand families had settled in Russia, the movement received a check by the

reports sent back by the colonists themselves. Starting with inordinate expectations, they naturally experienced a sense of disappointment. Ignorant of the language of the country, feeling the want of their customary accommodation, and sometimes exposed to the harshness of persons in office, many repented the step they had taken. Others, who only wanted to live in idleness, wondered that they were to begin again to work, as it was exactly on that very account that they had abandoned their native country. Catherine, however, succeeded in planting a population in districts which had been hitherto uninhabited; and although many of the new-comers were but the offscourings of neighbouring states, and, perhaps, never became industrious and estimable subjects, yet, in the next generation, they probably became respectable, and, in the one following, were merged into the general population of the empire. Catherine also encouraged many tribes from the east of Europe and from Asia, who were dissatisfied with their position or governments, to come and settle in her dominions. Fully aware that the latent power of Russia could only be developed as its population increased, and also with a view to eradicate a physical and moral cause of depopulation, she erected a foundling and lying-in hospital at Moscow, and also another at St. Petersburg. In the November of the year in which she ascended the throne (1762), she also founded the medicinal college of the empire at St. Petersburg.

Catherine had a correct estimate of her own peculiar talents, and of the influence she was likely to exercise on the empire and on Europe. In conversing with a foreign minister who had complimented her on her political sagacity, she observed—"You think, then, that Europe has, at present, its eyes fixed on me, and that I have some weight in the principal courts?" The answer could not fail to be in the affirmative. "I believe, indeed," she continued, with that imperial dignity of manner which she could assume with so much ease, "that Russia merits attention. I have the finest army in the world. I am rather short of money, it is true; but I shall be abundantly provided with it in a few years. If I gave the reins to my inclination, I should have a greater taste for war than for peace; but I am restrained by humanity, justice, and reason. However, I shall not be like the empress Elizabeth. I shall not allow myself to be pressed to make war. I shall enter upon it when it will prove advantageous to me; but never from complaisance to others." Catherine added, that the world could not properly begin to form a judgment of her until five years had elapsed, as it required at least that time to reduce her empire to order, and to gather the fruit of her care.

The empress was frequently reminded that the people had not forgotten the tragic death of her unhappy husband. Petty conspiracies frequently broke out; and although they were detected and defeated by the vigilance of her government, yet Catherine knew that it was impossible to remove the cause of them, and she frequently suffered much uneasiness in consequence. Anxious to conciliate her people, and to cause them to forget the past, she neglected no means of winning their attachment. Though generous by nature, she was still more so by policy. She also acted with kindness to the friends of the deceased emperor, and released from prison those few of his immediate adherents who had been sent there on account of their exertions in his favour.

Another source of grief to the empress was, that the most distinguished of the Russian nobles held aloof from her court. Disgusted with the arrogance of Gregory Orloff, and jealous of his influence over the empress, they would not mix in an arena where he was paramount. The courtiers of Catherine were mostly rough soldiers who had taken part in the conspiracy, and now abused the claims they imagined they had to her gratitude. She would willingly have dismissed many of them from her presence, but that she knew not how soon and how urgently she might require their services. Occasionally she blushed at the deference she felt compelled to show them; and to excuse their defects of manners, she attributed to them a fidelity which many were far from possessing. "The life I lead is far from agreeable to me," said she one day; "I know that I am surrounded by people of no education; but that I am indebted to them for being what I am. They are men of courage and probity, and I am sure that they will never betray me."

Count Panin was almost the only one of the courtiers of Catherine, at this time, who was distinguished by polished manners and a cultivated mind. But Panin injured his influence with the empress by preferring his own ambition to her interests. He had

desired Peter III. to place the real power of the empire in the hands of an aristocratic senate, and to resign the absolute power which was supposed to reside in the hands of the czar. Panin's scheme would have rendered the nobles independent of the sovereign, and have placed the people under the rule of many tyrants instead of one; yet he endeavoured to induce Catherine to adopt it. Observing, one day, that she laboured under some anxiety in consequence of the dangers to which her position exposed her, he took the opportunity of explaining to her the principles of the system of government which he desired to see established. "The sovereigns of this empire," he remarked, "have hitherto uniformly enjoyed an unlimited power; but it is the very extent of that power which renders it dangerous to him in whom it is lodged, since it may at any time be usurped by some bold pretender, and the usurper is thenceforth above the laws. Trust me, madam, make the sacrifice of an absolute authority. Create a fixed and permanent council, which will secure to you the crown. Solemnly declare that you renounce, for yourself and for your successors, the power of depriving at pleasure the members of that august body. Declare, that if they commit any crime or high misdemeanor, their peers alone shall have the right to judge and to condemn them, on accurate and severe informations. From the moment you shall adopt this prudent measure, it will be forgotten that you obtained the crown by violence, in the sentiment that you intend to preserve it only by justice." Catherine was at first pleased with the novelty of the idea, and the hope that, by adopting it, she would render her name illustrious, and conciliate the love of her subjects. She told her minister to commit his plan to paper, and implied that she might probably adopt it. Reflection, however, convinced her that to do so would be to divide the authority it had cost her so much to acquire, and which she would never recover if she once suffered to be taken from her. In a subsequent interview with Panin, she praised him for his zeal in her service, but said that it was impossible she could adopt his suggestions. "If the empress is determined to rule alone," said the disappointed minister to his friends, "you will see what a sad reign we shall make of it." But Panin had not yet formed a correct estimate of the abilities of his imperial mistress

Before long, Catherine had another dangerous proposal made to her, which, also, she had the discretion to decline. The aged ex-chancellor, Bestuchef, with the object of rendering himself of more importance in the state, and probably sinking into dotage, informed the favourite Orloff that he should be glad to see him emperor. With all the subtle eloquence he possessed, the old statesman urged his listener to aspire to the hand of his mistress. "She knows," he observed, "with how much zeal and intrepidity you have acted in her service. She knows from what dangers you freed her to invest her with a sovereign power. She cannot, then, worthily reward you but by giving you a share in that throne which she owes to your prowess. Indeed, why should she refuse it? Who is better able than you to support that throne against all attempts of conspirators to overturn it? Who would be more agreeable to the sovereign in the twofold capacity of her admirer and her defender?" Orloff was delighted, and, embracing the ex-chancellor, promised to do whatever he desired.

Bestuchef soon sounded the empress on the subject; but Catherine answered, that even if she was inclined to favour the proposal, she could never resolve on taking a step that might meet with so many difficulties. To obviate these, the ex-chancellor proposed a petition in the name of the Russian empire, in which, after eulogising all that the empress had done for the happiness of her people, he referred to the feeble constitution of the young Grand-duke Paul, and the anxieties caused by the frequent alterations in his health, and conjured Catherine to give the empire an additional testimony of her love, by sacrificing her own liberty to its welfare in taking a husband. Perhaps, notwithstanding its obvious imprudence, Catherine might have been disposed to accede to the design; for she induced Maria Theresa, the empress-queen, to dignify Orloff by the grant of a diploma of prince of the empire, which it was her own intention to follow up by decorating him with the titles of Duke of Ingria and of Carelia.

The ex-chancellor presented the petition to the clergy, and induced twelve bishops to put their signatures to it, specifying that the empress ought not to marry Prince Ivan (whom Bestuchef had artfully proposed as her husband, merely for the purpose of at first concealing his object), and

adding a request that her majesty would condescend to choose, from among her own subjects, him whom she might deem most worthy to participate in her throne. A great number of general officers adhered to the sentiment of the bishops; but when Bestuchef made known his proposition to the chancellor Vorontzoff, the latter interrupted him by saying, "By what conduct have I merited the degradation of such a confidence as you now dare to propose." Then, leaving the room, he ordered his carriage, and hurrying to the empress, remonstrated with her against the indecency and danger of such a proceeding, advising her to retain Orloff, if such was her pleasure, as her lover, and to load him even with riches and honours; but not to think for a moment of a marriage which could only disgrace herself and the nation. Catherine probably saw the peril of the step which, it appears, she contemplated, and answered, "I never authorised that intriguing old man to do what he has done; and as to yourself, I discover in the frankness and loyalty of your conduct, too much attachment to my person ever to mistake its motive." Count Panin and the hetman Rasumoffski gave similar advice to the empress, and its wisdom was soon apparent; for the project of the marriage having transpired, the populace, in the utmost indignation, tore down one of the images of the empress, and, after publicly whipping it, dashed it to pieces.

Catherine was not displeased with Bestuchef, nor pleased at the interference of the chancellor Vorontzoff. Indeed, the latter was treated both by her and Orloff with such marked coldness, that, under pretext of failing health, he asked and obtained permission to travel abroad for two years. The empress feigned a regret at his departure, and paid great respect to him when in public, desiring him to hasten his return to resume the functions of an administration which, she said, he filled so successfully for the happiness of the empire.

The empress had much difficulty in silencing the murmurs which her rumoured marriage with Orloff had occasioned. A bold attempt was even made to seize the person of the latter. A guard stood at the door of his bedchamber, and one of the sentinels was induced by a bribe to consent to deliver him, while asleep, into the hands of three of the conspirators. Fortunately for the favourite, a mistake was made in the hour; and when the latter presented themselves, the sentinel who was their accomplice had been relieved by another. On seeing three strangers about to enter into Orloff's chamber, the man gave the alarm; other soldiers soon arrived on the spot, and the conspirators had only time to escape under cover of the uniform they wore. Catherine was alarmed; and reports of plots were constantly brought to her ears. Count Panin and the hetman Rasumoffski, and even her once intimate friend the Princess Daschkaw, were suspected of being implicated in them. The empress contemplated the arrest of them all; but having no evidence against them on which she could rely, and fearing to incur further odium by an ill-timed severity, she thought it better rather to act the part of the fox than the lion, and to conciliate those whom she could not venture to crush.

The empress knew that the Princess Daschkaw, notwithstanding her high spirit and her great abilities, was both precipitate and imprudent. She therefore trusted to be able to draw from her some information which would clear up her doubts. With this view, she addressed a long letter to her, lavishing upon her many tender epithets, and conjuring her, in the name of friendship, to reveal to her what she knew of the recent conspiracies, assuring her, at the same time, that she would grant a free pardon to all concerned in them. The princess discerned Catherine's motive, and angry that she should endeavour to use her as an instrument of vengeance, replied, in a brief note, as follows:—"Madam, I have heard nothing; but if I had heard anything, I should take good care how I spoke of it. What is it you require of me? That I should expire on a scaffold? I am ready to mount it." Though unsuccessful in her attempt with the princess, Catherine yet disarmed the disaffection of Panin and Rasumoffski, and bestowed upon them further distinctions. Though not able to unravel the web of conspiracy which she knew existed, she prevented its being carried into effect. She threatened those who should be detected in treasonable designs with severe measures, and declared that, for the future, she would not conform to the edict of the empress Elizabeth, by which that potentate had promised never to put a criminal to death. At the same time, Catherine was aware that the best mode of conciliating a people was to promote their

interests; and with this view she founded colleges and hospitals in every part of her empire, encouraged commerce and industry, and took many steps for the enlightenment of her people. Sensible of the great, and yet undeveloped, natural advantages of Russia, she issued an imperial edict containing regulations for the promotion of commerce, in which she thus enumerated them:—"On the whole surface of the earth, there is no country better adapted for commerce than our empire. Russia has spacious harbours in Europe; and, overland, the way is open through Poland to every region. Siberia extends, on one side, over all Asia, and India is not very remote from Orenburg; but on the other side it seems to touch upon America. Across the Euxine is a passage, though as yet unexplored, to Egypt and Africa; and bountiful Providence has blessed the extensive provinces of our empire with such gifts of nature as can rarely be found as they are wanted in all the four quarters of the world." The measures which Catherine took for the promotion of the commercial interests of the empire, consisted chiefly in the abolition of a number of oppressive monopolies, and of the permission to her people to export corn free of duty, except in times of scarcity at home.

We may here mention, that the famous Seven Years' War was brought to a close at this time. Russia being no longer opposed to Frederic, that able soldier soon repaired his losses, reconquered Silesia, and inflicted heavy blows on the Austrian forces. Peace having been concluded between England and France, they paired off, and France abandoned the cause of the empress-queen, as England had done that of the Prussian monarch. The quarrel thus stood, as it at first began, between Austria on one side and Prussia on the other. Though the former country had greater means than the latter, she could not hope to succeed in a war unaided, which, even when supported by powerful allies, she had been unable to bring to a successful conclusion. Austria, too, was threatened by a formidable enemy in another quarter; the standing enmity of the Ottoman Porte was roused into activity, and 100,000 Turks were gathered on the frontiers of Hungary. The bitterly-revengeful spirit of Maria Theresa was compelled to yield; and in the February of 1763, the peace of Hubertsburg terminated a war which, for seven years, had devastated Germany. After immense sacrifices of human life and treasure, the political balance of Europe remained unchanged. "The whole continent in arms," observed an eloquent writer, "had been unable to tear Silesia from that iron grasp. Frederic was safe. His glory was beyond the reach of envy. If he had not made conquests as vast as those of Alexander, of Cæsar, and of Napoleon—if he had not, on fields of battle, enjoyed the constant success of Marlborough and Wellington, he had yet given an example, unrivalled in history, of what capacity and resolution can effect against the greatest superiority of power and the utmost spite of fortune."*

CHAPTER XXXII.

CATHERINE PLACES HER FORMER LOVER, PONIATOWSKI, ON THE THRONE OF POLAND; CONSPIRACY OF MIROVITCH, AND MURDER OF PRINCE IVAN; SPECULATIONS CONCERNING THAT EVENT; EFFORTS OF THE EMPRESS FOR THE SECURITY OF HER THRONE AND THE IMPROVEMENT OF HER PEOPLE.

It was not long before Catherine had an opportunity of exhibiting her power and decision to the great states of Europe. Augustus III., king of Poland, died on the 5th of October, 1763; and the empress of Russia, who desired that the future monarch of that country should be subservient to her wishes, resolved to raise her former lover, Count Poniatowski, to the vacant throne. This was not agreeable to the great majority of the Poles, who desired to elect a Piast, one of the descendants of their ancient kings. The Polish nobles,

* Macaulay.

also, naturally indignant at the prospect of being governed by a young man whose birth was not illustrious, and who had not those great natural gifts which enable their possessors to command, as it were, by a patent derived direct from nature herself, viewed the proposed elevation of Count Poniatowski with great aversion. What services, inquired they, had he rendered the country, to entitle him to so glorious a reward?

Poniatowski is described as endowed rather with those qualities which are adapted to conciliate the friendship of individuals, than to fit him for wearing a crown. Tall, well-made, of a figure at once commanding and agreeable, he spoke and wrote with fluency the principal languages of Europe; but he possessed only a slight knowledge of those affairs with which it is necessary for a statesman to be familiar. Rather weak than gentle, rather prodigal than generous, he might easily dazzle a thoughtless multitude, but not persuade men of calm judgment. He possessed more personal grace than mental strength, and was better adapted to mingle with the polished crowds of a court than to occupy the solitary dignity of a throne. But Catherine spared no effort or political intrigue to effect his election. Some one at St. Petersburg had the boldness to tell her that Poniatowski was not of a rank sufficiently dignified to entitle him to the Polish throne, as his grandfather had been steward of a little estate belonging to the Princess Lubomirski. "Though he had been so himself," retorted the empress, "I will have him to be king, and king he shall be." She kept her word; Poland was pressed upon by Russian armies; and on the 7th of June, 1764, an action took place between the latter and a body of Polish troops under Prince Radzivil, in which, after a fierce contest, the Poles were defeated. Finally, Poniatowski was elected, and, on the 7th of September, proclaimed king of Poland and grand-duke of Lithuania, under the name of Stanislaus Augustus. The nobles who had opposed his election now thronged to do him homage, and he began his reign with as much tranquillity as if he had not been raised to the throne by unjust and violent means. Europe submitted to Russian dictation in Poland, and the new sovereign received letters of congratulation from most of the great continental courts.*

Prior to the conclusion of this election, the empress Catherine, attended by her favourite, Count Orloff, and a small retinue of nobles, had started on a tour through the provinces of Esthonia, Livonia, and Courland; and, during her absence, a tragic incident, which is yet involved in some mystery, occurred at the fortress of Schlusselburg, to which prison the unfortunate Prince Ivan had been again conveyed. This victim of his illustrious birth was the object of considerable sympathy on the part of the people, and of concern on that of the sovereigns who had successively occupied the throne which, while an infant, he had for so brief a time occupied. The empress Elizabeth once caused him to be brought in a covered cart to St. Petersburg, where she saw and conversed with him. On that occasion, it is said that the graces of his figure, the plaintive accents of his voice, and the touching complaints he uttered, awakened the sensibility of all present, and even drew from the empress abundance of tears. She, however, directed him to be taken back to his prison, and did not soften the dreary misery of his confinement. Peter III., as we have already described, visited Ivan, and probably contemplated restoring him to liberty, and naming him as his successor. Catherine also had an interview with him soon after the commencement of her reign, in order, according to her own statement, to judge of his understanding and talents, and to procure him an agreeable and quiet

* Frederic of Prussia sent a communication of this kind to the Polish sovereign, which, from the soundness of its political views, should be remembered by princes and admired by their subjects. "Your majesty must reflect," said the great soldier-king, "that, as you enjoy a crown by election and not by descent, the world will be more observant of your majesty's actions than of any other potentate in Europe; and it is but reasonable that it should be so. The latter being the mere effect of consanguinity, no more is looked for (though much more is to be wished) from him than what men are endowed with in common. But from a man exalted by the voice of his equals, from a subject to a king, from a man voluntarily elected to reign over those by whom he was chosen, everything is expected that can possibly deserve and adorn a crown. Gratitude to his people is the first great duty of such a monarch; for to them alone (under Providence) he is indebted that he is one. A king who is so by birth, if he acts in a manner derogatory to his station, is a satire only on himself; but an elected one, who behaves inconsistently with his dignity, reflects dishonour also on his subjects. Your majesty, I am sure, will pardon this warmth. It is the effusion of the sincerest regard. The amiable part of the picture is not so much a lesson of what you ought to be, as a prophecy of what your majesty will be."

situation, suitable to his character and the education he had received. To her great surprise, she said, she found him suffering from an impediment of utterance which rendered his discourse almost unintelligible, and a total privation of sense and reason. He was unable to read, knew no one, and could not distinguish between right and wrong. The empress, therefore, felt compelled to leave him where she found him, with an order that he should be supplied with all the comforts and conveniences that his melancholy situation would admit of.

This statement has been suspected of untruth, and as being merely made in accordance with a policy attributed to Catherine of calumniating the unfortunate object who had a claim to the throne on which she sat. Certain it is, that the Russian court circulated many doubtful stories about the unhappy prince. At one time it was given out that he was stupid, and incapable of uttering articulate sounds; at another, that he was a drunkard, and as ferocious as a savage; then it was rumoured that he was subject to fits of madness, and supposed himself to be inspired. But these reports were not generally believed, and the discontented regarded them as the result of a malignant policy. Almost all the numerous conspiracies which, in the early reign of Catherine, constantly threatened her overthrow, had for their object the restoration of this unfortunate captive to the throne. It was for his sake that men who had never seen him, and whose very existence was utterly unknown to him, were continually braving the scaffold. That Ivan was ignorant is certain, from the way in which he was brought up in a fortress, confined without any means of obtaining even the most simple education; but it does not appear that he was either mad or simple; and, indeed, the conversation he held with Peter III. would exonerate him from the latter aspersion.

Catherine certainly had an interest in the death of the imprisoned Ivan; and she is suspected, though perhaps wrongfully, of promoting the incident we are about to relate, which led to it under very painful circumstances. The regiment of Smolensk was stationed in the town of Schlusselburg, and a company of about one hundred men guarded the fortress in which Ivan was confined. In this regiment was a young officer, named Vassili Mirovitch, whose grandfather had been implicated in the rebellion of the Cossack chief Mazeppa, and had fought under Charles XII. against Peter the Great, at Pultowa. The estates of the family of Mirovitch had, therefore, been forfeited to the crown, and the young soldier had frequently urged his pretensions to have them restored. In answer to his application, hopes were held out to him that the estates might probably be restored, *if he would show himself active in securing the tranquillity of the empire.* The answer leads to the suspicion, that the services required from him were the adoption of some means for the assassination of Prince Ivan in such a manner as would not implicate the empress and her government. In what other way could a subaltern officer promote the security of the Russian empire?

We have nothing but surmises to guide us in this matter; but Mirovitch was soon engaged in a mad attempt to set the prince at liberty. Whether the ease with which the late revolution had been accomplished, induced him to suppose that the work of dethroning a sovereign was one of but little difficulty, and to lead him to seek for fortune in the convulsion of an empire; or whether, on the other hand, his attempt to deliver the prince was a mockery, in collusion with the emissaries of the empress, for the purpose of bringing about the death of the unhappy Ivan, is more than can be conclusively established.

Two officers, Captain Vlassieff and Lieutenant Tschekin, slept with the imprisoned Ivan in his cell. These men were in possession of a discretionary order, signed by the empress, by which they were enjoined to put the imperial captive to instant death on any insurrection that might be made in his favour, supposing that it could not be suppressed in any other way.

The door of Ivan's prison opened into a sort of low arcade, which, together with it, formed the thickness of the castle wall within the ramparts, and in this arcade eight soldiers usually kept guard; the others were in the guard-house, or at their respective stations. This little force within the fortress was commanded by an officer of the regiment, who was changed every week. Whatever may have been the exciting cause, it is certain that Mirovitch contemplated a conspiracy for the release of the prince, or, at least, for enabling him to obtain possession of the person of the royal captive. Under the influence of irresolution, he had allowed his period of duty to pass without

making the attempt he contemplated. Under these circumstances, he solicited and obtained permission to remain on guard for one week longer. Feeling that he must make instant use of the time allotted him, he admitted one Jacob Pishkoff into his confidence, and then began to tamper with three corporals and two common soldiers. These men also were won to his purpose, and, between one and two in the morning, they assembled again, and induced about forty of the soldiers on guard to join them in their desperate purpose.

Mirovitch then led them at once towards the prison of Prince Ivan. Beredinkoff, the governor of the fortress, roused from his sleep by their noise, suddenly made his appearance, and authoritatively demanded of Mirovitch the reason of his appearing in arms at the head of the soldiers? Mirovitch, without answering a word, knocked him down with the butt-end of his firelock, and giving directions to some of the men to secure him, continued his march. Arrived at the corridor into which the door of Prince Ivan's chamber opened, he attacked the eight soldiers who guarded that avenue. These men drove him back, on which he ordered his followers to fire upon them. The guard returned the fire, and though, strange to relate, no one was killed or wounded on either side, yet the conspirators retired in dismay. Mirovitch endeavoured to bring them again to the attack, but they hesitated, and insisted on seeing the order which he said he had received from St. Petersburg, authorising his conduct. The schemer was provided for this emergency, and he immediately took from his pocket and read to them a forged decree of the senate, recalling Prince Ivan to the throne, and excluding Catherine from it, because, it averred, she was gone into Livonia to marry Count Poniatowski. The simple soldiers were deceived, and, falling into order, prepared to resume their attempt to gain possession of the prince. To render opposition useless, and to cause the inmates of the cell to open the door, Mirovitch caused a piece of artillery, which had been brought from the ramparts, to be planted against it. Having threatened to batter down the door, it was thrown open, and Mirovitch and his followers entered without opposition. The sight that met their gaze was the bleeding and lifeless body of the prince, on whose pallid face the convulsive struggles of a violent death yet lingered. By the corpse stood the two officers who had slept in the cell of the unfortunate young man, and who, from his companions, had become his butchers.

These men had, in the first instance, called out to the sentinels to fire; but when they heard the cannon placed against the door, and preparations made for its discharge, they held it impossible to resist the force opposed to them, which was greatly magnified by their fears. Conscious that the peace of the empire would be endangered by the liberation of their prisoner, and fearful of the punishment they might incur in the event of their charge being wrested from them, they held a hurried consultation, and came to the conclusion that their duty required from them the performance of the conditional command they had sworn to execute—that of putting the wretched captive to death. The prince had been awakened by the report of the fire-arms; and hearing the shouts of the assailants without, and the threats of the officers within his cell, he implored the latter to spare his miserable life. Regardless of these entreaties, they proceeded to execute their horrible design; but Ivan, though unarmed and in his night-dress, fought with his murderers with the strength of despair. In a short time his right hand was pierced through, and he had received several wounds. Still he grasped the sword of one of the assassins, and broke it; but, at that moment, the other stabbed him from behind, and threw him down. There the ruffian whose sword he had broken, plunged a bayonet several times into his body, and the wretched prince soon expired.

It was at this moment that they opened the door, and showed Mirovitch the new-made corpse, and the order by which they were authorised to perpetrate the frightful deed they had just committed, in the event of any attempt being made to liberate their captive. Mirovitch appeared struck with horror, and throwing himself upon the body, exclaimed, "I have missed my aim; I have now nothing to do but to die." He made no attempt to escape, or to avenge the fate of the prince by ordering his followers to shoot the murderers; but, on rising, he went passively to the spot where he had left the governor in the hands of the soldiers, and surrendering him his sword, coolly observed, "It is now I that am your prisoner."

The following day the corpse of the ill-

fated Ivan was exposed before a timber church within the castle, and the people admitted to see it. Enormous crowds came for that purpose from the neighbouring towns, and even from St. Petersburg. On beholding the mangled body, their expressions of grief and indignation were unbounded. Ivan was full six feet in height, and was finely formed. His features were regular, and his complexion extremely fair; he had very light hair, and a red beard. The partial absence of colour from his face and hair, was no doubt the result of his having lived the greater part of his life where he never beheld the natural light of day, or felt the cheering rays of the sun. At the time when his gloomy life was terminated by the hands of assassins, he had not completed his twenty-fourth year. The body of the ill-starred captive, who in his babyhood had sat upon the imperial throne of the most powerful empire in Europe, was wrapped up in a sheepskin, and buried without ceremony. Vlassieff and Tschekin, the murderers, were compelled, in consequence of the murmurs of the people, to hurry on board a vessel then about to start for Denmark, where, on their arrival, they were taken into the protection of the Russian minister. Shortly afterwards they returned, and were rewarded by promotion for their sanguinary fidelity to the empress.

The governor of Schlusselburg sent an account of the catastrophe to St. Petersburg, together with a manifesto discovered on the person of Mirovitch, which contained many scurrilous invectives against Catherine, and represented Prince Ivan as the sole legitimate emperor; and was to have been published at the moment when the prince, having been set at liberty, was making a public entry into St. Petersburg. A courier was immediately dispatched by Count Panin to the empress, who was then at Riga; suffering, it was observed, under a visible impatience, and frequently inquiring for news. So great was her irritability and disquietude, that she occasionally rose in the night to ask whether any courier had arrived. These circumstances were remembered to her disadvantage by those who suspected that the conspiracy of Mirovitch was originally instigated by her or her ministers; but it must be remembered that her agitation was by no means unnatural, when we consider that she had for some time been suffering from apprehensions of the conspiracies which, she had reason to believe, were ever fermenting around her.

Catherine published a long manifesto, in which she gave an account of the affair, and commended the conduct of the assassins "who had nipped this rebellion in the bud." The trial of Mirovitch and his confederates she referred to the senate, in conjunction with the synod and the presidents of the colleges. It was conducted with great formality; but the conspirator himself preserved a calm and easy air. He even replied in a frivolous and sometimes insolent manner to the questions which were put to him, as if, it has been urged, he knew the trial to be a mockery, and felt secure of a pardon whatever might be the verdict. If such was the case—if he had really acted in collusion with the government, he was now cruelly deceived. Sentence of death was passed upon him as a disturber of the public peace. He received it unmoved, and even walked with indifference to the scaffold. Probably his demeanour was the result of a contempt of life, since all his attempts to advance himself had been failures; but if he had been the instrument of a barbarous policy, he was now its victim. So far from any pardon being extended to him, the time fixed for his execution was accelerated. Indeed, if the empress was guilty of a complicity with Mirovitch, how could she have shielded him from punishment without drawing upon herself the charge of having prompted his crime? Besides this, she would have preserved a dangerous witness, who might have proved extremely troublesome.

Public opinion was much divided on this matter; and on the return of the empress to St. Petersburg, many persons endeavoured, by watching her countenance, to discover if they could read in it any confirmation of their suspicions. In this they were disappointed. Catherine, always mistress of herself, wore a face of smiles, and had a demeanour as serene, and a step as firm, as those whose minds knew no care, and whose hearts were unoppressed by guilt. There is, indeed, just room to hope that the empress was not implicated in the crime of Mirovitch; but, on the other hand, there are heavy reasons for suspicions against her.* Though Mirovitch was the only person put to death in consequence of this

* The Princess Daschkaw, always the apologist of Catherine, thus endeavours to clear the character of her imperial mistress. We append her observations from a sense of justice to the empress, whose great

conspiracy, no less than fifty-eight were punished, and some of them with great severity. Pishkoff, as the most guilty, was sentenced to run the gauntlet twelve times through a line of a thousand men. The three corporals and the two soldiers, who were the next seduced by Mirovitch, were each flogged ten times, and then condemned to labour at the public works. The rest were whipped through the ranks, and sent into distant garrisons. This severity was calculated to obviate the suspicions that were entertained concerning the existence of any eminent participators in their crime.

Whether or not Catherine or her ministers were implicated in the events which terminated in the murder of Prince Ivan, the stability of her throne was established by that dismal event. Under her rule the empire was gradually becoming more European in its nature, more polished in its population, and more developed with respect to its resources. It was observed by one of her biographers, that she had not only the supreme authority which in Russia was the source of the law, but also the judgment which knew when to show that authority, and how to employ it. Few monarchs understood so well the art of being bountiful at the most fitting time, and of making presents with such significance as to fix the gratitude of the receiver, and elicit the sense of affectionate loyalty which is commonly acquired by beneficent princes. "While Catherine," observes her biographer Tooke, "was giving law to Poland, amusing Austria, conciliating the friendship of Prussia, and treating with England, she was also tampering with the other courts of Europe, and labouring efficaciously towards very soon making herself dreaded by them. She exerted herself to the utmost in giving new spirit to the commerce of her country, in augmenting her navy, and, above all, in softening the manners of her people, as yet not far advanced in civilisation. But, badly seconded by the great personages of the empire, and even by such as were about her, the progress of her institutions was at first but slow. The spirit of division continued to reign in St. Petersburg. The outrages that were to be prevented or punished, always made it necessary for Catherine to keep well with the conspirators to whom she was indebted for the throne. But the favours she was incessantly heaping on that greedy and insolent crew, were so many additional sources of hatred and discontent. Some new plot or conspiracy was forming every day; and every day the good fortune of the empress, or rather her prudence, delivered her from danger. Punishments were secret and terrible. The authors of one plot could but rarely undertake a second."

Dissensions existed between Catherine's chief minister, Count Panin, and her favourite, Prince Gregory Orloff. The latter, considering himself permanently established in the favour of the empress, was regardless of those assiduities by which he had won it, and even neglectful of his attendance at court, from which he would absent himself for several weeks at a time, engaged in the pleasures of the chase. The astute Panin, therefore, with the view of depriving Orloff of the favour of his imperial mistress, placed near her a young officer, named Vissenski, whom he had observed her regard with apparent interest. Vissenski was admitted by the empress into her favour, and Panin trusted that Orloff would soon be discarded. But the latter, hearing what was going forward, suddenly appeared at court, and became so assiduous in his attentions to the empress, that the latter felt her cooling affections for him revive; and the new favourite was loaded with brilliant presents, and dismissed to an employment that settled him in a province remote from the capital.

Catherine employed many means for the detection of the conspiracies which continually disturbed her repose, and for ascer-

talents as a sovereign must ever act in modifying our censure of her offences. "It has been said, and affected to be believed in several countries of Europe, that this whole affair was neither more nor less than a horrible intrigue on the part of the empress, who had gained over Mirovitch to act the part he did, and had afterwards sacrificed him. During my travels, in 1770, I frequently introduced in conversation the subject of this conspiracy, in order to exculpate Catherine from the twofold wickedness of such a charge. I everywhere found, that nations, viewing with a jealous eye the growing preponderance of Russia, made it a common interest to establish into truth, as a sort of political equipoise, every calumny against its active and enlightened sovereign. I remember, when speaking of this subject at Paris, expressing my astonishment, as I had before done, to M. and Madame Necker, at Spa, that a nation like the French, which had had a Cardinal Mazarin for its minister, should puzzle itself by accounting for such an action in such a manner, when their own annals must have so readily suggested the efficacious expedient of a well-mixed cup, for arranging these matters with greater secrecy and expedition."

taining the names of those who were disaffected to her government. For this purpose she intercepted the correspondence of the foreign ministers; and unsuccessful insurrection thus increased the vigilance of despotism, and called into being a dangerous system of espionage. She succeeded in purchasing the letters of the French *chargé d'affaires*, and also in obtaining a copy of his key to those written in a secret cipher. In this correspondence she fancied she detected a knowledge of, if not a participation in, the traitorous schemes which existed around her. This increased her aversion to the court of Versailles, and caused her to treat the French minister with so marked a coldness, that he deemed it expedient to return to his native country. Louis XV. replaced him by the Marquis de Beausset, who arrived in St. Petersburg, and was presented to the empress on the 1st of May, 1765.

This gentleman was unable to conciliate the favour of Catherine, whom he presumed to be actuated by a jealousy of the glory of the French nation. Some such feeling probably existed; but the coldness of the empress appears to have arisen from a sense that the French government, and all persons appointed by it, were inimical to her interests, and ready to encourage any insurrection which might shake or overturn her throne. As to the French nation, she held it in esteem, and greatly admired the distinguished authors who graced its literature. She corresponded with Voltaire and D'Alembert, and solicited the latter to accept the situation of governor to her son the Grand-duke Paul. She offered the philosopher a salary of 24,000 livres a-year, and every convenience for finishing the *Encyclopédie* at St. Petersburg. D'Alembert declined, and Catherine wrote him a kindly letter, in which she endeavoured to win him to a reconsideration of his decision. Learning that the affairs of Diderot were not prosperous, and that he wished to sell his library to provide for his daughter, she generously purchased it, left it in his own possession, and bestowed on him a handsome income as her guardian of it. To the famous surgeon, Morand, she sent a collection of gold and silver medals which had been struck in Russia, as a token of her satisfaction with the anatomical subjects and surgical instruments he had procured for her. Indeed, almost all the distinguished men of letters, and artists of Paris, received some proofs of her princely, and it must be added politic, munificence.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

INTERFERENCE OF THE EMPRESS WITH THE AFFAIRS OF POLAND; SHE ASSUMES THE PROTECTION OF THE DISSIDENTS, AND THE CATHOLIC POLES SEEK AID FROM TURKEY; CATHERINE EXCLUDES THE ENGLISH MINISTER FROM HER COURT, IN CONSEQUENCE OF AN AFFAIR OF GALLANTRY; TOURNAMENTS AND FESTIVITIES AT ST. PETERSBURG; CATHERINE'S LEGAL REFORMS AND ATTEMPT TO REGENERATE THE LEGISLATURE OF THE EMPIRE; ASSEMBLY OF DEPUTIES FOR THE PURPOSE AT MOSCOW; HER FAMOUS INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE FORMATION OF A NEW CODE OF LAWS; THE DEPUTIES VOTE HER THE TITLES OF GREAT, WISE, PRUDENT, AND MOTHER OF THE COUNTRY; SHE NARROWLY ESCAPES ASSASSINATION; HER ASSIDUITY IN THE PROMOTION OF THE SCIENCES; SHE INTRODUCES THE PRACTICE OF INOCULATION INTO RUSSIA.

CATHERINE did not place her former lover, Count Poniatowski, on the throne of Poland in consequence of any affection she entertained towards him. She was actuated by a motive which, at the time, she did not think it prudent to reveal. The empress of Russia, rather than the king of Poland, was the actual ruler of that country. But this was not all; and Catherine now put forward pretensions of a kind she knew could only be enforced by the power of the sword. She altered on the map the boundary line between Russia and Poland, and insisted that the limits of the two countries should be so fixed according to her dictation. She also demanded that Poland should contract with her a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, and that all who did not profess the Roman form of Christianity should enjoy the same rights with those who did. The

Poles had adopted the Christian religion, according to the church of Rome, between the ninth and tenth centuries; and as men were then governed much more by forms than principles, and accepted the new mode of worship without much inquiry, a uniformity of opinion, or rather of faith, prevailed. But, in the course of time, many neighbouring states, either by conquest, by right of succession, or by marriage, became united to the kingdom of Poland. These new provinces, in which the prevailing religion was chiefly that of the Greek church, were upon an exact equality with the old in every respect, and each was protected in the observance of its own mode of worship. So late as the commencement of the fifteenth century, it was thought a happiness peculiar to Poland, that, while other countries have at different times been distracted by intestine feuds and rancour arising from diversity of religion, yet that the great variety of opinions on that subject never produced any strife or animosity among this nation. Under these favourable circumstances, it might be anticipated that, after the Reformation, protestantism would make rapid advances in Poland. In the year 1563, Sigismund Augustus passed a law, by which all sects, whether protestant, Greek, or Arian, were permitted the full enjoyment of exercising their worship, together with the right of voting in the diets, and of holding the same offices as the catholics. No one was offended by this noble act of justice and wisdom; indeed, so amicable a spirit existed, that all men were glad to see that the difference of religion produced none in the political and civil rights of the several members of the community. As a mark of distinction, the followers of the different modes of religion were called Dissidents, a term which, though afterwards unhappily converted into a signal for proscription, did not then convey any injurious imputation.

In the course of time the Roman catholics of Poland acquired the ascendancy, and, breaking through the law to which we have alluded, robbed the Dissidents of the rights to which they were entitled by it. The Romanists first persecuted the Arians, and divested them of all their privileges—a process which the Greek and protestant Christian beheld with great complacency. Their want of charity and co-operation was a fatal error. As might have been foreseen, they were next attacked; and, in 1733, the Romanists succeeded in entirely excluding them from the diets, and even deprived them of the natural privilege of building any new churches. Thus pressed, many of the Dissidents returned to the church of Rome; but those who retained their principles, cherished them the more dearly on this very account. They referred to the treaty of Oliva, of which so many monarchs were the guarantees, as securing them the rights of which they had been despoiled. In consequence of this the diet, then composed only of catholics, passed a decree, attaching the guilt of high treason to such Dissidents as should have recourse to foreign powers for obtaining the execution of the infringed treaty, and the re-establishment of the law so despotically repealed.

This produced a reaction, and the Dissidents were furious. Those of the Greek church at once sought the protection of the court of St. Petersburg, while the protestants entreated the interference of England, Denmark, and Prussia. The sovereigns of the latter countries promised their support—a circumstance which Catherine and her ministers regarded as a sufficient pretext for the military interference of Russia. Such was the state of affairs at the close of the year 1765.

When the Polish diet assembled in the autumn of 1766, the ministers of the protecting courts presented their memorials on behalf of the Dissidents. This proceeding produced much dissatisfaction, and the catholic bishops were extremely violent. Saltyk, the bishop of Cracow, not satisfied with the iniquitous law passed against the Dissidents, proposed that new ones of a more severe character should be adopted. His example was followed by others among the Romanist priesthood and nobles: violent clamours took place; and, despite the protest of a few enlightened members, the recent intolerant enactments against the Dissidents were confirmed.

In the meantime a Russian army, under the command of Prince Repnin, had entered Poland, and advanced to the very gates of Warsaw. The Russian general then demanded, in the name of the empress, not only a toleration secured by law in behalf of the Dissidents, but a complete political equality with the catholic party. This the latter furiously rejected; and the Dissidents formed themselves, under the Russian protection, into a confederation, for the purpose of securing by force what they could not obtain by reason. Romanist tyranny thus led to a servile war, which soon raged

in all its horrors, and additional bodies of Russian troops were constantly entering the Polish territories. King Stanislaus Augustus assembled a diet-extraordinary, with the hope of pacifying the contending parties. His object was frustrated by the violence of the Bishop of Cracow and his adherents, who made speeches utterly in defiance of reason and of prudence. Prince Repnin, who had now quite invested the city of Warsaw, caused the bishops of Cracow and of Kief, and several of the most violent catholic nobles, to be seized and hurried off to Siberia. He offered the confederated Dissidents an excuse for this outrage, by assuring them that he had only violated the liberty of the Poles for the benefit of Poland; and when the king, at the instigation of the diet, desired the release of the prisoners, Repnin treated the application with disdain; nor were these offensively intolerant persons permitted to return from their exile in the deserts of Siberia, until the lapse of a period of six years.

The diet was overawed, and adopted a more moderate tone. It even appointed a committee for settling the rights of the Dissidents, in concert with the ministers of the courts which had undertaken the advocacy of their cause. Prince Repnin, in consequence of the powerful army he had at hand, ruled almost absolutely at Warsaw, and the Dissidents obtained whatever the Russian ambassador demanded in their behalf. The ancient law, enforcing not only toleration, but equal political rights, for those who professed other than the Roman form of Christianity, was restored; and other enactments, still more favourable to the Dissidents, were passed. This was but justice; but it was a notorious calamity, that such a result was brought about by the armed interference of Russia. Roman intolerance gave a plausible pretext for that foreign dictation which eventually led to the extinction of Poland as a nation. Moreover, a number of regulations were enforced by the orders of the empress Catherine, which tended to promote the troubles and anarchy of that distracted country, and to leave it without defence against the usurpations she contemplated.

The catholic nobles, though intimidated for a time, soon raised a loud outcry against the Dissidents; formed themselves into confederations for the defence of the Roman religion; and even solicited, and obtained, the protection of the Turks! As to the king whom Catherine had placed upon the Polish throne, he was altogether powerless, and resided at Warsaw more like a prisoner than a prince. The courts of Europe regarded the conduct of the Russian empress with amazement; but she addressed herself with consummate art to the task of disarming any opposition they might be disposed to give. She was sure of Frederic of Prussia; for she knew that he desired nothing better than to share with her the provinces of Poland. Sweden she kept quiet by her intrigues; while she humoured Denmark by holding out to it a hope of the cession of Holstein. England she flattered by a favourable treaty of alliance and commerce; while France alone seems to have refused to be blinded as to her secret views. The court of that country, in order to defeat the projects of Russia by dissipating its means, addressed itself to the design of involving the empress in a war with Turkey. The French ambassador at Constantinople represented to the Porte, how unjust and dangerous it was that Russia should dare to violate the rights of the Poles, and invade their territory. He assured the Moslem cabinet that the demarcation of the limits exacted by the court of St. Petersburg, would be attended with consequences fatal to the security of the Euxine; and he advised them resolutely to oppose it. The Turkish minister, therefore, sent a note to the king of Poland, requesting that the regulation of the limits might be suspended till some explanations should be given the sultan of a nature to remove his alarms concerning the danger with which the cession of the Polish territory threatened the Ottoman empire. Stanislaus Augustus, fearful of offending Catherine, and most solicitous of regaining her friendship, answered that there was not the least proposal for altering the limits between Russia and Poland. The Porte having received this assurance, returned for a time to its customary apathy. "Notwithstanding which," observes a modern historical writer, "the great empires of Russia and Turkey—the most powerful in Asia as well as in Europe—were soon to be engaged in a bloody conflict. Religion had entered into the quarrel, and added to its bitterness. The miserable country of Poland was the theatre of a contention not more destructive in its consequences than singular in its causes and pretexts. The despotic power of Russia became the guardian of Polish freedom;

and the catholic religion fled for protection to the standard of Mohammed."

The favourable treaty of alliance and commerce into which the court of Russia entered with that of England, was concluded in the December of 1767. Yet, notwithstanding the partiality which the empress displayed towards this country, she was induced to exclude the British minister for some time from her court. This was in consequence of an affair of gallantry between him and one of the maids of honour, which became so public, that Catherine deemed it requisite to interfere. She therefore dismissed the offending lady, and prohibited the presence of the ambassador. It might be supposed that a consciousness of her own frailties would induce the empress to regard deviations from the path of a stern chastity with feelings of peculiar leniency. Such, however, was not always the case; and she occasionally assumed, even in the presence of those who best knew her, as great an appearance of austerity in manners as of attachment to religion. On one occasion, when two ladies of her court were, at a masquerade, talking loudly concerning one of their admirers, the empress went up to them, and commanded them to leave the ball-room, since they knew no better than to pay so little regard to decorum.

During the winter of 1767, Catherine endeavoured to divert the disaffection which yet existed, by the excitement of public festivities. A spacious amphitheatre was erected at St. Petersburg, and several tournaments took place, in imitation of those common in the civilised countries of Europe during the middle ages. On these occasions the ladies of the court jousted as well as the chevaliers; and all, both ladies and knights, wore upon their gorgeous dresses of silk or velvet, a profusion of gold and silver, pearls, and other precious stones. The entertainments lasted during several days; and then the company, amounting to several hundred persons, sat down to a splendid supper, the dessert at the conclusion of which represented the circus in which the carousal had taken place. At night the imperial summer gardens were illuminated, and the walks lighted with numerous arches of lamps burning with naphtha, radiant temples, and illuminated fountains. The pyrotechnic art lent its aid to the display, and the festival terminated with a masquerade in the gardens.

Catherine had a purpose in this gorgeous trifling, which did not draw her attention from the solid duties of her exalted station. She was incessantly occupied in the erection of useful institutions, and the promotion of those reforms which most softened the manners of her subjects. Ever prepared to crush conspiracy, and active to conciliate disaffection, she yet aimed at dazzling the judgment of mankind, and taking captive their admiration. The crude state of the laws of the Russian empire had for some time been notorious; and previous sovereigns had directed their attention to the subject. Though absurdly voluminous, they were yet found insufficient in practice, extremely perplexing, and containing many contradictions. In addition to this, they were so loaded with precedents, reports, cases, and opinions, that they produced constant altercations, and could scarcely be reconciled or understood by the very professors of them.

The empress resolved, by one great legislative act, to re-create the laws of the country in such a manner that they should be impregnated with the spirit of justice and clemency. The senate and the colleges she formed into separate departments, each of which was to address itself to one sort of business only, by which the latter was executed with more dispatch, and fewer opportunities given for artifice and venality. To obviate the well-known dishonesty of the judges, she augmented the emoluments of their offices, openly observing, in the ukase she published on the occasion—"Indigence may, perhaps, hitherto have given you a propensity to self-interest; but now the country itself rewards your labours: and, therefore, what might heretofore have been pardonable, will henceforward be criminal." Besides increasing the salaries of the judges, the empress made some, though an insufficient, provision for them, when that period of life should arrive at which increasing infirmities dictated their retirement from active duties.

These were merely preliminary matters; and Catherine now aimed at the glory of giving a new, and, as far as circumstances would permit, perfect code of laws to the empire. With this object she commanded all the provinces of Russia, even the most remote and barbarous, to send deputies to Moscow, competent to represent their ideas as to the laws most fitted for their respective conditions. The empress then proceeded to

that ancient city, to welcome this novel convention. The assembled deputies represented many nations and tribes, and differed from each other widely in manners, in dress, and in language. It might be supposed that so heterogeneous an assembly—the greater part of which had never even thought about laws, much less the responsible task of constructing them—would merely listen to their instructions, and obey them. Such, we may not unfairly assume, was the intention of the empress; and her object in convening the assembly was to give at least the appearance of a popular sanction to what, in reality, she designed to be her own act.

When the deputies were assembled in the hall appointed for their deliberations, the business was commenced by the public reading of a work written, or rather compiled, by the empress herself, and entitled, *Instructions to the Commissioners appointed to frame a new Code of Laws for the Russian Empire.** These instructions, pregnant with a humane and exalted spirit, were borrowed chiefly from the writings of Montesquieu, and others of the French philosophers. Catherine, therefore, does not deserve the praise which was so profusely lavished upon her as their authoress. Yet, though the merit of originality must be denied to her, she deserves no small commendation for having compiled, and thus given her sanction to, principles tending to destroy despotism and enlighten a people. In them she recognised no legitimate authority but that which was founded upon justice; she aimed at the destruction of arbitrary legislation, and the prevention of those who governed under her from exercising a capricious or cruel authority. The instructions to the deputies were read to them in the Russian language; but the original was written in French, almost entirely in the handwriting of the empress. It has since been deposited, inclosed in a magnificent case, in an apartment of the Imperial Academy of Sciences at St. Petersburg.

The assembled deputies frequently interrupted the reading of the instructions by their bursts of applause; and all present extolled the wisdom and humanity of the sovereign. These expressions of admiration, though no doubt proceeding, in some instances, from conviction, were, in others, merely the result of adulation. Yet the meetings did not pass without some opposition to the imperial will, and a threatening appearance of affairs without. Much conversation took place about the right of the serfs to liberty; and many thousands of this unfortunate class prepared to obtain by force that which they correctly feared would not be granted to them by equity. The nobles dreaded an insurrection, in the event of the system of serfdom being continued; but they dreaded still more a falling-off of their revenues if it should be abolished. So strong were their feelings on the subject, that some of them threatened to poniard the first man who dared to move for the enfranchisement of the serfs. Still, Count Scheremetoff, the wealthiest man in Russia, declared his willingness to accede to this measure; and the debate was carried on with so much warmth that fatal consequences were apprehended, and the deputies dismissed to their respective homes.

Though the benefit intended for the people of Russia was thus unhappily frustrated, it was suggested that it should not be equally lost to the sovereign who had projected it; therefore, before the deputies separated, they decreed to the empress, by general acclamation, the titles of Great, Wise, Prudent, and Mother of the Country. This was, doubtless, very agreeable to the empress; yet, when she was solicited to accept those titles, she replied, with an assumption of modesty, "That if she had rendered herself worthy of the first, it belonged to posterity to confer it upon her; that wisdom and prudence were the gifts of heaven, for which she daily gave thanks, without presuming to derive any merit from them herself; that, lastly, the title of Mother of the Country was the most dear of all in her eyes—the only one that she could accept, and which she regarded as the most benign and glorious recompense for her labours and solicitude in behalf of a people whom she loved."

Yet Catherine was naturally proud of the flattering adulation which had been offered to her; a luxury for which she possessed a great and eager appetite. She commanded copies of her instructions to be sent to those sovereigns whose applause she most desired. She received, in return, many compliments on her literary performance, and assurances that it would be an eternal monument to her glory. The great soldier-statesman of Prussia dazzled the empress by the incense he

* This work, considered the most remarkable of those which proceeded from the pen of the empress, was translated into English by M. Tatischeff, and published in London in 1768.

thus offered, and bound her still more closely to a regard to his interests. Writing with his own hand to the Russian minister Panin, he observed—"I have read with admiration the work of the empress. I was not willing to tell her all that I think of it, because she might have suspected me of flattery; but I may say to you, with due deference to modesty, that it is a masculine performance, nervous, and worthy of a great man. We are told by history that Semiramis commanded armies. Queen Elizabeth has been accounted a good politician. The empress-queen has shown great intrepidity on her accession to the throne; but no woman has ever been a legislatrix. That glory was reserved for the empress of Russia, who deserves it."

The construction of the articles was a work of considerable extent, even though we exclude the preparatory labour of study and reflection which, had the document been entirely original, must necessarily have preceded its execution. Yet, as an ingenious compilation, it was not a light task, consisting as it did of no less than 525 articles. Indeed, though it failed to produce the effect intended, yet even the publication and dispersion of such a work throughout the empire, could scarcely have failed to produce valuable civilising and educational results. Though not in itself a law-book, but merely a number of instructions as to the spirit in which laws should be made, it must have exercised, and no doubt still exercises, a considerable influence over Russian legislation. We subjoin a few of the articles, in the tolerably confident hope that they will not be without interest to the intelligent reader.

"The spirit of the nation, the nation itself, ought to be consulted in the framing of laws.

"These laws should be considered no otherwise than as a means of conducting mankind to the greatest happiness.

"It is our duty to mitigate the lot of those who live in a state of dependence.

"The liberty and the security of the citizens ought to be the grand and precious objects of all laws; they should all tend to render life, honour, and property as stable and secure as the constitution of the government itself.

"The liberty of the subjects ought only to be restricted concerning what it should be disadvantageous to them to do.

"In causes purely civil, the laws should be so clear and precise, that the judgments resulting from them be always in perfect unison in the same cases, in order to remove that jurisprudence of decisions which is so often a source of uncertainties, of errors, or acts of injustice, according as a cause has been well or ill defended at one time or at another, gained or lost, according to influence or circumstances."

With respect to legislation for crime, the empress gave the following humane and enlightened instructions:—

"It is incomparably better to prevent crimes than to punish them.

"The life of the meanest citizen is of consequence, and no one should be deprived of it, except when it is attacked or required by the country.

"In like manner his liberty should be respected, by being cautious about imprisonment, by carefully distinguishing the cases in which the laws will dispense with it, as also those in which the public safety requires arrest, detention, or formal imprisonment; and in this case even concerning different prisons.

"In the methods of trial, the use of torture is contrary to sound reason. Humanity cries out against this practice, and insists on its being abolished.

"A prisoner is not to be sacrificed to the torrent of opinions. Judgment must be nothing but the precise text of the law; and the office of the judge is only to pronounce whether the action is conformable or contrary to it."

Concerning punishments, she said—

"The aim of punishment is not to torment sensible beings.

"All punishment is unjust when it is not necessary to the maintenance of the public safety.

"The atrocity of punishments is reprobated by the compassion that is due to human nature; whenever it is useless, it is a sufficient reason to regard it as unjust, and, as such, to reject it.

"In the ordinary state of society, the death of a citizen is neither necessary nor useful."

Nothing in relation to government was left untouched in these instructions, which were replete with the most noble and liberal sentiments. "Contrive," said the imperial writer, "that the laws favour less the different orders of citizens, than each citizen in particular. Let men fear the laws, and nothing but the laws. Would you prevent

crimes? provide that reason and knowledge be more and more diffused among mankind. To conclude: the most sure, but the most difficult, method of making men better, is by rendering education more complete."

Some writers, sinking from the historian into the mere moralist, have felt, or affected, so much indignation at the vices of Catherine, that they have resolutely denied her the admiration which was her due, and have endeavoured to place her most meritorious deeds in the meanest possible light. The cause of virtue will never be served by conduct like this; which is neither truthful nor honourable. The character of Catherine must be contemplated with sober judgment, and not with intemperate invective. It is a psychological problem, not difficult of solution to the student of the human mind. The private vices of the woman must be separated from the public virtues of the sovereign, and the latter acknowledged, not grudgingly, but in a tone of generous appreciation. Attempt to write or compile history in any other frame of mind, and it is in danger of becoming not only partial in its views, and low in its estimate of humanity, but altogether worthless. The instructions of Catherine, like all else she did, have, by some writers—and those among the most recent on the subject—been condemned in the carping spirit of which we have spoken, which, unhappily, is usually more ready to censure than to deliberate; more prone to the utterance of easy obloquy, than addicted to habits of generous forbearance. With respect to this literary and legislatorial performance of the empress, we are ourselves inclined to agree with the favourable estimate of her biographer Tooke, who says—"The whole performance is an excellent compendium of choice observations, of just maxims, and of generous sentiments; and, at the same time, a beautiful collection of striking passages from the celebrated philosophers of Greece and Rome; of apt examples from ancient and modern history, from the manners of cultivated and savage nations, and even from such nations as are not very much known to the rest of Europe, the Chinese and other Asiatics. Whoever would make himself acquainted with the philosophy of legislation, might reap considerable advantage by taking it as his manual."

Catherine laboured zealously to establish her fame by the services she rendered to material as well as to legislatorial science. Prior to the transit of the planet Venus over the sun, in the summer of 1769, she wrote a letter with her own hand to the director* of the Academy of Sciences at St. Petersburg, in which she desired to be informed of the most proper places in her dominions for making observations; and offered to send workmen and artists, and to construct buildings in all such places as the academy might think proper for the purpose, and to grant every assistance requisite to the undertaking. At the same time she desired, that if there were not sufficient astronomers in the academy to make observations in all the favourable localities, that notice might be given her, and she would send a proper number of the officers of her marine to qualify themselves, under the direction of the professors of the academy, for that undertaking. Such is the extent of the Russian empire, that the observations which were made, both on the transit and exit of this planet (the one in the frozen regions towards the Pole, and the other on the borders of the Caspian), were carried on within its own limits; to some part of which, astronomers from every part of Europe went to behold that remarkable occurrence. It is interesting to add, that the instruments used by the members of the academy on this occasion, were specially procured for them from London, by Mr. Short, a member of the Royal Society, who was so successful in his efforts, and in the suggestions he offered, that he received the thanks of that body, and a letter containing a confession of the doubt they entertained of being able to comply with the desires of the empress without his assistance.

In the year 1768, Catherine narrowly escaped perishing by the hand of an assassin. The fate of Peter III. had not been forgotten by the people, who now regarded the memory of that unfortunate monarch with a feeling approaching to affection. Amongst the malcontents who mourned the murder of the late emperor, was a young officer named Tschoglokoff, who appears to have been of a highly excitable, if not disordered mind. He entertained a superstitious belief that he was directed by heaven to avenge the fate of Peter, by depriving the empress of life. After brooding for some time on this idea, he resorted

* Vladimir Orloff, the youngest brother of Gregory and Alexis; the eldest, Ivan, lived a retired life, and received from Catherine the nickname of "the Philosopher."

to the palace for several days in succession, and lurked about in the ill-lighted passages leading to the apartments to which Catherine retired when she wished to be alone. In one of these passages, through which she was shortly about to pass, was the intended assassin arrested, in consequence of his having rashly confided his design to another officer, whose friendship for him he incorrectly supposed to be stronger than his duty to his sovereign. When Tschoglokoff was seized, a long poniard was found on him, and he confessed, without hesitation, the use for which it was designed. Catherine concealed the fear with which we may reasonably suppose such a discovery inspired her: she also suppressed her indignation, and generously spared the life of the enthusiast who would have taken her's. Commanding him to be brought into her presence, she mildly expostulated with him on the enormity of the crime he had striven to commit. Instead of being hurried to the scaffold, he was at first sent to prison, and afterwards exiled to the heart of Siberia. Something of policy was doubtless mingled with this mercy; but it was mercy, nevertheless; and such as perhaps no other potentate in Europe, at that time, would have been wise enough to extend to any similar criminal. Catherine desired not publicly to punish a crime which, if it had been much talked of, might soon have had imitators.

In order to carry out those national improvements to which the empress addressed herself with so much energy, she gave orders to the Academy of Sciences to select a number of learned and able men, for the purpose of travelling over the empire and reporting concerning the capacities of the land and the wants of the people. Her commands were executed in a manner that did much honour to the academy. Several very distinguished men were amongst those engaged in this vast labour, and their journals contained a vast amount of valuable information. At this period the court of Catherine obtained the illustrious distinction of being regarded almost as the home of the sciences; for to it she invited distinguished learned men from every part of Europe.

The empress had the acuteness to perceive that it is less by the power of the sword, the roar of artillery, and the fierce parade of war, than by precedence in the sciences and the arts, that nations obtain an illustrious place in the annals of the world. She therefore encouraged artists of all kinds, and scholars of all views; and while granting new privileges to the Academy of Sciences with a noble liberality, exhorted its members to add the names of several celebrated foreigners to those which already conferred a lustre on their society. She also assigned an annual sum of 5,000 roubles for the purpose of procuring translations of the literature of other nations into the Russian language. Nor did she less cherish the interests of the Academy of Arts. She increased the number of its pupils, whom she directed were not, in future, to be received after the age of six years, that their tempers might not be spoilt, or their manners corrupted by the influence of a bad education. When admitted, the boys were placed for three years under the care of women; after which they were delivered to the more advanced tutors; and they were finally instructed in the art for the acquirement of which they displayed the most aptitude. Some became painters, sculptors, architects, watchmakers, or engravers; while others learnt the art of casting in metals, or of making mathematical and optical instruments. All these lads were clothed, fed, and lodged at the public expense; and, during the whole period of their residence at the academy, their parents were not at any expense for them whatever. They remained for fifteen years at the institution; and, on leaving it, those who carried off the highest prizes, received a sum of money for the purpose of travelling for three years over Europe.

At this period, that once terrible, but now disarmed malady, the small-pox, made great ravages amongst the inhabitants of St. Petersburg. Neither rank nor fortune secured to its possessors any security from the assaults of this frightful disease. The beautiful Countess Scheremetoff was attacked and carried off by it on the very eve of her intended marriage to Count Panin. Considerable alarm prevailed, and the empress and her son, the Grand-duke Paul, avoided the capital, and remained at Tzarskoselo. Under these circumstances a proposal was made for introducing the practice of inoculation into the empire. A remedy was anxiously desired; but a natural antipathy existed against submitting to an operation which, on a first reflection, appeared both repugnant and unnatural. The empress and the Grand-duke Paul (the latter, doubt-

less, influenced by the decision of his distinguished mother) resolved themselves to set an example by first submitting to an operation still regarded as both hazardous and experimental in its nature. Inoculation had been most practised in England, where it was introduced, about forty years before, from Turkey, by the famous Lady Mary Wortley Montague.* In the summer of 1768, Dr. Thomas Dimsdale, an able physician of London, was invited by Catherine to St. Petersburg. On being introduced to her majesty, she showed great perspicuity in the questions she put to him concerning the practice and success of inoculation, and then invited him to dine with her. The following is the doctor's description of the repast, which, as presenting a picture of imperial life in Russia at the court of this famous sovereign, is not destitute of interest to those who find a pleasure in efforts of the imagination at realising the scenes of past times and the habits of the famous ones of the earth:—"The empress sat singly at the upper end of a long table, at which about twelve of the nobility were guests. The entertainment consisted of a variety of excellent dishes, served up after the French fashion; and was concluded by a dessert of the finest fruits and sweetmeats, such as I little expected to find in that northern climate. Most of these luxuries were, however, the produce of the empress's own dominions. Pine-apples, indeed, are chiefly imported from England; though those of the growth of Russia, of which we had one that day, are of good flavour, but generally small. Water-melons and grapes are brought from Astracan; great plenty of melons from Moscow, and apples and pears from the Ukraine. But what most enlivened the whole entertainment was the unaffected ease and affability of the empress herself. Each of her guests had a share of her attention and politeness; the conversation was kept up with a freedom and cheerfulness to be expected rather from persons of the same rank, than from subjects admitted to the honour of their sovereign's company."

Dr. Dimsdale afterwards desired the empress to grant him the assistance of her court physicians, to whom he wished to communicate his mode of proceeding, and the medicines he administered to his distinguished patients. To this Catherine would not consent, and stated her reasons at length. "You are come well recommended to me," said she; "the conversation I have had with you on this subject has been very satisfactory, and my confidence in you is increased. I have not the least doubt of your abilities and knowledge in this practice, while it is impossible that my physicians can have much skill in this operation. They want experience; their interposition may tend to embarrass you, without the least probability of giving any useful assistance. My life is my own; and I shall, with the utmost cheerfulness, rely on your care alone. With regard to my constitution, you could receive no information from them. I have had, I thank God, so good a share of health, that their advice has never been required; and you shall, from myself, receive every information that can be necessary. I have also to acquaint you that it is my determination to be inoculated before the grand-duke, and as soon as you judge it convenient. At the same time I desire that this may remain a secret business; and I enjoin you to let it be supposed that, for the present, all thoughts of my own inoculation are laid aside. The preparation of the great experiment on the grand-duke will countenance your visits to the palace; and I desire to see you as often as it may seem necessary, that you may become still better acquainted with what relates to my constitution, and also for adjusting the time and other circumstances of my own inoculation."

The empress was much pleased with the satisfactory manner in which Dr. Dimsdale performed the operation, both upon herself and upon the grand-duke. She rewarded the successful experimentalist with a present of £10,000, together with a pension of £500 a-year, to be paid him in England, and by creating him a baron of the Russian empire. On Dr. Dimsdale's son, who accompanied and assisted his father, she conferred a similar title, and presented with a superb gold snuff-box, richly set with diamonds. Before Dr. Dimsdale left Russia, the empress purchased a house, and, under

* When we occasionally descant with so much fluency upon the barbarism and prejudices of other nations, it would be as well to reflect upon the ignorant and superstitious opposition with which the beautiful and witty Lady Mary was encountered in her benevolent attempt to introduce the practice of inoculation into this country. The clergy actually preached from their pulpits on the impiety of thus seeking to take events out of the hands of Providence; and the people were taught to hoot at her, as an unnatural mother who had risked the lives of her own children.

his able directions, converted it into a hospital for the purposes of inoculation, which, under these favourable circumstances, was soon resorted to by the most sensible of the Russian people. In a grand thanksgiving service for the recovery of the empress, which was performed in the chapel of the palace, the metropolitan observed, in the course of his sermon, "that the Russians had borrowed assistance from Britain; that island famed for wisdom, bravery, and virtue."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

AFFAIRS OF POLAND; WAR BETWEEN RUSSIA AND TURKEY; VISIT OF PRINCE HENRY OF PRUSSIA TO CATHERINE; AN IMPERIAL FETE; REVERSES OF THE TURKS; WALLACHIA, MOLDAVIA, AND BESSARABIA ACKNOWLEDGE CATHERINE AS THEIR SOVEREIGN; NAVAL VICTORY OF THE RUSSIANS IN THE BAY OF TSCHESME; SCHEME FOR THE SUBJECTION OF GREECE AND EGYPT TO RUSSIA; FATE OF THE YOUNG PRINCESS TARRAKANOFF.

POLAND, though retaining a delusive semblance of independence, was in fact but little more than a province of Russia. Its king had been elected, and its laws were framed, by Russian influence, while its states were governed through the instrumentality of a Russian army. The intolerant and tyrannical conduct of the Polish priesthood and catholic nobles had given Catherine an excuse for interference; but the Poles saw that their national independence was perishing, and the Ottoman Porte became reasonably jealous of the almost absolute influence over Poland which its great northern neighbour had acquired. Catherine did not seek for war with Turkey; and when that power, in consequence of the appeal made to it by the Poles, and in accordance with a policy usually regarded as a wise one, first assumed a menacing attitude, she suspended the settlement of the limits between Russia and Poland, without, however, abandoning her idea of eventually seizing on a portion of the latter country.

Poland was distracted by a furious servile war between the united catholic nobles and priesthood and the Dissidents. Almost every conceivable horror reigned in that miserable country; and the fields, instead of being devoted to the culture of the necessaries of life, were often covered with the unburied bodies of those who used to till them. The catholic confederates again implored assistance from the Turks—a requisition which was supported by the influence of France. The sultan resolved on war; and causing the Russian ambassador to be arrested, had him (in October, 1767) placed in confinement within the walls of the famous prison-fortress, called the Castle of the Seven Towers. At the same time a temperately-written manifesto, by the sultan, explanatory of the cause of the hostile demeanour to Russia, was delivered to the foreign ministers residing at Constantinople. In it the empress was charged as a breaker of treaties; with having "set up for a king a private Polish officer, in whose family there had never been any king, and to whom loyalty was not becoming;" and with invading a frontier of the territories of the Porte, and there massacring upwards of a thousand Mussulmans.

Though Catherine had not desired war with an enemy so powerful as the sultan, yet she had prepared for, and no longer sought to avoid, a contest which, sooner or later, was inevitable. Catherine issued a declaration to the courts of Europe, in which she declared that the intentions of Russia had been calumniated; and complained, in a tone of dignity, of the insult offered to her ambassador. "The honour and glory of her imperial majesty," said this document, "the regard to her empire, point out the part it is right for her to take. Confiding in the justice of her cause, she appeals to all Christian courts on the situation she finds herself in with regard to the common enemy of Christianity." Immense preparations were made in Turkey for the war, and the Porte gave out that they intended to open the campaign with an army of 500,000 men.

The empress was not behindhand; and

she gathered a formidable army, or rather series of armies. Indeed, on the breaking out of the war, the general voice of Europe seemed to presage victory to Russia, and many persons expressed an opinion that that power would be in possession of Constantinople before the end of the first campaign. Early in 1769 her troops began their march, and soon extended from the banks of the Danube to those of the Kuban. Azoff and Taganrog were also put in a state of defence; and Catherine caused her fleet in the Euxine to be augmented. The Tartars of the Crimea, so long dreaded by the Russians, were the first who now felt the weight of their arms. The Russian forces next laid siege to the fortress of Choczim, regarded as the key of the Turkish empire. The Moslems knew the advantage of this stronghold, and they concentrated their whole power in its defence. Many furious engagements followed, attended by immense loss to both sides, and not productive of any great advantage to either.

Catherine and Frederic of Prussia surmised each other's intentions with respect to the partition of Poland; but each of them felt the necessity of conferring together on that great design. Yet, as an interview between them might excite suspicions in the minds of the other monarchs of Europe, Frederic determined on sending his brother, Prince Henry, into Russia, to represent his views to the empress. This prince was one of the most celebrated generals of the age; and so great were his military talents, that even his illustrious brother, never prone to pay compliments, said of him, that, in commanding an army, he was never known to commit a fault. Professor Richardson, then at St. Petersburg with the family of Lord Cathcart (the English ambassador), gave the following vivacious description of the Prussian prince:—"To judge of him by his appearance, I should form no high estimate of his abilities. But the Scythian ambassadors judged in the same manner of Alexander the Great. He is under the middle size; very thin; he walks firmly enough, or rather struts, as if he wanted to walk firmly; and has little dignity in his air or gesture. He is dark-complexioned, and wears his hair, which is remarkably thick, clubbed and dressed with a high *toupée*. His forehead is high, his eyes large, with a little squint; and, when he smiles, his upper lip is drawn up a little in the middle. His look expresses sagacity and observation, but nothing very amiable; and his manner is grave and stiff, rather than affable. He was dressed, when I first saw him, in a light-blue frock, with silver frogs; and wore a red waistcoat and blue breeches. He is not very popular among the Russians; and their wits are disposed to amuse themselves with his appearance, and particularly with his *toupée*. They say he resembles Sampson; that all his strength lies in his hair; and that, conscious of this, and recollecting the fate of the son of Manoah, he suffers not the nigh approaches of any deceitful Dalilah."

Some artifices were resorted to to make the visit of Prince Henry to the Russian court appear a matter rather of accident than of design. On his arrival at St. Petersburg, he was, however, received with the honours which are usually paid only to monarchs. On the day of his being presented to the empress, he dined in public with her; and all that passed was conducted with the most rigorous attention to ceremony: but, on subsequent occasions, the empress and the prince met and discoursed together without the least restraint. Catherine entertained her guest with truly imperial magnificence and hospitality. Not a day passed without some new festivity; and one entertainment, at Tzarsko-selo (the palace of the czars, and the fixed summer residence of Catherine), has been deemed worthy of a lengthened description by many writers. The palace stands at the extremity of a thick forest, and is built in the form of an amphitheatre. The exterior impresses the observer with a sense of grandeur from its magnitude; while he is dazzled with the profusion of its gilded ornaments. The gardens—laid out in the English fashion—are of great extent and beauty, and contain a collection of antique and modern statues, picturesque ruins, baths, lakes, pyramids, and a spacious hall for musical entertainments.

It was in this magnificent palace that Catherine gave to the Prussian prince one of those extravagantly gorgeous entertainments with which she, at times, delighted and astonished her court. On the approach of evening, the empress, the Grand-duke Paul, and Prince Henry, entered an immense sledge drawn by sixteen horses, and set out from St. Petersburg, followed by upwards of 2,000 sledges, filled with courtiers in masquerade costumes. Along the road were triumphal arches, lit up in the

most brilliant manner; illuminated temples, pyramids of lamps, displays of fireworks, vaulting and tumbling, and rustic dances by shepherds and shepherdesses. On approaching the palace, an artificial mountain was seen through an avenue in the wood, pouring out from its summit torrents of flames, in imitation of Vesuvius during an eruption. On arriving at the palace, the company danced for two hours in a suite of apartments lit by an enormous number of wax-candles. Then came a roar of cannon; the ball was suspended; the lights were all extinguished; and the company ran to the windows, from which they enjoyed a magnificent exhibition of fireworks. When these were terminated, another discharge of artillery took place, the wax-candles were suddenly relit as if by magic, and a splendid supper was already served up, and only waiting the attack of the guests. After this refreshment, dancing was resumed, and continued until a late hour in the morning. Indeed, all the entertainments of the empress were conducted with a magnificence not exceeded by any court in Europe.

Among the numerous presents which Catherine bestowed upon the prince, was the star of the order of St. Andrew, full of very large brilliants, and containing a single diamond valued at 40,000 roubles. All these pleasures did not arrest the accomplishment of the secret object of the journey of the brother of the Prussian monarch. The dismemberment of Poland was resolved upon; and it was determined that Austria should be bribed into acquiescence by making her a sharer in the spoliation. Prince Henry was so satisfied of the consent of Joseph II., the son and successor of Maria Theresa, that he even settled with Catherine the conditions to be observed in the dismemberment of Poland, and fixed the extent of territory that each of the powers engaged in this iniquitous scheme should appropriate to itself. The treaty, however, was not signed until two years afterwards.

The war between Russia and Turkey raged with fury on the frontiers of the latter country. The results were variable; and the Russians were twice repulsed from the fortress of Choczim; and even driven, for a time, into Poland. But though the Turks fought with great courage, the ignorance of their generals drew upon them many reverses; and, after ten months of war, their once numerous army was almost destroyed, and Choczim eventually surrendered to a very small force. The offended sultan not only caused his unsuccessful general to be deprived of the command, but also to be put to death.

Catherine, satisfied with the attitude of her fleet on the Black Sea, boldly resolved to strike a blow at her enemies even in the Greek islands. With this object, she commanded a number of new vessels to be constructed; and the dockyards of Cronstadt, Revel, and Archangel swarmed with workmen from all parts of the country. She laboured strenuously to keep up a good understanding with England and Denmark, then the two most important maritime powers; and she doubled the number of English naval officers engaged in her service. Amongst the experienced British naval officers who at this period entered the service of Catherine, may be mentioned the names of Elphinstone, Greig, Tate, Dugdale, and Admiral Knowles. The empress also requested the maritime powers to give a friendly reception and assistance to her ships of war. England complied with this desire; but other states regarded it unfavourably; and France, Spain, Venice, and Naples, would only consent to admit the merchant vessels of Russia into their ports.

By the September of 1769, a Russian fleet, consisting of twenty sail-of-the-line, together with six frigates, and several transport vessels containing troops, steered their course into the Mediterranean, whose waters had never before been breasted by the war vessels of the great northern power. It was placed under the command of Alexis Orloff, assisted by Admiral Spiridoff. Europe gazed with astonishment on the spectacle thus presented. A nation which, prior to that century, was scarcely known but on the map, had sent a fleet to agitate the remotest parts of the Mediterranean; to excite and support the insurrections of the Greek Christians against their Mohammedan masters; and to create confusion and alarm in this distant part of the vast empire of its Ottoman enemies. Indeed, this expedition is regarded as a not unimportant era in naval history. Catherine was aware that the fate of Poland, and the consideration in which Russia should in future be held in Europe, depended on the result of the war against the Turks, and she therefore exerted herself to the utmost to ensure

its success. For some time before the sailing of the Russian expedition, the emissaries of the empress had been at work among the inhabitants of the isles of Greece, with the object of exciting a general revolt against the authority of the Porte; but the Greeks were soon found to be fickle and unprincipled, deficient both in discipline and courage, and far more devoted to plundering than to fighting.

Prince Galitzin was superseded in the command of the Russian army by Count Romantzoff. General Panin and Prince Dolgoruki had each another army under their directions. The Russians opened the campaign of 1770 by laying siege to Bender, in Bessarabia—a place which had acquired some distinction as having been the refuge of Charles XII. of Sweden. Their efforts were unsuccessful, chiefly in consequence of the harassing attacks to which they were exposed from the Tartars. But the Russians were far more than compensated for this disappointment by being victorious in two pitched battles with the Turks. The first was fought on the banks of the Pruth, where a Turkish army, amounting to 80,000 men, was stationed. As General Romantzoff was unable, for some time, to bring them to an engagement, he made such movements as induced the enemy to imagine that he was about to retreat. The Turks were deceived, and detached 20,000 men to pursue him. These were repulsed with great loss, and fled back in terror to their camp. The Russians followed them; the engagement was renewed; and the Turks finally abandoned their intrenchments and a great part of their baggage and artillery.

The Turks retired towards the Danube, where they were joined by large detachments from the grand Ottoman army. The Russian general, uninformed of this, and supposing that he was in pursuit of an army in confusion, followed them rapidly with a force of only 18,000 men, and suddenly found himself confronted by an army of 150,000 Turks. The grand-vizier saw his advantage, and surrounded the Russian army in such a manner as to cut off all possibility of retreat. The following morning the Russians were attacked on all sides at once; and notwithstanding the immense disparity of numbers, the firing was kept up for five hours without any decided advantage to either of the adversaries. The Russian general then seems to have remembered, that as the enemy could afford to lose eight men to his one, a contest thus conducted must terminate in his defeat, and the probable destruction of his troops. There was but one chance of escape—to charge with the bayonet, and, by a desperate effort, burst through the ranks of the foe. This plan was adopted, and the Turks gave way before the furious charge of their assailants, and retreated within their intrenchments. Encouraged by this success, the Russians renewed their efforts with redoubled energy. The Turkish host was thrown into confusion, and took to flight, leaving an immense number of dead and wounded upon the field of battle, and abandoning 143 pieces of brass cannon, and 7,000 waggons loaded with provisions.

Other successes followed. Bender, which had been a second time besieged, surrendered, after a resistance of nearly three months, to General Panin. On the fall of this fortress, the Tartars of Budziak and Otchakof submitted to the Russian rule. Indeed, so great were the triumphs of the imperial arms, that the provinces of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Bessarabia, acknowledged the Russians as their masters, and sent deputies to do homage to Catherine.

By sea the Russians obtained a success of which they were far more proud than of their triumphs by land. The squadron of Admiral Spiridoff, in the Archipelago, was joined by another under Elphinstone, an English naval officer, who held the rank of vice-admiral in the Russian service. The Turkish fleet opposed to the united Russian squadron was under the directions of a capudan-pasha, whose skill and valour had obtained for him the surname of Gazi, or "the Victorious." He had won some advantage over the Russians, and compelled them to retire from Lemnos; but he was soon to experience the superior power of his foe. On the 5th of July, 1770, the rival fleets met in the channel that separates the Isle of Scio from Natolia. The Turkish fleet, besides being superior in point of number to that of the Russians, was stationed behind some small islands and rocks, which formed for it a sort of natural intrenchment. Yet the Russians had the spirit to accept the offered battle, and the engagement commenced. The *Sultan*, a ship of 90 guns, bearing the flag of the capudan-pasha, challenged that of Admiral Spiridoff, and the two vessels were soon side by side in furious combat. Desperate efforts were made on each side, and showers of

balls and grenades crossed the deck of each vessel. At length the Turkish ship caught fire; and as the Russian one could not be disengaged from it, they both blew up together, and covered the sea with their smoking fragments. The admirals and a few officers were rescued; but the crews perished.

A pause in the engagement ensued while the ships were burning; and the other vessels, struck with terror for a time, abandoned the fight. It was soon renewed; but the approach of night separated the combatants. The Turks then committed an error which led to their destruction. They had the imprudence to enter the narrow and slimy bay of Tschesmè, where some of their vessels ran aground, and the confined space deprived the rest of the power of action. The following morning Vice-admiral Elphinstone stationed himself at the entrance of the bay, to prevent the egress of the Turks. He then directed that four fire-ships should be prepared, placed under the protection of the English Lieutenant Dugdale, and protected by the vessels of another Englishman—Vice-admiral Greig. The day passed away; and as midnight approached, Greig attacked the Turks with four ships of the line and two frigates. Under cover of this diversion, Dugdale approached the Turkish fleet with his fire-ships. Braving the vigorous fire of the enemy, and encouraging the hesitating Russians by his example, he himself fastened the grapplings of a fire-ship to one of the Turkish vessels, and then, with his hands, face, and hair all burnt, threw himself into the sea, and swam to the Russian squadron. So effectual was the fire, and so crowded were the Turkish vessels, that within five hours the whole fleet was destroyed. Only one man-of-war and a few galleys escaped the devouring flames; and this was in consequence of their being towed off by the Russians. The Turkish sailors made no efforts to stop the conflagration, and sought only to secure their own safety. Some got away in boats, and others leaped into the sea and endeavoured to save themselves by swimming; but the Russians, with an unnecessary ferocity, sent out boats to knock these poor struggling wretches on the head, or dispatched them by grapeshot from the ships. An English officer who was in command of a Russian boat, struck with horror at this massacre, endeavoured to put a stop to it; but he was told by the Russians that it was Count Orloff's order that no quarter should be given. The Turks who reached the shore dispersed themselves about the country, and committed such excesses, that it was found necessary to send out a body of troops to put an end to their ravages. If it had not been for the explosion of Admiral Spiridoff's ship, which involved the destruction of six or seven hundred persons, the Russians would have purchased this victory very cheaply, as, with that exception, they had not fifty men killed and wounded. Indeed, the greater part of the ships had never come into action, and Orloff himself had kept at a distance, which preserved him from all chance of danger. The loss of the Turks was very severe, and estimated by their victorious enemies at 10,000 men; but this was a gross exaggeration. Still the slaughter was terrible; for this Russian victory was little else than a conflagration and a massacre; and for many weeks the bay and its shores were covered with dead bodies, putrefying beneath the burning heat of a summer's sun. When the work of blood was over, and while the Russians were yet reeking with the steam of slaughter, Orloff ordered a general thanksgiving to the Deity for the success of the Russian arms; and the applauding Greek priests, who had put off in boats from the villages of Scio, Samos, and Anatolia, sprinkled the ships with holy water, and gave their blessings to the crews. On the other hand, the infuriated Turks massacred every Greek they could find—man, woman, or child—between Tschesmè and Smyrna.

After the destruction of the Turkish fleet, the Russians entered the harbour and bombarded the town, and a castle which protected it, with so much success, that both were reduced to a heap of rubbish. The conflagration of the Turkish vessels was the result of the exertions of the Englishmen—Elphinstone, Greig, Dugdale, and Mackenzie; but the empress gave the credit of the idea of it to Alexis Orloff. The Russian fleet then anchored at Paros, from which point they commanded all the Greek seas, and where they did not permit a single vessel to approach without lowering its topsails.

Orloff dispatched a courier with the news to the empress Catherine, who was the first person in St. Petersburg made acquainted with the victory of Tschesmè. Information of the event was received with extreme joy,

and magnificent festivities given to celebrate it. When, in the spring of the following year, Alexis Orloff returned to St. Petersburg to enjoy his triumphs, the rejoicings were renewed; and he was decorated by the empress with the grand riband of St. George. He then laid before the council a scheme for the subjection of Greece to the Russian sceptre, and the rescue of Egypt from the dominion of the Porte. To accomplish this, he said he would force the passage of the Dardanelles; and that to effect all these designs, he desired only ten millions of roubles. "I grant you twenty," was the reply of the ambitious Catherine, "for I am resolved that you shall want for nothing." At the same time she issued a command for the equipment of a new squadron, to reinforce that which was already in the Archipelago; and the Russians, intoxicated by an accidental success, vainly dreamed of becoming a great naval power. Catherine, in the height of her success, even contemplated the expulsion of the Turks from Europe.

The Ottoman empire was not only humiliated by the serious reverses it had experienced, but distracted by internal misfortunes. Egypt was in a state of rebellion, under the able Ali Bey. Constantinople was ravaged by the plague; where, for several weeks, about a thousand people died daily from this terrible visitation. The runaway sailors from the destroyed fleet also, united with all the vagabonds and ruffians who chose to join them, filled the city with dread, in consequence of their plundering and violence, and made several attempts to set it and the suburbs on fire. So powerful did these dissolute ruffians become, that they ventured on an open engagement with the Janissaries, who cut many thousand of them to pieces, and dispersed the rest. Notwithstanding these calamities, the Porte adopted every precaution for the security of the Dardanelles. The Turkish government collected the ships still in its possession, and fitted them out to assist in defending that famous passage; new batteries were erected on the straits, and the castles put into a proper state of defence.

In 1771, Count Alexis Orloff left St. Petersburg, crowned with honours and loaded with rewards, in order to return to the Archipelago. On his way he passed some time at Vienna, where he gave himself up to a luxuriousness so extravagant as to excite general surprise. One evening, while at supper with the Russian ambassador and a numerous company, he spoke of the revolution which had placed the empress Catherine on the throne. From motives of delicacy no one questioned him concerning the death of the unfortunate Peter; but he created a sensation of horror throughout the company by calmly relating the particulars of it himself. Perceiving the shudders of disgust that he excited, the dull and strong-nerved ruffian endeavoured to excuse himself by saying, "That it was a lamentable thing for a man of so much humanity as he possessed, to be forced to do what he had been commanded."

On leaving Vienna, Orloff proceeded to Leghorn, where, in obedience to the commands of the empress, he engaged a celebrated German artist, named Philip Hackert, to represent the engagement of the Russian and Turkish fleets, and the destruction of the latter at Tschesmè. The artist was unable satisfactorily to represent the blowing-up of the Turkish vessels; and on Orloff complaining of this, he replied that he had never seen a ship destroyed by explosion. To obviate this, Orloff furnished him with the most expensive model that was ever made for an artist. In the month of May, 1772, he caused a Russian frigate to be blown up in the roads of Leghorn, in the presence of the painter and of thousands of persons who had assembled to witness this novel sight. The artist caught the character of the evanescent spectacle, and the picture was then completed entirely to Orloff's satisfaction.

The empress Elizabeth had left three children, regarded as illegitimate, the result of her clandestine marriage with Alexis Rasumoffski. The youngest of these was a girl, who had been brought up under the name of the Princess Tarrakanoff. This young lady was, when about twelve years old, carried away to Rome by the persons to whom her education had been entrusted; an act performed at the instigation of the Polish prince and patriot, Radzivil, who, irritated at Catherine's trampling on the rights of his countrymen, entertained the idea, that the daughter of Elizabeth might furnish him with a signal means of revenge. He conceived, that it would not be in vain to oppose to the sovereign whose armies were spreading desolation over his unhappy country, a rival whom her mother's name would render acceptable to the Rus-

sians. It is probable that he also flattered himself, that he, perhaps, might one day be enabled to mount the throne on which he desired to place the young princess.

Catherine was a dangerous foe, especially when the secret agency of craft was to be resorted to. On the ground of Prince Radzivil being chief of the confederacy of the malcontents, she caused all his estates in Poland to be seized, and reduced him to the necessity of living on the produce of the diamonds and other valuables he had brought with him to Italy. When these were exhausted, he left the Princess Tarrakanoff at Rome in extremely narrow circumstances, and returned to Poland to learn what he could with respect to his own affairs. Here an offer was made to restore to him his estates, on condition that he would take his ward to Russia. To this baseness he would not consent; but he committed the lesser wrong of purchasing his confiscated property by engaging to take no further heed of the unfortunate daughter of Elizabeth.

But the empress was resolved on securing the person of the Princess Tarrakanoff; and Alexis Orloff undertook to become the means of luring that young lady into her power. Having engaged an unprincipled Neapolitan, named Ribas, he sent him to Rome, where this subtle agent soon discovered the lodgings of the young princess, and introduced himself to her as a Russian officer. Affecting a profound grief at the state of destitution in which he found her, he said that he had waited upon her with the sole desire of paying homage to a princess whose fate and fortunes were highly interesting to all her countrymen. Finally, he offered that pecuniary assistance of which the unfortunate lady stood in so much need; while she and her female attendant regarded him almost as a messenger sent from heaven for their relief. Ribas soon gained the confidence of the deserted women; and he then informed the princess, that he was commissioned by Count Alexis Orloff to offer to her the throne that had been occupied by her mother. He added, that the Russian people were averse to the rule of Catherine; that Orloff himself hated her, on account of her ingratitude and her tyranny; and that, if the young princess would accept of the services of that general, and recompense him for them by the grant of her hand, it would not be long before she saw the breaking-out of the revolution he had prepared. The snare was successful, for the inexperienced girl had no suspicions of the worthlessness of the human viper who was luring her to her fate. Her high birth was no secret to her: Prince Radzivil had dazzled her with hopes of a brilliant destiny; and she seemed now upon the eve of realising the gorgeous day-dreams which had made her recent poverty and neglected condition the more bitter.

When Alexis Orloff himself arrived at Rome, he was received by the princess as her benefactor. Some friendly persons warned her and her *gouvernante* against a man who was notorious for the reckless wickedness of his character. It was in vain. The deluded girl would not mistrust her supposed benefactor, and even communicated to him the cautions she had received; but he justified himself with so much ease, that her confidence was rather confirmed than shaken. Having removed her transient distrust, he entreated her to consent to their speedy marriage. The trusting victim yielded to his wish; the ceremony was performed by some of his attendants, disguised as priests and lawyers; and the princess fancied herself secure in the arms of a husband who had contracted a mock marriage only that he might betray.

Orloff conducted his bride to Pisa, under the pretence that they would be exposed to too much observation at Rome, and that it would be better to wait in some other Italian city for the breaking-out of the expected revolution in Russia. At Pisa, Orloff lodged the princess in a magnificent palace, and treated her with every apparent respect and tenderness; but he did not suffer her to be approached by any persons except those who were entirely devoted to his interests. At the theatre, or on the public promenades, he always accompanied her himself. One day, Orloff told the princess that a division of the Russian fleet had just entered the port of Leghorn, and that his presence was consequently necessary in that city. He, however, offered to take her with him, to which she readily consented, more especially as she had heard much commendation of the beauty of the port of Leghorn, and the magnificence of the Russian ships.

On her arrival at Leghorn she was received with the greatest consideration, lodged in the house of the English consul, and soon surrounded by a little court, in consequence of the great number of persons who came to pay their respects to her.

Every one seemed anxious to study and to anticipate her wishes. In the streets, the people crowded to see her; at the theatre, all eyes were directed to her box. Everything tended to lull her into a fatal security, and to dispel any thought of fear or suspicion. So strong was the confidence she placed in her betrayer, that after a few days spent in amusements, she herself requested to be shown over the Russian fleet. Preparations were immediately made for receiving her with becoming state, and she was handed into a boat with magnificent awnings. Vice-admiral Greig, who was in command of the Russian squadron, and Alexis Orloff, entered a second boat; while a third followed, filled with Russian and English officers. They pushed off from the shore in the sight of an admiring multitude, and were received by the fleet with shouts, music, and salutes of artillery. A splendid chair was let down from the vessel, on which the princess was to go on board, and in this manner she was hoisted upon deck. It was also told her, that these honours were bestowed in recognition of her distinguished rank. No sooner had the unfortunate girl stepped on board than this dissimulation ceased. In a moment she was rudely seized and handcuffed. She then saw that she had been deceived; but she knew not the deep villany of her betrayer. She yet called him husband, implored his interference, threw herself at his feet, and watered them with her tears. It was in vain. He was silent, and his despairing victim was torn away and carried down into the hold. The next day the vessel sailed for Russia. On arriving at St. Petersburg, the princess was shut up in the fortress there; and her subsequent fate remains a mystery. Some affirm that she was drowned six years afterwards, by the waters of the Neva entering her prison during the inundation of 1777; others say, that she was secretly put to death by the hands of the executioner; but neither statement has been confirmed by any unexceptionable evidence.

The inhabitants of Leghorn were horrified at the treachery which had been practised towards the unhappy victim of Russian policy. The Grand-duke of Tuscany, whose territory had been so shamefully insulted, complained both to the courts of Vienna and St. Petersburg, of the outrage that had been committed, but he was unable to obtain any satisfaction; and the Russian traitor braved both his indignation and that of the public. A circumstance which occurred during the stay of Alexis Orloff at Rome, tends to illustrate the coarse manners of this brutal man. One evening, when at supper at the house of the Marchioness Gentili Bocca Paduli, he desired to exhibit some instances of his extraordinary strength. He first, with great ease, broke in his hand several pieces of crystal and iron; then, taking an apple between two of his fingers, he crushed it into bits by tightly compressing them. One of the pieces flew with force into the face of a royal duke who was at table. Every one present, except Orloff, used some expression of regret; he alone, as if disdainful of the courtesies ever current amongst gentlemen, viewed the accident unmoved, and did not even make the slightest apology.

CHAPTER XXXV.

MOSCOW DEVASTATED BY THE PLAGUE; SUPERSTITION OF THE PEOPLE, AND CONSEQUENT RIOTS; ACTIVITY OF GREGORY ORLOFF IN PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF THE PESTILENCE; UNSUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATIONS FOR PEACE BETWEEN TURKEY AND RUSSIA; ORLOFF IS DISMISSED, AND VASSILTSCHIKOFF BECOMES THE FAVOURITE OF THE EMPRESS; THE FIRST DISMEMBERMENT OF POLAND.

During the whole of 1771, the city of Moscow was subjected to the ravages of the plague. The Russian army was first infected, in consequence of the soldiers residing in the Turkish towns which they had captured; the Turks being, either from want of cleanliness, or from some other cause, more subject to that dreadful malady than any other people in Europe. The Russian general at Jassy, where the pestilence raged

in the winter of 1770, endeavoured to arrest its fatal influence by diverting the minds of his soldiers from the contemplation of it. He therefore issued a peremptory order that its name should not be pronounced, and even obliged the military surgeons to draw up a declaration in writing, that it was only a spotted fever. This artifice did not avail; several thousand soldiers died, and great numbers of the citizens perished. Even the general fell a victim to the pestilence as the summer advanced. The infection was also spread to a far greater extent by the insane folly of the soldiers themselves, who persisted in robbing the houses, and even the persons of the infected dead.

From the army the dreadful distemper spread into Russia, and went on with a steady and deadly advance until it reached Moscow. Here the authorities either deceived themselves, or in the hope of allaying the fears entertained upon the subject, issued an ukase, assuring the people that there was no pestilence, and that a false alarm had been wickedly raised among the citizens. In Kief, where also the terrible scourge had made its appearance, similar language was held respecting it; and as none of the physicians or surgeons there had ever seen cases of the plague, they pronounced it to be a putrid spotted fever.

The principal families of Moscow hurried away from the city and went into the country. Their flight was useless; they carried the contagion with them, and spread it through the neighbouring towns and villages, where it destroyed at least 30,000 persons. But its ravages were far more terrible in Moscow itself; for before it subsided, it was estimated that only a fourth part of the ordinary number of inhabitants were left alive. Such was the want of labour, and the apathy produced by fear, that the dead often lay for three or four days in the streets, on the spot where they had dropt and died. The empress, on hearing the news, did not shut her eyes to the real nature of the calamity. She issued a proclamation, containing certain directions to be observed, and sent Gregory Orloff to Moscow with unlimited power to adopt whatever expedient he considered necessary for checking, and, if possible, terminating the evil. The conduct of the favourite upon this occasion was bold, active, and efficient; and it gained him great distinction. Orloff appointed a commission of health, comprising the most skilful physicians amongst its members. He converted monasteries and palaces into lazarets; appropriated a building for the reception of children whose parents had perished of the plague; turned several of the public offices into houses of quarantine for suspected persons; and adopted other salutary measures. By these means, the further spread of the pestilence was, to a considerable extent, arrested; but no efficient mode of cure was discovered. Most of those who were attacked died, and the plague only subsided as winter approached. It carried off in Moscow alone, at the beginning of September, 800 persons every day; while in the middle of October, five, six, or seven hundred were the daily number of victims. By the 15th of November, the number had decreased to 150; while, on the 30th, but seventy-five perished. On the 4th of December only ten died; and then the number diminished until the 6th of January, 1772, when the plague ceased.

The folly or wickedness of men commonly steps in to aggravate those afflictions which arise from the sickness of nature or the decree of an offended Deity. In this case, it was not sufficient that the invisible power of death floated on every breeze, and rose with the dews of night into the still air, broken only by the moans of agony, the low wailings of despair, or the fierce imprecations of the maniac and the blasphemer. To these terrors must be added the double curse of ignorance and its twin-brother, fanaticism. The dull and brutal populace could not be induced to observe the precautions recommended to them by the government; and so far were they from following the prescriptions of the physicians, that they charged the latter with being the cause of the pestilence, and subjected them to insult and violence. Foreign medical men, especially, could not pass through the streets without peril to their lives. The ignorant people maintained, that the only true mode of cure was continual prayer to the pictures of the saints;* and this superstitious delusion was not long before it led to a criminal tragedy.

* "It is difficult to imagine," says Tooke, "to what length the Russians carry their fanaticism for the pictures of the saints, which they call *bohgs* or gods. The figure of some saint is painted in gaudy colours on a piece of board, and the silver, gold, or diamonds about the hands and face of it, constitute its value. When a Russian enters a room, the first thing he does is to salute the god, which is placed against the wall in one corner, by bowing and crossing himself. St. Nicholas, St. John the Baptist, St. Sergius, and St. Alexander Nevski, are the figures in most request, except the *bohgoroditza*, the Mother of God. Every one has his particular patron to whom he applies in cases of need. When his neighbours see that he succeeds in the culture of his fields or in trade, they borrow or hire his god, to which they attribute his prosperity. They then pay the borrowed figure all sorts of reverence and offerings. There are in some towns god-markets; and the sole difference between the chaffering is, that in this the word 'money' must never be pronounced. Some people will never go to their daily labour, or set out on a journey, without taking their god with them; and if a stranger call at their house in the meantime, and asks to salute the *bohg*, the wife replies that he is gone into the fields, or on a journey. St. George is a protector of horned cattle. The horses are looked after by St. Anthony, and the fish by St. Jonas; one cures one disease and one another. But perhaps it is unjust to deride any religion for its superstitions; all national religious establishments have them under one form or another. The Russian peasants, notwithstanding, are extremely tolerant. 'Your God,' say they to those who are not of the same religion with them—'your God commands you to serve him thus; our God orders us differently.'"

During the month of September, shortly before the arrival of Gregory Orloff, an impostor, or a madman, stood by one of the gates of the city, and declared to every one who passed by, that a picture of the mother of God, placed near the gate, had appeared to him, complained that its worship had been neglected, and promised to quell the pestilence by a miracle, if that worship was zealously revived. Both priests and people listened; and without questioning the honesty or sanity of the fellow, they spread his story by relating it to every one they met. With the mass of the people, to hear was to believe; for the terrors of the plague had created so much dismay, that they were in the frame of mind best adapted for the reception of the narratives of the wonderful and the miraculous. Multitudes flocked to St. Barbara's gate, and bringing with them trinkets to hang about the picture, they addressed it in passionate entreaties or vehement cries. Processions then commenced, and the pestilence was aggravated in consequence of the concourse of people always congregated in the neighbourhood of the picture. Ambrosius, the primate of Moscow, desired to put an end to this confusion. Having procured the assistance of five soldiers, he sent them, late in the evening, to take down and bring away the picture that had been the object of so much excitement. But neither by night nor day was the gate free from a fanatical tumult before the painted mother of God. The soldiers were driven off, and the incensed mob denounced the primate as a heretic. Running to the churches, they rang all the bells, on which nearly all the inhabitants of the city rushed into the streets, supposing it to be an alarm of fire. On the fanatics informing them of the intended removal of the holy picture, the majority joined in the riot, and, swearing vengeance against the primate, went in pursuit of him. He had taken refuge in the Donskoi monastery without the city; but he was tracked by the rabble, who rushed into the church, and found him engaged in the celebration of divine worship. Unawed by the sanctity of the place, the venerable appearance of the man, or the nature of his employment, they beat the unfortunate prelate to the ground, and then dispatched him with their knives.

Leaving the mangled body lying before the gate of the sacred building, the murderers ran back into the city, where they plundered the residence of the primate, turned the sick out of the lazarets, ill-treated the surgeons, and, breaking into some wine-cellars, soon added the madness of drunkenness to that of fanaticism. Some public officers who endeavoured to calm the tumult were severely beaten; and the tide of popular fury turned against the medical men, who were accused of having occasioned the pestilence. Meeting with an Italian dancing-master, whom they took to be a doctor, they broke both his arms and his legs, and left him lying in that shocking condition in the street. Having attacked and plundered the house of a well-known physician, they pressed forward, staggering, shouting, and filling the air with wild cries, to the principal hospital. At their approach, a hundred soldiers, who had been placed there to protect it, took to their heels; the doctors and attendants had all previously consulted their safety by retreating into the country.

For a few hours Moscow was not only smitten with the plague which struck invisibly, and removed its victims from amongst the living with a rapidity that engendered a mysterious awe, but it also lay at the mercy of a fanatical, desperate, and drunken mob. Few situations could be more calamitous, when the destructive powers of nature, and the blind wrath of brutal men, combined to spread death and terror throughout its dwellings. But the sanguinary carnival that furious ignorance

carried on within the city of the plague, was suppressed in the evening by General Yerakin, who arrived with 150 soldiers and two field-pieces. Encouraged by the smallness of this force, the rioters encountered it, and a furious fight, which was prolonged until midnight, ensued. By that time 250 of the insurgents lay dead in the street, 300 were taken prisoners, and many more crawled away, desperately wounded, and died in their miserable homes. The decision of General Yerakin restored peace to Moscow; and the governor and officers who had fled from their duty, speedily returned to it.

Soon after this wild outbreak, Gregory Orloff arrived in Moscow with absolute authority to adopt any means he considered expedient for the reduction of the pestilence. His fearlessness and activity contributed much to that result. Some of the means he put in practice were admirable ones. When, in the spring of 1772, a return of the calamity was apprehended, he proclaimed throughout the city, that whoever kept in concealment any goods or other things in houses that had been infected, even though they were stolen, might freely produce them, and instead of punishment, should receive from ten to twenty roubles; and that such articles as had been in the possession of infected persons, and must therefore be burnt, should be paid for according to their full value. The result of this proclamation was, that all the infected garments and other articles which a revolting avarice had filched from the dead, even at the risk of themselves speedily following in the same dark path, were collected and destroyed. Happily the plague, which, according to a Russian estimate, had cost the empire the lives of 133,299 persons, did not return. Such had been the exertions of Gregory Orloff in promoting this end, that the empress Catherine caused a triumphal arch to be erected to his honour, bearing the inscription, "Moscow delivered from the contagion by Orloff." Medals also were struck as memorials of the service he had rendered his country.

During this period Poland continued a prey to confusion; and on the 3rd of September, 1771, its powerless monarch narrowly escaped assassination, in consequence of the belief which prevailed amongst his subjects, that he was acting in concert with the empress Catherine, who, from day to day, was adding to the weight of the yoke she had forced upon their unhappy country. The danger from which Stanislaus Augustus had escaped, gave Catherine a new pretext for pursuing the confederates of Bar, as the intolerant catholic party were called, and for preparing for the dismemberment of Poland.

Turkey had suffered much in the war with Russia, and desired peace; Russia, who had not sought the conflict, felt it to be a heavy and dangerous responsibility, and was, therefore, not averse to peace. The more so, as the Russian squadron in the Archipelago was devastated by an epidemic which threatened to carry off every sailor in the fleet. Consequently, when the ministers of Austria and Prussia intervened to bring about a peace, an armistice was agreed upon, and a congress appointed to meet at Fokshiani. Gregory Orloff saw in this what he deemed a favourable opportunity for promoting his ambition. Could he obtain a favourable peace for Russia, he conceived that the gratitude of the empress might induce her to make him her partner on the throne, and that popular opposition to such a step would be abandoned in the general joy at the restoration of tranquillity.

The empress had been greatly attached to Orloff; but the feeling he entertained towards her was, it has been conjectured, not affection, but the result of gratitude and ambition. Proud of the favour of his sovereign, he showed himself zealous to deserve it; but when once he thought he had acquired sufficient grounds for his pretensions, his ardour began to cool, and he even assumed a distant behaviour. The more Catherine wished to bring him back to his usual attentions, the more he seemed inclined to retreat, and to seek his amusement in the company of other ladies. The empress could not but resent this ungrateful conduct, and feel hurt at the insensibility from which it proceeded. However, on account of the fondness for her child, of which Orloff was the father,* she did not at once discard him. The offspring of the adventurer and his imperial paramour was brought up in one of the suburbs of the city, where Catherine, deeply disguised, and under a false name, frequently visited him. It is said, that from affection to this child, and with the object of remedying the inconstancy of Orloff, the empress made him an offer of a clandestine marriage, but

* A boy, afterwards known as the Count Bobrinski.

that he rejected it with disdain, as he presumed himself not unworthy of sharing with her a throne gained, to no small extent, by his boldness, and upheld by his influence. Catherine, though surprised, masked her displeasure; but considering that the ambition of Orloff was not only humiliating to her, but might give rise to dangerous consequences, she resolved to subdue her attachment to her aspiring and ungrateful lover.

Catherine's chief minister, Count Panin, was acute enough to discern the intentions of his mistress. He had long regarded Orloff with secret aversion; and now that the favourite had departed on his mission to the East, again endeavoured to supplant him in the estimation of the empress. Panin watched her majesty closely, and soon perceived that she often looked with complacency on a sub-lieutenant of the guards, named Vassiltschikoff. This person was young, handsome, and of a good figure; but he had not more than the average intellect or talent, was deficient in a knowledge of the world, and in that courage, or rather confidence, which is commonly indispensable in forwarding addresses where a disparity of rank or fortune exists. But Count Panin, and the courtiers who seconded his design, played up to this new fancy of the empress, and blackened the name of Orloff, while they bestowed praises upon his timid rival. In this case, the docility of the latter was useful to him; he did as he was directed by the more accomplished intriguers who were interested in his success, and soon was appointed by the empress as her chamberlain; in which situation her smiles and her magnificent presents left no doubt concerning the familiarity which existed between them.

When Gregory Orloff learnt that a rival had supplanted him in the affections of the empress, he was filled with rage and astonishment. Trusting that his presence would revive a passion which his pride forbade him to believe altogether extinguished, he abandoned Fokshiani without the permission of the empress, and giving up the peace negotiations, hastened to St. Petersburg. On arriving at the gates of that city, an officer approached his carriage, and presented him with an imperial order forbidding him to enter. The discarded favourite regarded it with silent astonishment, and directed his servants to drive him to Gatshina, one of his country-seats.

When Catherine, who knew the violence of Orloff's temper, received intelligence that he had quitted Fokshiani, she experienced some alarm; and apprehensive that he might make his appearance in spite of her, gave orders to double the guard of the palace, and to place sentinels at the gate of the new favourite. As Orloff had a key to his apartments, she even caused the locks to be changed. These precautions were needless; nothing was to be feared from the once powerful and arrogant courtier. No sooner was it known that he had lost the favour of the empress, than he had not a follower left; while those who had hitherto been his enemies in secret, showed themselves on all sides. He at first braved the anger of the empress by refusing to surrender his employments; but Catherine had no desire to punish where she had once loved. With a politic indulgence she entered upon a compromise with him; and Orloff, overcome by her bounty, consented to leave Russia, and set out on a tour through various parts of Europe. The empress rewarded his submission with a present of 100,000 roubles, the brevet of a pension of 150,000, a magnificent service of plate, and an estate with 6,000 peasants upon it. He had already obtained a patent of prince of the Roman empire, and Catherine desired that he should take the title, no doubt wishing that her former favourite should appear before the world with a magnificence befitting the position he had once held.

The arrogant demands of the Russians led to the rupture of the congress of Fokshiani, but negotiations for peace between Turkey and Russia were afterwards resumed at Bucharest. While they were pending, the Russians concluded with a new khan of the Crimea a treaty, by which he declared himself independent of the sultan, and placed himself under the protection of the empress. He at the same time surrendered to her the forts of Kertch and Yenikale, together with the territory belonging to them. The Porte, incensed at this, sent a squadron into the Black Sea to oppose the war ships of the empress, which already breasted its waters.

Catherine's attention was now particularly directed to Poland, where she saw herself about to reap the result of the political intrigues she had so patiently carried on. Frederic the Great was her accomplice in the design of partitioning that miserable country, which fell a prey to the ambition

of its neighbours through the vices of its nobles and its priesthood, the weakness of its kings, and the slavery of its people. Frederic had drawn Austria into the scheme; and the emperor, Joseph II., was perfectly willing to share in the plunder. England had been deluded by a highly profitable commercial treaty, which bound up her interests with those of Russia, and ensured her neutrality. France—then in the oppressed and exhausted condition which, twenty years later, produced that terrible revolution which astonished the world—she disregarded. The nations of the Baltic, though they felt jealous of the growing preponderance of Russia, were not in a condition to oppose her designs; and the Turks had enough to do to defend their own territory without sending assistance to Poland.

Prussia and Austria both seized some pretext for pouring their troops into Poland, which was already occupied by those of Russia. The rest of Europe looked on in silence, and wondered why three formidable powers, in a time of peace, should seize upon a country the independence of which had been guaranteed by the most solemn treaties. They were not long kept in suspense. The treaty that had been entered into by the three powers was avowed, and the ambassadors of each of them presented to the king and the diet of Poland declarations in support of it. The internal troubles of Poland, it was said, were productive of danger to neighbouring states, who were consequently obliged, at a great expense, to take measures of precaution, in order to secure the tranquillity of their own frontiers. Russia, Prussia, and Austria were therefore resolved on terminating the dissensions of Poland, and at the same time, of satisfying certain claims they had upon that country, by taking possession of such parts of its territory as would serve to fix more natural and certain bounds between it and them. In the autumn of 1772, each of the three partitioning powers issued a specification of the particular territory which they had respectively agreed to appropriate. In these documents, the sovereigns of Prussia and Austria merely commanded the inhabitants of the districts to which they laid claim, to take an oath of allegiance to them, and to conduct themselves as loyal subjects. The inclination of the people as to this sudden transference of their loyalty was not taken into consideration. Catherine acted with a greater liberality. She solemnly promised her new subjects the free and public exercise of their religion, together with the perfect security of their property. She added, that looking upon them now as her dear children, she gave them equal shares in all the rights, liberties, and prerogatives enjoyed by her ancient subjects. In return for these graces, she expected they would render themselves worthy of them by a sincere love of their new country, and an inviolable attachment to its sovereign. Catherine, at the same time, commanded them to take an oath of allegiance to her in the course of a month; but she allowed any of the nobility or landholders who were not disposed to do so, three months to sell their lands before they left the country.

Stanislaus Augustus, the king of Poland, while his country was thus being torn asunder by strangers, was a sort of honourable prisoner in his capital, which was surrounded with foreign troops. He was required by the representatives of the partitioning powers to give a sort of sanction to their act of spoliation. They insisted that a diet, presided over by the sovereign, should solemnly cede to them the provinces of which they had already possessed themselves. On the 19th of April, 1773, a diet met to deliberate with the bayonet at its bosom. Bribes and threats were used to influence the votes of the deputies, and that so successfully, that after some resistance, the diet confirmed the dismemberment of the country. No sooner was this done, than several of the principal members of the diet went to the king, and reproached him with the ruin of their country; for though he had declared loudly against the partition, he was suspected, by those who knew his former devotion to the empress Catherine, of still being the creature of her will. At first he answered his irritated nobles gently; but as his moderation only encouraged them to use expressions of insult, he rose from his seat, and throwing his hat upon the floor, said haughtily—"Gentlemen, I am weary of listening to you. The partition of our unhappy country is a consequence of your ambition, of your dissensions, and your eternal disputes. It is to yourselves alone that you ought to attribute your misfortunes. As for me, if no more territory should be left me than could be covered by this hat, I should nevertheless be still, in the eyes of all Europe, your lawful but unhappy king."

By this, the first dismemberment of Poland, it lost an extent of territory inhabited by nearly 5,000,000 of persons, and comprising more than one-third of its whole extent. Of this territory, Russia took 3,444 square leagues; Austria, 2,700; and Prussia, 900; but Frederic's portion, though the smallest and least populous, was also the richest and most enterprising.* Some nobles of the usurped provinces published protests against this proceeding; but these were of no avail in a country overrun with foreign armies. The three powers then brought forward, and induced the diet to adopt, the plan of a new constitution, which was to obviate the defects of the old one. Its real object, and its actual effect, was to confirm the dangerous privileges of the nobility, and aggravate the confusion from which the country suffered. These were, indeed, calamitous; much of the land was reduced to a mere desert, the inhabitants being either exterminated or forcibly carried off into Russia or Prussia. The extortions imposed by Frederic, during the occupation of Poland by Prussian troops, were enormous; and the actual sovereignty of Poland, so far as any could be said to exist, was in the hands of the Russian ambassador, who never neglected an opportunity of treating its legitimate monarch with the most galling insult.

"The violent dismemberment and partition of Poland," said an author who wrote a few years after the events we have just narrated, "without the pretence of war, or even the colour of right, is to be considered as the first very great breach in the modern political system of Europe. It is not, said the politicians of the continent, sapping by degrees the constitution of our great western republic, it is laying the axe at once to the root, in such a manner as threatens the total overthrow of the whole. The surprise of a town, the invasion of an insignificant province, or the election of a prince who had neither abilities to be feared nor virtues to be loved, would some years ago have armed one-half of Europe, and elicited the attention of the other. We now behold the destruction of a great kingdom, with the consequent disarrangement of power, dominion, and commerce, with as much indifference as we could read an account of the extermination of one horde of Tartars by another, in the days of Ghengis Khan or Tamerlane.

"The idea of considering Europe as a vast commonwealth; of the several parts being distinct and separate, though politically and commercially united; of keeping them independent, notwithstanding their inequality in power; and of preventing any one, by any means, from becoming too powerful for the rest, was great and liberal, and though the result of barbarism, founded upon the most enlarged principles of the wisest policy. It is owing to this system, that this small part of the world has acquired so astonishing a superiority over the rest of the globe. The fortune and glory of Greece proceeded from a similar system of policy, though formed upon a smaller scale. Both her fortune and glory expired along with the system.

"Some of the most desert provinces in Asia have been repeatedly the seats of arts, arms, commerce, and literature. These potent and civilised nations have repeatedly perished for want of any union or system of policy of this nature. Some Scythian or other barbarian has been suffered, unnoticed, to subdue his neighbouring tribes; each new conquest was made an instrument to the succeeding, until at length become irresistible, he swept whole empires, with their arts and sciences, off the face of the earth. In the same manner, a banditti, who were afterwards called Romans, were suffered to accumulate power, until they had subdued the bravest and fiercest nations, and become the masters of the best part of the world. Each state looked on with indifference, or enjoyed a malignant pleasure at the ruin of its neighbour, without reflecting that the weapons and power of which he was deprived would be quickly employed to its own destruction.

"It will not be denied, that the idea of supposing a balance of power has in some cases been carried to an extreme; that by artfully employing it to operate upon the passions and jealousies of mankind, it has been made an engine subservient to the designs of interested and ambitious persons; and has, perhaps, thereby been productive of some unnecessary wars. The same objections might be made to that

* Notwithstanding the smallness of the tract acquired by Frederic, its importance to him was immense, for it united the kingdom of Prussia with Pomerania and the marches of Brandenburg, which it had previously separated in a very awkward manner, so that Voltaire was accustomed to compare his illustrious friend's dominions to a long pair of gaiters.

glorious jealousy with respect to civil liberty, which has been the admiration and envy of all ages; which, for the happiness of mankind, should subsist in full vigour in every state in the world, and, to their misfortune and punishment, is scarcely alive in a few; even that, the noblest quality of the human mind, has been productive of wars and other evils."

We may mention that, so perfectly was England seduced by her commercial interests to a connivance at the aggression of Russia and the other partitioning powers, that, when George III. met his reassembled parliament on the 26th of November, 1772 (a time when the dismemberment of Poland was known to all the world), his speech did not contain a single allusion to that startling innovation. As if approving all that had been done, George expressed his satisfaction at seeing there was reason to hope that the war which had so long unhappily prevailed in one part of Europe, was drawing to a close; and he added, that although there was no probability of England being involved in these troubles, yet their discontinuance would afford a fairer prospect for the duration of peace, which he trusted would not be affected by recent alterations in Europe. Both houses of parliament gave a formal and empty response to his speech, and neither of them said a word about the political annihilation of Poland, the Russian proceedings in the Archipelago, and the growing power and expanding territory of the empress Catherine!

CHAPTER XXXVI.

HOSTILITIES BETWEEN RUSSIA AND TURKEY; FIRST MARRIAGE OF THE GRAND-DUKE PAUL; PEACE OF KAINARDSHI; PUGATSCHEF THE IMPOSTOR, AND THE GREAT COSSACK REBELLION; PUGATSCHEF IS BETRAYED AND EXECUTED; CONCILIATORY MEASURES OF THE EMPRESS.

While the attention of the empress Catherine was chiefly occupied in the division of Poland, her army and her fleet were engaged, with variable success, with those of the Turks. The Danube, which formed the boundary between the hostile armies, was the scene of many furious encounters, which not unfrequently terminated in favour of the Ottoman arms. The Russians, harassed by frequent attacks, and suffering greatly from the climate, were losing immense numbers of their best troops in ineffectual service. The empress, on learning this, sent despatches to Marshal Romantzoff, desiring to be informed why he did not give battle to the enemy. The answer the general returned was, that the grand-vizier had three times more people than he, and might easily find his advantage in such an event. Catherine, in reply, wrote with a proud impatience—"The Romans never asked after the number of their enemies, but where they were, in order to fight them."

Neither on land or by sea were the Russians so successful as they anticipated being. Some trifling engagements took place between the hostile fleets on the Black Sea; but such was the badness of the vessels, and the inexperience of the sailors on both sides, that their contests did little more than show that Russia was about as ill suited to acquire, as Turkey was to defend, the dominion of those boisterous waters. In the Archipelago the career of the Russian fleet was a chequered one; some hollow successes were obtained, and some exhausting reverses suffered. In the spring of 1773 the Russian fleet made an unsuccessful descent upon the island of Negropont, in which they suffered great loss; the Turks cutting off all the men that were landed. Chiefly in consequence of the numbers of their sick the Russians quitted the isle of Paros, and sent a part of their fleet to Leghorn, where they refitted their ships, and fixed a hospital. The other vessels were employed in desultory expeditions of a piratical character. They made several descents upon the islands of Cyprus, Candia, and others, which were attended with no further advantage than the accumulation of plunder. They were, however, so far from being always successful in these affairs, that four sacks, full of Russian heads, were sent from Stanchio to Constantinople,

as a proof of the reception they had met with in that island.

Catherine had, for some time, desired to see her son, the Grand-duke Paul, contract an alliance which should result in ensuring the continuance of the imperial dynasty. Paul was weak in constitution and cold in temperament; and the empress entertained some fears that he might be indisposed or incapable of giving heirs to the empire. Some of her confidants undertook to dispel her doubts. For this purpose they engaged an attractive Polish lady, a widow, named Sophia Ossipovna, to melt the coldness of the prince, and win him to her endearments. Paul was captivated; the lady bore him a son,* and the empress was satisfied and convinced. She shortly afterwards caused Paul to be married to the Princess Wilhelmina, one of the daughters of the landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt. As a preliminary, the lady embraced the Greek mode of worship; and the marriage, which was conducted with great magnificence, took place on the 10th of October, 1773.

Catherine was fond of communicating with distinguished men of letters, and Voltaire and Diderot were the correspondents whom she most distinguished. She had several times invited them to visit her at St. Petersburg. Voltaire had ever declined; but this year Diderot accepted the hospitality of the empress, and travelled to St. Petersburg, where he was received with much distinction and liberality. The apostle of materialism wrote to a friend, that "while in a country called the land of freemen, he felt as a slave; but now, in a land called the country of slaves, he felt like a freeman." Every day, after dinner, Catherine conversed with him on philosophy, legislation, or politics. Diderot unfolded his principles concerning the rights of nations, with his usual eloquence and enthusiasm. The empress used to make him sit beside her; and, in his warmth, he sometimes hit her on the knee with the back of his hand—a familiarity which she never resented or seemed displeased at. But, though she seemed delighted to converse with the philosopher, he did not often win her to the adoption of his principles. "Monsieur Diderot," she remarked, "is a hundred years old in many respects; but, in others, he is no more than ten."

* This child received the name of Simeon Velikoi. He was of a gentle and modest disposition, and at an early age entered the Russian navy. He afterwards formed one of twelve officers sent by the empress Catherine to learn the art of navigation in England. While in this country he volunteered into the English navy, and died in the West Indies in 1797.

Immense preparations were made, both by the Turks and the Russians, for the campaign of 1774. The army of the grand-vizier, on the Danube, was reported to amount to no less than 400,000 combatants, while the Porte also fomented rebellions amongst the Cossacks, and troubles with the Tartars of the Crimea. The Russians also had a powerful army on the Danube, under the command of Marshal Romantzoff, beneath whom served Generals Soltikoff, Suwarrow, and Kamenskoi.

Notwithstanding the enormous numerical force of the Turks, they were defeated in several engagements; and the severe reverses they suffered led, as was usual, to a spirit of insubordination amongst them. They not only fought furiously amongst themselves, but deserted by whole detachments. Their general had fixed his camp at Shumla, at a considerable distance from the main body of his army. Romantzoff soon discerned this vital error, and, surrounding the camp of the vizier, he cut off the communication of that thoughtless general with the great body of his troops, and also with his magazines. The vizier, unable to obtain any succours, to retire, or to stand a battle, resolved to sue for peace.

The Russians had no objection to peace, but they would abate nothing of their previous demands. To these the Turks now agreed, and the treaty was concluded at Kutschuk-Kainardshi, in Bulgaria. By it Russia obtained the free navigation of the Black Sea, and all other Ottoman seas, together with the passage of the Dardanelles, with the sole restriction that she should never have more than one armed vessel in the Bosphorus. Russia retained Azoff, Taganrog, Kertch, and Kinburn, but restored the rest of her conquests. But the condition which perhaps most of all galled the pride of the Porte, was the declaration of the independence of the Crimea; though that government does not appear to have foreseen that Catherine only desired to obtain the independence of the Crimea, that she might be the better enabled to incorporate it with her own dominions, to which, indeed, in a geographical sense, it properly belongs. Besides these concessions, the empress obtained from the Porte that tract of land lying on

the Euxine between the Bug and the Dnieper, a pecuniary equivalent for the expenses of the war, and a recognition of her imperial title. By this treaty, therefore, she derived the twofold advantage of increasing her own power and decreasing that of her enemy. The commerce of the Euxine, and the mart of the Levant, opened to her a source of immense riches. The protection which she granted the Tartars furnished her with the means of dividing them, and of conquering their country. The acquisition of the Polish Ukraine put her in a capacity of more easily carrying on a war in the regions of the Danube, of overawing the Ottoman empire, and of completing the ruin of Poland. The establishment of discipline among the Cossacks added to her armies an excellent cavalry; and the empress beheld her influence and her reputation extending throughout Europe. Great joy prevailed at St. Petersburg in consequence of the conclusion of peace, and eight days were devoted to public festivities. That the spirit of gladness might be universal, all prisoners, except those charged with high treason, were released, and many of the unfortunate outcasts who had been exiled to Siberia permitted to return.

In fact, peace was almost as requisite to Russia as to Turkey. The finances of the empress were in a dilapidated state; Moscow and the adjacent country had not recovered the ravages of the plague, which had made its appalling appearance in the armies of the empress, and had even extended to her fleet in the Archipelago. An insurrection, to which we shall presently refer, was rife in the provinces of Kazan, Astracan, and Orenburg; while from seventy to one hundred thousand Kalmuck families had, in consequence of some oppression to which they had been subjected, abandoned the steppes of Russia, and sought the protection of the emperor of China. Catherine, who could ill afford to lose so considerable a number of the inhabitants of her thinly-populated dominions, demanded the restitution of the runaways. To this she received a dignified refusal; the supreme tribunal of Pekin saying—"Their sovereign was not so unjust a prince as to deliver up his subjects to foreigners, nor so cruel a father as to drive away children who returned to the bosom of their family. That he had no intimation of the design of the Kalmucks till the moment of their arrival; and that then, without delay, he caused to be restored to them the habitations that had belonged to them from time immemorial."

Catherine herself, also, though equal to immense exertions, yet desired repose. Though triumphant over her enemies, the admiration of Europe, idolised by her courtiers, she was still frequently a prey to secret disquietudes of great severity. Though constantly projecting an extension of her large dominions, she yet dreaded the thought of being hurled from the throne. Sometimes trembling for her life, yet she gaily discoursed of the long career she had probably still to run. On one occasion she found a paper in her cabinet, in which mention was made of a threatened assassination; but never did she show herself more confident and sedate than on that day. Though sometimes distracted with doubts, she never abandoned those pleasures to which she had always been so much devoted. She frequently went from the council to the ball-room and the theatre, and from important sittings of the senate to the most frivolous amusement.

Catherine was growing weary of her favourite Vassiltschikoff, who, though he did not abuse the trust placed in him, and conducted himself with much moderation, was yet rather a passive and insipid character. At this point, Prince Orloff returned unexpectedly from his travels; and although the empress at first refused to see him, she commanded Vassiltschikoff to retire to Moscow, and loaded him with presents for his complaisant obedience. Orloff soon made his appearance at court, where the empress received him with cheerfulness. He aspired to gain his old ascendancy over the heart of the empress; but he was deceived in this respect. She only desired his presence and his influence, that she might be the better able to oppose a faction which she feared was forming under the auspices of her son the Grand-duke Paul.

Clouds appeared to be gathering in the horizon of Catherine. For some time discontent had reigned among great bodies of the people, on account of their sufferings from the plague and the war, and the boors were almost desperate at seeing their sons successively taken from them to perish by the sword of the Turks, or the pestilence which raged among the Russian armies on the Danube. The empress had never been a favourite with the ancient nobility of the empire, while the priesthood secretly hated

her, on account of the wealth and privileges she withheld from them. The latter, ready to adopt any means of vengeance, privately spread abroad a report that Peter III. was still living, and would soon make his appearance to claim the throne which was his right. So early as the year 1767, a shoemaker of Voronetch declared himself to be the deceased czar; but he was soon taken, and executed as an impostor. Three years afterwards, a Russian soldier, who had deserted from his regiment, made the same dangerous assertion; and although he received a great deal of support from the priests, shared the same fate as his predecessor. Stefano Piccolo, a foreigner, who had served among the Austrian irregulars in the Seven Years' War, and afterwards entered into the Russian service, was the third adventurer in this direction. An insurrection followed, and his claim was soon exposed; but he himself was fortunate enough to escape. A fourth and fifth impostor, who each claimed to be the murdered Peter, perished by the hands of the executioner. These miserable attempts were but a gloomy prelude to the tragedy that was to follow.

The next attempt to personate the deceased czar was made in 1773, and with remarkable success. The chief actor in it was Ikhelman Pugatschef, the son of a Cossack of the Don. In early life he served as a common soldier in the Russian army, and fought against Frederic of Prussia. He afterwards served in the campaign of 1769 against the Turks, and was present at the siege of Bender. When that town surrendered he applied for his dismission, and on its being refused him, deserted and fled to Poland. There he was concealed by some hermits of the Greek church, whom he sometimes entertained by narrations of his various adventures. One day he mentioned, that while he was in the Russian service, an officer, after contemplating him for some time, observed, "If the emperor Peter III., my master, were not dead, I should believe that I saw him once more in thee." The hermits paid but little attention to this anecdote, but a circumstance occurred shortly afterwards which recalled it vividly to their minds. One of their companions who had been absent, seeing Pugatschef on his return, exclaimed suddenly, "Is not that the emperor, Peter III.?" On this the monks conceived the project of inducing Pugatschef to assume the character of the murdered czar, and found no difficulty in winning him to a participation in the proposed deception.

As soon as the monks considered the deserter to be sufficiently prepared in the details of the character he was to assume, he proceeded to Little Russia, and putting on the garb of a patriarch, bestowed his benedictions on the people with all the solemnity of a new apostle. He had no desire, he told them, to recover his lost dignities; declared that he was entirely weaned from the vanities of the world; that his life had long been devoted to piety; and that as soon as he had placed his dear son upon the throne, he would again retire to terminate his days in mortification and prayer. The ignorant and superstitious people listened with wonder and belief! Pugatschef was soon at the head of a great number of followers, and was even countenanced by many of the nobility of that locality.

From Orenburg, where the revolt began, Pugatschef went to the Cossacks of the Don, where he was arrested on a charge of exciting the people to sedition, and sent to take his trial at Kasan. There the discontented priests supplied him with money, with which he corrupted his guards, and then made his escape. Gathering a few of his old comrades around him, they went down the Volga as far as the mouth of the Irghis, proceeded up that river, and penetrated into the desert. There, from day to day, his followers increased, and soon became sufficiently formidable to encourage him publicly to declare that he was the emperor Peter III., and had been delivered by a miracle from the hands of his assassins; that a soldier, who greatly resembled him, had been substituted as a victim to their fury; and that the report of his death was a fiction coined by the court to compose the minds of the people, and reconcile them to the usurpation of Catherine.

Serious discontents prevailed among the Cossacks, especially those who resided in the neighbourhood of the river Yaïk. The chief of these arose from religious differences, for the Cossacks of that locality belonged to a party of separatists known as Roskolniki, or heretics; though they called themselves Starovertzi, or believers according to the old faith. The pretext on which Peter III. had been dethroned, was his attempt to alter the dress and rites of the priests, and to curtail the splendid revenues of the church. The Cossacks, therefore, now be-

lieved that he was a true Roskolnik, who had been deprived of his crown on account of his adherence to their tenets. What, then, more natural than that believing him to be alive, they should receive him with open arms?

In the month of September, 1773, Pugatschef and his followers made their appearance before the town of Yaïtsk, which contained 5,000 Cossacks and two field regiments, and summoned it to surrender. To these troops the impostor issued a manifesto, in which he declared "that he was Peter III., who had escaped from Ropscha at the instant when his assassins were about to murder him; that the traitors who had dethroned him, and dreaded his return, had falsely invented and propagated the report of his death; that he had been obliged to put on the disguise of a Cossack, to bear arms for his persecutors, and afterwards to conceal himself among the true and faithful believers, to whom he had made himself known; that having learnt, at length, that the brave Cossacks of the Yaïk were resolved to free themselves from the yoke of the usurpatrix, he was come to put himself into their hands, and to offer to march with them to victory and to vengeance." Immediately 500 of the Cossacks came over to him, accompanied by eleven of their officers; many of the others soon followed their example; and the commander of the place, who remained true to his duty, Pugatschef seized and hanged.

It would be both wearisome and unnecessary to follow the steps of this barbarian in his career of conquest and of cruelty. He acted with great boldness and some military skill, and defeated many bodies of troops sent against him. Lured by the hope of plunder and the excitement of a warlike life, immense numbers joined his standard; and, during the winter, a body of 10,000 Kalmucks revolted, and went over to him. At first Pugatschef conducted himself with an appearance of moderation; he wore an episcopal robe, gave his benediction to the people, and constantly repeated that he was destitute of all ambition, and that he only desired to place his son, the grand-duke, on the throne, and then end his days in religious retirement. Though this mode of conduct attracted to him many followers, he soon became tired of it, and the real character of the man revealed itself. He omitted no opportunity for extending the terror of his arms, and shrunk from no cruelty that might promote that end. He availed himself of every exhibition of weakness or imprudence on the part of the authorities, and displayed so much activity, that scarcely had he reduced a town to submission, before he led his followers to engage some force sent against him. Continued success rendered him arrogant, and throwing aside all restraint, he gave free scope to his savage temper and his licentious passions. While besieging Orenburg he caused all the officers and gentry of the surrounding country to be massacred, together with their wives and children; resolving, as he said, to shed the very last drop of blood of the haughty and tyrannical nobility.

The spirit of rebellion extended itself as far as Moscow. Catherine felt alarmed at its extent, and recalling General Bibikoff from the frontiers of Turkey, gave him the command of a considerable army, with orders to march against the insurgents. At the same time she issued a manifesto, which was circulated through the principal towns of the empire. It promised a pardon to all deserters—especially to those of the Cossacks of the Don and the Yaïk—who should return to their duty, and offered a reward of 100,000 roubles for the head of Pugatschef. The rebel chief also published his manifestoes, and affixed to them the name of Peter III. By one of these documents he declared all the serfs of the empire to be emancipated. He even caused roubles to be coined, bearing an impress of his likeness, with the inscription, "Peter III., emperor and autocrator of all the Russias."

General Bibikoff led an army of 35,000 men against the rebels, and obtained several successes over them, but without much affecting their number or decreasing their atrocities. His good fortune, however, soon abandoned him; for, having detached Prince Galitzin with a considerable body of troops, he was unexpectedly attacked by Pugatschef, and lost his life in the severe engagement which followed. Prince Galitzin, on his return, attacked the rebels, who fought desperately for a period of six hours, when, after a great number had perished, Pugatschef and the rest took to flight, and escaped to the shelter of the Ural Mountains.

Notwithstanding this heavy reverse, the active rebel soon reappeared at the head of a considerable force, and made himself master of several towns to the east of the mountains. Such as offered any resistance he gave to the flames. Here he was again

attacked and defeated; and after being hunted from place to place, though not without occasionally inflicting sanguinary checks upon his pursuers, he crossed the Volga, and regained the desert with no more than 300 followers, in whose bravery and fidelity he placed his last hope.

Fortune had not yet deserted him, and every day he was joined by numbers of Cossacks, Kalmucks, and boors, who, attracted by the name of liberty, had abandoned their labour and taken to arms. Elated by his popularity and the seeming attachment of his people, he resolved to march upon Moscow, where the populace, never perfectly reconciled to the sway of the empress, waited for him as a redeemer and champion of their cause. Fortunately, as he was beginning his march, he received information that the empress had just concluded a war with the Turks; and, apprehensive that he should have to contend with the greater part of the returning army of Marshal Romantzoff, he thought it more prudent to turn his arms in another direction. Learning that some Russian regiments were encamped on the shores of the Volga, he descended that river, fell upon them by surprise, and routed them utterly. Pugatschef also took several forts, and the town of Dmitressk, the governor of which he inhumanly caused to be impaled. The rebel chief here showed himself as a ruffian altogether destitute of merciful or generous emotions. Hearing that the astronomer Lovitch, member of the Imperial Academy of Sciences at St. Petersburg, was employed in the neighbourhood in taking levels for a projected canal, he commanded the unoffending man of science to be brought before him. As soon as the astronomer made his appearance, Pugatschef ordered his men to lift him on their pikes, in order, said he derisively, "that he may be nearer the stars." The unfortunate man was then cut to pieces by the attending Cossacks.

The career of the successful ruffian was approaching to a conclusion. The empress had sent General Panin to arrest his progress; and an intimate associate of Pugatschef, who had been taken prisoner, was suborned to betray him. But it was to the indefatigable exertions of a Colonel Mikelson that Catherine was peculiarly indebted for the suppression of this dangerous rebellion. He pursued the insurgents without intermission, marching over deserts of trackless snow without a guide, and, at times, almost without food. In every collision he had with the rebels he was always successful; and not only did he surprise and defeat them, while encumbered with baggage in a mountain pass, but cut off their convoys, and reduced them to a state of famine. Again deserted by the great bulk of his followers, Pugatschef had sought for safety in the deserts beyond the Volga. His miserable associates, suffering from hunger and thirst, and no longer able to hope for any change in his fortune, resolved to betray him, and to purchase their own safety with the life of their leader. As he was seeking a meal by gnawing the bones of a horse, the only food left him, several of his associates approached, and the first observed, "Come, thou hast been emperor long enough." Pugatschef shattered the arm of the foremost of his assailants by a pistol-shot, but he was soon overpowered and bound by them. They then sent a message to the Russian authorities, relating what they had done.

Pugatschef was at first placed in close confinement, together with several of his principal accomplices, but he was afterwards carried to Moscow in an iron cage. The baffled rebel refused all sustenance, and appeared resolved on self-destruction; but his keepers found means to compel him to eat. He afterwards counterfeited madness, but without producing the effect he intended. He was subjected to many examinations for the purpose of discovering if his career of imposture had been suggested or aided by any distinguished persons. Both the Turkish and the French governments were suspected of having excited this formidable insurrection for the purpose of giving the empress full employment at home. In a letter which Catherine wrote the French monarch, informing him that the leader of the revolt was in her power, she said, "I shall keep his depositions secret, that they may not aggravate the disgrace of those who set him on."

The delinquent was tried by the senate, assisted by a special commission; and the empress recommended them to be satisfied with a simple confession of his crime, and not to apply the torture for the purpose of extracting the names of his accomplices. She was prudently apprehensive lest his declarations might oblige her to multiply punishments, and plunge the empire into fresh excitement. The empress, however, departed from her customary lenity on this

occasion. Pugatschef was condemned to have his hands and his feet cut off, and then to be quartered alive. Several of his associates were to be hanged at the same time. He was taken to the place of execution in a cart painted black, and compelled to hold a lighted candle in his hand. A priest sat on each side of him, and behind stood the executioner with two large axes placed on a block. The preparations that had been made created a great sensation in the minds of the spectators, but Pugatschef himself beheld them with an undaunted aspect. With a strange insensibility respecting the atrocities he himself had committed, he uttered a wish, as he was driven through the crowd, that if he had done aught amiss, the people would pardon him for the love of God! He ascended the scaffold with perfect calmness and self-possession; but, happily, the revolting sentence passed upon him was not literally fulfilled. Either from an error on the part of the executioner, or from a sense of humanity in the man, he struck off the head of the rebel first, and severed the hands and feet afterwards. Some persons have said that the punishment of Pugatschef was thus mitigated in consequence of a secret order from the empress to that effect; but that is not probable, as the unfortunate executioner had his tongue cut out, and was sent to Siberia, for presuming to alter the nature of the punishment to which so notorious a criminal was condemned. Five of the principal associates of Pugatschef suffered with him, while eighteen more underwent the knout, and were exiled to Siberia. His rebellion had cost the destruction of a great number of towns, and of upwards of 250 villages, besides interrupting the works at the mines of Orenburg, and the whole trade of Siberia. The empress, to efface all memorial of the revolt, changed the name of the river Yaïk into that of the Ural; and the town of Yaïtsk, where Pugatschef commenced his rebellion, into that of Uralsk. She also prohibited the discussion of the particulars of this prolonged insurrection, forbade any reproaches to be used on its account, and pronounced a decree of silence and oblivion on all matters concerning it.

After the suppression of this rebellion, which had threatened to shake her throne, Catherine adopted many measures of a nature calculated to produce contentment in the minds of the people, and to win their attachment. She abolished a number of the ancient taxes, especially such as were considered discouraging to agriculture, or oppressive to particular provinces or orders of the people. With a remarkable generosity she also lent considerable sums of money, without interest, for a specified term of years, to those provinces which had been devastated by the rebels, and were consequently suffering from famine. Those criminals who had undergone long periods of imprisonment, or had otherwise suffered severely for their offences, she set at liberty. The same humanity was shown, under certain restrictions, to imprisoned debtors; while the heirs of those who lay under pecuniary obligations to the crown, were released from them. These prudent measures were so far successful that the disturbed districts were tranquillised, and the insurgents everywhere returned to their duty.

"Thus," it has been well observed, "Russia enjoyed her power, influence, and glory, with a noble and splendid magnificence. All her affairs were conducted upon a great and extensive system, and all her acts were in a grand style. She sat supreme between Europe and Asia, and looked like the dictator of both. In her was seen a great but still growing empire, which, not having reached the summit of her destined power, felt life and vigour glowing in every part. The successes and consequences of the war enlarged the spirit, extended the views, and dignified the minds of the people. In such a state everything is bold and masculine. Even its vices and crimes are great."*

* That is, not estimable, but having a certain air of grandeur from their being absolutely and widely removed from littleness and meanness. Great crime has often so dazzled the world by its brilliancy, that men regard the author with emotions of admiration; but the criminal who crawls through life heaping meanness upon meanness, and doing villanous work from vile and utterly selfish considerations, is not only wicked, but disgusting. No sane man can apologise for that which is vicious; but yet even Edmund Burke exclaimed, "that vice lost half its evil by losing all its grossness."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

POTEMKIN BECOMES FAVOURITE OF THE EMPRESS; STATE VISIT OF CATHERINE TO MOSCOW; POTEMKIN ENDEAVOURS TO INDUCE THE EMPRESS TO MARRY HIM; HE IS DISCARDED AS THE LOVER, BUT REMAINS AS THE FRIEND OF HIS MISTRESS; DEATH OF THE GRAND-DUCHESS; PAUL MARRIES THE PRINCESS OF WIRTEMBERG; CATHERINE'S THIRST FOR DISTINCTION; HER INTRIGUES IN SWEDEN; DISTURBANCES IN THE CRIMEA; CLAIMS OF RUSSIA WITH RESPECT TO MOLDAVIA AND WALLACHIA; NEW TREATY BETWEEN RUSSIA AND TURKEY; COLDNESS OF THE EMPRESS TOWARDS ENGLAND; SPLENDOUR OF THE COURT OF CATHERINE.

When the empress dismissed her lover Vassiltschikoff, Prince Gregory Orloff was again taken into favour. But this was but for a short time, for Catherine had been impressed with the manly beauty and noble air of Potemkin. She remembered with pleasure that, on the day of entrance into St. Petersburg, during the revolution of 1762, Potemkin, then a mere youth, on observing her to be without a plume in her hat, had gallantly ridden up and presented her with his.

The coarseness of Orloff's manners were not calculated to revive a cold attachment, and the empress secretly bestowed her smiles on the handsome Potemkin. Elated by this prosperity, he one day boasted to Alexis Orloff of the favour he enjoyed, and even ventured to assert that he could remove from court any person to whom he had taken a dislike. Orloff returned a haughty reply; sharp words ensued, and Potemkin received a blow, which eventually deprived him of an eye. In addition to this, the empress yielded to the solicitations of Gregory, and Potemkin was compelled to abandon the court. Retiring to Smolensk he remained almost a year in solitude, suffering much from vexation and from the injury to his eye.* Sometimes he expressed his intention of turning monk, as thousands of worldly and disappointed men have done before him; at others, he gave way to the most extravagant hopes. At length an ardent and submissive letter, which he wrote to the empress, had the effect not only of producing his recall, but of restoring to him the full possession of her favour. He arrived during the absence of Gregory Orloff on a hunting excursion; and the latter, on his return, soon discovered that his reproaches and his complaints were alike unavailing.

Potemkin was installed into the office of favourite during the year 1774, with certain formalities, which were afterwards observed towards all on whom the imperial smiles were lavished. Some account of these proceedings is, at the least, curious. When Catherine cast her eyes on one of her subjects with the intention of raising him to the post of favourite, he was invited to dinner by some lady in her confidence, and she herself, as if accidentally, joined the party. During the entertainment she entered into discourse with the new-comer, to ascertain if he was worthy of the favours she contemplated bestowing upon him. A sign to the confidant expressed her satisfaction, or the reverse; and, in the event of a favourable judgment, that discreet person took care to inform the fortunate courtier of the honour that was intended for him. The following day he received a visit from one of the physicians of the court, who came to inquire into the state of his health; and, in the evening, he accompanied the empress to her palace called the Hermitage, and took possession of the apartment which had been prepared for him. This was situated immediately beneath that of the empress, to which it communicated by a private staircase. The position of general aide-de-camp to her majesty was bestowed upon him, in order that he might accompany her everywhere without attracting reproach or inviting observation. On the day of his being received into favour he was presented with 100,000 roubles, and every succeeding month he found 12,000 on his dressing-table. In addition to this, the marshal of the court was ordered to provide him with a table of twenty-four covers, and to defray all the expenses of his household. The paramour of the empress, or rather her favourite (for that was the polite term in use at the Russian

* It has been said that he might have been cured of the injury done to his eye, but that, in his impatience, he burst a slight tumour that had formed close to the ball, and deprived himself of the sight of it.

court), attended her at all parties of amusement, at the opera, and on the promenade, and was not permitted to leave the palace without express permission. He was likewise given to understand, that it would not be well received if he conversed familiarly with other women; and if he went to dine with any of his friends, the mistress of the house was always absent. When the favourite no longer possessed the power of making himself agreeable to the empress, he received orders to travel, and from that time he was excluded from all further access to her. But Catherine never dismissed her paramours with anger, or behaved to them otherwise than with a generosity truly imperial. The discarded favourite received such lavish tokens of her past affection as, to some extent, consoled him for the loss of her presence.

The spring of the year 1775 saw the Russian empire recovering from the exhaustion caused by its war against the Turks, and the internal discord and misery resulting from the great Cossack insurrection under Pugatschef. The time of the empress was divided between those sensual and extravagant pleasures to which she was attached, and the cultivation of the arts of peace and the improvement of the country. In these efforts she found an efficient second in Potemkin, who, notwithstanding his frivolity and waywardness, possessed considerable abilities, and of such a character as enabled him to gain a remarkable ascendancy over the empress. So conscious was he of this, that he grew wanton in the exercise of his power, and constantly demanded, and obtained, some new dignity or accession of revenue. When any desire he had formed was disappointed, he grew sullen, and occasionally angry. By such means he entered the council, and supplanted a more able man than himself in the post of vice-president at war. Such presumption necessarily created him a host of enemies, and he was reproached for undertaking all things, yet completing nothing; and of making indiscriminate promises which he never fulfilled. The empress, though much captivated with him, was still conscious of his failings; and it was partly with a view to check his petulance and audacity that she retained her discarded lover (Prince Orloff) at court, and strove to preserve peace between the new favourite and the two fiery brothers. Gregory, regardless of the pleasures, but jealous of the honours of Potemkin, had sullenly requested permission to retire; but to this the empress would not consent. He then obtained an interview with her, during which he recalled to her mind the obligations which she owed to him; spoke of his zeal and fidelity; and observed, that she had nothing to reproach him with but the circumstance of his not being so young as his rival. Catherine listened with gentleness; and, without denying the wrongs of which he complained, assured him she should ever be his friend. The discontented prince was subdued, and still remained at court her trusted, because probably hopeful, servant.

Early in 1775, the empress paid a visit in great state to Moscow, chiefly for the purpose of exterminating by her presence, her favours, and her liberality, the traces of disaffection and sympathy with the rebel Pugatschef, which lingered there. Though she held in contempt the childish bigotry of the ignorant people, and almost equally ignorant priesthood, and regarded the latter as dangerous subjects, she did not disdain to appeal to this very bigotry, and to use the priesthood, for the purpose of regaining the alienated minds of her subjects in the city and neighbourhood of Moscow. With this object, she carried with her a great number of little figures of saints, and distributed them in the churches and chapels on the road. She also carried a large picture, richly decorated with gold and diamonds, for presentation to the cathedral of Moscow. She was preceded into that city by 600 soldiers from each regiment of the guards, and followed by a brilliant retinue. Two triumphal arches had been erected, at a cost of 40,000 roubles, for the procession to pass under, and everything connected with the entrance of the empress into the ancient city was grand and gorgeous. Only one thing was wanting—but it was the one least indispensable in displays of this nature—the acclamations and enthusiasm of the people. Catherine was unable to charm them into any exhibition of loyalty, or to dispel the dislike which the citizens of Moscow had always entertained towards her. They gazed on the gorgeous cavalcade with silence, and permitted the empress to pass without the least demonstration of welcome. To the Grand-duke Paul, whom they regarded as the son of their murdered sovereign, they displayed a marked contrast of feeling. Such was the enthu-

siasm with which he was received, that it is said, a courtier, either anxious to ascertain his sentiments, or influenced by a treasonous feeling towards the empress, observed to him—"Your imperial highness sees how much you are beloved. Oh, if you would ———." The speaker paused for encouragement to pursue his daring remark; but Paul only responded with a look of reprimand, which implied that he had no intention of plotting against a mother whom he neither loved or was loved by.

Catherine carried out her assumption of devotion at Moscow by performing a pilgrimage on foot, attended by her whole court, to a convent situated at a distance of forty versts. Her chief minister, Count Panin, was the only one not invited to take part in this laborious and dramatic piece of pretended piety. This might have been a slight to the minister, who now troubled himself about little but ease and amusements. He was a great glutton, a great gamester, and a great sleeper; and had become so enormously fat, as to render it extremely doubtful whether he could walk the distance of forty versts, however gently the task might have to be accomplished. So negligent had he become, that an urgent despatch from Marshal Romantzoff (then commanding the expedition against the Turks) was, after an interval of four months, found unanswered in the pocket of Panin's dressing-gown. Such dangerous inattention to the duties of his highly responsible position, raised him up enemies and rivals, amongst whom was Potemkin, who strove to supplant the minister.

The favourite had also another and a higher aim. Like Orloff, he sought to become the husband of the imperial mistress whose favour he enjoyed. During the stay of the court at Moscow, Potemkin, who was so far from being influenced by religious emotions that he treated all modes of faith with a daring and impartial ridicule, put on a semblance of the most austere piety. During Lent he abandoned the luxurious living to which he was much attached, and fed upon nothing but roots and water. Every day he went to confession, and remained for some hours before the pictures of the saints in prayer. It was the confessor to the empress that this crafty schemer selected to listen to the list of his transgressions also. With a penitent air, Potemkin entreated the priest to inform his imperial mistress that his alarmed conscience would no longer allow him to indulge in an intercourse that was criminal when not sanctioned by marriage. The monk performed his mission; but the shrewd empress at once divined the nature of Potemkin's scruples, and the object he was aiming at. Sending for him, she said, with a dignity tempered by tenderness, that though she had a regard for him, she was sufficiently mistress of herself to subdue her passion; and that, if he was disinclined to fill the post of favourite, she could easily resolve to put another in his place. The disappointed schemer was much humiliated, and even talked of entering the church, and causing himself to be consecrated archbishop: but he soon forgot both his devotion and his resentment in the mingled pursuits of pleasure and ambition.

Whether this trifling and duplicity cost Potemkin the affection of his mistress, or Catherine had merely yielded to a new impression, we cannot say. Certain it is, that, not long after this event, the empress transferred her smiles to a young officer named Zavadofski, whom she first appointed her secretary, and afterwards bestowed upon him the title of favourite. Potemkin, on whom she had recently showered gifts and dignities, received the usual command to set out upon his travels. This command he evaded, even while pretending to obey. Having prepared for his departure, he left the palace; but the very next day returned, and, with the utmost composure, placed himself opposite the empress just as she was sitting down to her customary whist party. Perhaps the discarded favourite had received secret permission to remain in the character of friend; certain it is, that the empress did not appear displeased, but invited him to join the table, saying that he always played luckily. The subject of travelling was not resumed, and Potemkin retained all his posts, his honours, and his influence, and, from the lover, became the friend of his mistress. His abilities, which bore some resemblance to her own, enabled him to retain an ascendancy over her. The amazed courtiers beheld two favourites; and not understanding the somewhat equivocal arrangement entered into, they could not divine which lover the empress preferred. They did not suppose that Potemkin had resigned the latter character; not reflecting that love is usually silent in the presence of ambition.

It is not surprising that Catherine should

entertain some jealousy of the popularity of her son the Grand-duke Paul, especially as a party existed who were desirous of seeing him lay claim to a throne which, assuming him to be really the son of Peter III., undoubtedly belonged to him. The empress viewed with distrust all persons whom she deemed capable of instilling ambitious thoughts into the grand-duke, or who were in a condition to arm on his behalf. Catherine's apprehensions were discerned and turned to account by Frederic of Prussia. Aware that it would be scarcely possible for Paul to succeed in any design upon the Russian throne without his assistance, he always, when desiring any concession from the empress, testified great concern about her son. The alarmed Catherine immediately made any sacrifices whatever for preserving the friendship of the Prussian monarch.

Paul lived in habits of close companionship with Count Andrew Rasumoffski, who had been brought up with him. The count possessed a bold and enterprising spirit; and Catherine, therefore, resolved to effect a division between him and her son. Watching Rasumoffski with this object, she observed some expressive looks pass between him and the grand-duchess, the consort of Paul; and, with a woman's quickness in such matters, she at once concluded that the count had presumed to form some rash design upon the princess. Catherine at once communicated her suspicions to her son, who, though he imagined them to be without foundation, resolved to keep an eye upon his friend, and desired his consort to be more reserved in her behaviour. That the grand-duchess entertained a partiality for Rasumoffski, may be inferred from the fact that she kept up a secret correspondence with him. Some surmise that she went further, and entered into certain political intrigues for the purpose of being revenged upon the empress for having brought her virtue into suspicion. If so, she had no time to execute her designs, as she soon afterwards expired in childbed.* Rumour, probably engendered from calumny, attributed her death to some criminal intervention of the empress.† Paul was much affected by the sudden demise of his consort; but when his grief had somewhat subsided, he examined her papers, and found among them letters from the count. Presenting them to the empress, he demanded vengeance: but she had attained her object—the separation of Paul and Rasumoffski; and, desirous of avoiding an unpleasant publicity, she sent the count as her envoy-extraordinary to Venice.

In Poland, the commissioners of Russia, Austria, and Prussia, could neither agree among themselves nor with the Poles, respecting the exact demarcations of that country. Frederic, therefore, expressed a wish that his brother, Prince Henry, might go and confer with the empress, for the purpose of settling such differences as might have been raised in the matter between the courts of St. Petersburg and Berlin. The prince arrived in Russia a few days before the death of the grand-duchess, and was received with as much distinction as on his first visit. The prince frequently discoursed in private with the empress on the affairs of Poland; and, on one occasion, when Catherine had made some objections, he replied—"Madam, I see one sure method of obviating all difficulty. It may, perhaps, be displeasing to you, on account of Poniatowski; but you will, nevertheless, do well to give it your approbation, since compensation may be offered to that monarch, of greater value to him than the throne, which is continually tottering beneath him. The remainder of Poland must be partitioned." The idea, if not preconcerted, was at least welcome to the ambitious empress; and the extinction of Poland as an independent nation was resolved upon.

Scarcely had the grave closed over the Grand-duchess Natolia, the consort of Paul, than the empress directed her attention to providing a second wife for her son, as his first had died without leaving a heir to inherit the empire. She selected the princess of Wirtemberg-Stutgard, niece to the king of Prussia, and engaged Prince Henry to negotiate the marriage. Frederic gladly

* On the 26th of April, 1776.

† We are not inclined to credit this suspicion; but Tooke observes—"What served to add credibility to these surmises was, that the midwife who attended the grand-duchess very soon made a great fortune. She lived on a familiar footing with the empress, and talked with Prince Potemkin and Count Besborodko, who often went to dine with her, in the style of thee and thou. Dr. Almann was the official accoucheur; but upon being asked by a friend afterwards why he was not present at the delivery, he replied, 'Because, on a previous visit to her imperial highness, the empress said to me, 'Sir, if anything disastrous should happen, you will answer it with your head.' 'Upon which,' continued the doctor, 'I made my obeisance, retired, and have never been at court since.'"

accepted a proposal which would lead to a closer alliance between Prussia and Russia; and the young lady herself gave up the Prince of Hesse-Darmstadt, to whom she was engaged, in order to accept the offer of the hand of an embryo emperor. Towards the close of the summer of 1776, Paul and Prince Henry, attended by Marshal Romantzoff and a numerous suite, set out on this errand to Berlin. Paul was received by the great Frederic with all the honours due to the heir of the imperial house of Russia. On being presented to the famous soldier, the grand-duke observed—"The motives which bring me from the extremities of the north to these happy dominions, are the desire of assuring your majesty of the friendship and alliance to subsist henceforth for ever between Russia and Prussia; and the eagerness to see a princess destined to ascend the throne of the Russian empire; who, by my receiving her at your hands, I dare to promise you, will be the more dear to myself and to the nation over which she is to reign; and chiefly to see that boon granted me for which I have been ardently wishing so long—the satisfaction of contemplating the greatest of heroes, the admiration of our age, and the astonishment of posterity."

"Instead of which," responded Frederic, "you behold, my prince, a gray-headed valetudinarian, who could never have wished for a superior happiness than that of welcoming within these walls the hopeful heir of a mighty empire, the only son of my best friend, the great Catherine."

Paul was then introduced to the Princess of Wirtemberg, and the ceremony of the nuptial contract took place the same day. Great festivities followed; and, on the 3rd of August, the grand-duke took leave of the king, and returned, loaded with presents, to St. Petersburg. The princess, shortly after, followed, and was united to him on the 13th of October. At the same time she embraced the Greek religion, and assumed the name of Maria Feodorovna. Twenty years afterwards this imperial couple ascended the throne of the Russian empire.

Prince Potemkin had forgotten the lover in the minister, and now occupied the first place about the throne of Catherine. Proud of his political influence and abilities, he left the empress in the tranquil indulgence of her inclination for Zavadofski. The latter had filled the post of favourite for about a year and a-half, when he also became ambitious of political distinction, and endeavoured to supplant Potemkin in his capacity of minister. By so doing he entered on an antagonism with a rival of far greater talents than himself, who at once resolved on his expulsion from court. Potemkin had personal experience both of the sensuality and the inconstancy of the empress, and he therefore placed in her way a young, tall, and handsome Servian named Zoritch, an officer in a regiment of hussars, who had come to St. Petersburg in search of promotion. The artifice succeeded; the fancy of Catherine was ensnared; Zavadofski was abruptly dismissed, loaded with presents; and Zoritch was installed as favourite. The latter was a man of neither education nor experience, and in no way calculated to interfere with the projects of the ambitious Potemkin.

Russia now enjoyed more internal repose than had fallen to its lot since the accession of the empress. The flames of rebellion were extinguished; and disappointed conspiracy, never revealing itself except to be crushed, was content to submit in silence to a government it could not overthrow. Catherine might herself have rested content with what she had done, and have devoted most of her time to those pleasures by which she was so much attracted. But she was ever grasping after personal fame and the aggrandisement of the Russian empire. There was nothing she would not sacrifice in the pursuit of glory, or, indeed, of that celebrity which is not always real fame. As her armies had ceased to gain victories beyond her frontiers, she made Europe resound with the brilliant acts of her munificence, the encouragements she afforded to the arts and sciences, the prizes she assigned to talent, the bounties she showered upon foreigners, and the numerous institutions she created for augmenting the industry and the riches of her people. Ever intent upon carrying out that regeneration of the empire commenced by Peter the Great, she constantly addressed herself to the extension of education and the erection of institutions for national improvement. In the various public schools—most of which had been established by the empress—about 6,800 children, of both sexes, were boarded, clothed, and educated at her expense.

Catherine was too ambitious a sovereign not to be a dangerous neighbour. It has been seen how Poland, distracted by its own dissensions, fell a victim to her ab-

sorbing policy. Denmark had fallen under her influence, and she carried on intrigues in Sweden, with the object of still further weakening a power whose armies, in the time of Charles XII., had made Russia tremble. By promoting the internal dissensions of Sweden (the nobles of which were divided into two factions, called the "Caps" and the "Hats"), Catherine trusted to reduce that country to such a condition as would enable her to subjugate it at some future period. Her efforts, however, were interrupted by the abilities and decision of Gustavus III. Early in 1777, Gustavus, alarmed at seeing that the empress had fitted out a fleet of galleys from Cronstadt, demanded what might be the cause of this armament. He received an unsatisfactory answer; and, although the Russian fleet took no steps against Sweden, Gustavus himself proceeded to St. Petersburg, under the name of the Count of Gothland, to confer personally with the empress upon the subject. Catherine received him with a sumptuous hospitality, and a hollow cordiality was exhibited on both sides. The visit did not, however, raise the empress in the esteem of Gustavus; while it confirmed in her the desire of humbling her youthful rival.

By the late peace with Turkey, the Crimea had been declared independent; but the Tartars of that peninsula had now two khans—the one supported by the Turks, the other by the Russians. The latter desired to place the whole of the Crimea under the khan who enjoyed their insidious protection, in order that they might the more readily despoil him of it. They therefore furnished him with a guard of Russian soldiers, who, being viewed by the ferocious Tartars with jealous feelings, were attacked, and the greater part of them massacred.

The empress immediately poured fresh troops into the Crimea. The Russians attacked and defeated the Tartars opposed to the khan who had received the sanction of the court of St. Petersburg; and his competitor, Selim, was compelled to seek for refuge in the mountains. As the Turkish government refused to acknowledge Sahim-Gueray as the khan of the Crimea, the Porte was given to understand that that country had placed itself under the protection of the empress, who would rather rekindle the flames of war than abandon the cause of the khan whom she supported. The Turks were exasperated at this haughty message, and seemed resolved to put the dispute to the arbitrament of the sword.

France and other powers interfered to prevent hostilities, for they had no wish to see Russia further exalted, by fresh victories, over its eastern neighbour. But the divan continued undetermined and wavering between the different impressions it received. The people of Constantinople called loudly for war; and the Porte could not easily prevail on itself to pardon Russia for her successes and her invasions, which made it remember the many defeats it had suffered, and the humiliating peace it had been forced to sign. It was not to be expected that the Turkish ministers could calmly behold the Russian supremacy on the Euxine, the flag of that empire displayed even under the walls of Constantinople, and its commerce extending from sea to sea. The independence of the Crimea, also, was a subject of annoyance; but its probable subjugation by the Russians exceeded their patience. Some other differences had arisen between the ministers of Catherine and the Ottoman Porte. By the recent treaty of peace, the Russians had obtained several privileges for the Greek Christians, who were dispersed in great numbers throughout the Turkish provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia. Since that period many inhabitants of the opposite shore of the Danube, who professed the Greek religion, abandoned their country, and passed over into those localities in which they exchanged toleration for protection. These persons were naturally more attached to the power to which they were indebted for the new advantages they enjoyed, than to that by which they had been so long oppressed. But Russia aimed at more than this. She was secretly contriving to render these provinces entirely independent of the Porte; and to accomplish that object, she insisted that the princes or hospodars of Moldavia and Wallachia should not be liable to be deposed on any pretence whatever. This interference the Turks regarded as not more justifiable than that with respect to the Crimea; but the good offices of the French ambassador prevailed over the desire for war. He induced the divan to release several Russian vessels which had been detained for more than a year in the Turkish harbours. This courtesy led to the expression of a less hostile feeling; and, in the March of 1779, a new treaty was signed

through his mediation. By this the Russians gave up some of their unjust claims with respect to Moldavia and Wallachia, and agreed to withdraw their troops from the Crimea, the independence of which, however, was again acknowledged. The Porte likewise granted its subjects who professed the Greek religion the privileges they desired, and enlarged the liberty already granted to the Russians, of navigating the Ottoman seas. With this treaty Catherine was so satisfied, that she sent magnificent presents both to her minister at Constantinople, to the French ambassador, the grand-vizier, and the principal members of the divan.

The French ambassador, while thus serving the interests of Turkey and propitiating the favour of Russia, had also laboured to deprive England of the support it derived from Russia. This attempt met with some success, and the close alliance that had so long subsisted between the courts of London and St. Petersburg was much weakened. Catherine, free to navigate so many seas, and the dominatrix of some, could not endure that any other power should pretend to a right of mastery in them. One of the causes, therefore, that contributed to raise a coldness on her part towards this country, was the jealousy she experienced at its attempt to force from every power an acknowledgment of the superiority of the British flag. Still the commerce with England was too advantageous to be discountenanced. Catherine looked on with secret satisfaction while the English were losing a part of their colonies, and with an oppressive civility she invited them to come and fetch from her ports the productions they could no longer obtain from the continent of America. At the same time she welcomed the vessels of the new-born republic, and, in opposition to the solicitations of the British minister, granted to them the free navigation of the Baltic.

Catherine had by degrees polished the rough soldier-like court by which she had been at first surrounded, until its splendour surpassed that of any neighbouring potentate. Indeed, it united the profusion of Asiatic pomp with the ingenious invention of European luxury. On court-days the quantity of jewels worn by both sexes, and the brilliant colours of the varied costumes to be seen there, produced a remarkable effect. On these occasions both ladies and gentlemen were, with the exception of the military, dressed according to the prevailing modes at Paris. To a foreigner nothing was more remarkable than the number of diamonds and precious stones, worn as much by men as by women, who appeared to have challenged one another which should be most covered by these costly ornaments. As to the nobility, their buttons, buckles, the scabbards of their swords, and even their epaulets often consisted of diamonds, in addition to which many even wore a triple row of precious stones round the borders of their hats. When, on days distinguished by a more than ordinary amount of ceremony, the empress dined in public, she usually wore a diamond crown of immense value, the ribbons of St. Andrew and of St. George, both over one shoulder, with the collars of St. Alexander Nevski, St. Catherine,* and St. Vladimir, and two stars, one above the other, on her bosom. This imparted to her a very brilliant appearance, and, as her courtiers were equally fond of display, the result presented was exceedingly gorgeous. During the winter the empress gave masquerades at the palace, to which persons of all ranks were invited. Sometimes the number of tickets issued amounted to 8,000: yet inconvenient crowding seldom existed; as twenty magnificent halls, splendidly illuminated, afforded sufficient room for this multitude. One of these spacious apartments contained an enclosure more adorned than the rest, and appropriated to the nobility and the most favoured courtiers. At these entertainments Catherine usually made her appearance about seven in the evening, and retired at eleven.

The Servian officer, Zoritch, had filled the post of favourite about a twelvemonth, when suddenly he received the usual orders to travel. He immediately went and complained to Potemkin, who supported him, with the object of excluding any more able and dangerous man from a position which necessarily carried with it a certain amount of influence over the empress. Potemkin ventured to ask her for what reason she had discarded her humble friend. "I was fond

* Instituted, our readers will remember, by Peter the Great, in honour of the assistance he received from his consort in the camp on the banks of the Pruth. This distinction is bestowed upon ladies only, and consists of a narrow red ribbon, edged with silver, to which the figure of the *saint(?)* is suspended, set with diamonds and a silver star of eight points, on the left breast, with the inscription, "*Amore et fidelitate.*" The empress was the grand-mistress of the order.

of him yesterday, and to-day I am not," replied Catherine; "perhaps, if he were somewhat more informed, I might love him still; but his ignorance puts me to the blush. He can speak no other language than Russ. Let him travel into France and England to learn foreign languages."

Prince Potemkin was not long in ascertaining the cause of the dismission of Zoritch. That evening, at the Hermitage, he perceived with astonishment, behind the chair of Catherine, a chamberlain of whom he had no knowledge. It was the new favourite Rimski Korzakoff, who, though afterwards distinguished as an able general, had been suddenly raised from the humble rank of a sergeant of the guards to that of aide-de-camp of the empress. Korzakoff had a handsome face and an elegant figure; but if the ignorance of Zoritch had disgusted Catherine, she was not likely long to remain satisfied with her new lover. His want of that common information which most men moving in good society possess, is amusingly evident in the following incident. He conceived the idea that a man who occupied the distinguished position to which he had been advanced, ought necessarily to provide himself with a library. Sending, therefore, for the principal bookseller of St. Petersburg, he said that he wanted a great number of books to put up in a house of which the empress had just made him a present. "What books would he please to have?" was the natural inquiry of the dealer in these dumb, yet eloquent productions; not at first comprehending that they were ordered only like tables and chairs, as articles of furniture. "You understand that better than I," replied the favourite; "that is your business. You know the proper assortments; I have destined a large room to receive them. Let there be large books at the bottom, and smaller and smaller up to the top; that is the way they stand in the empress's library."* The bookseller bowed, and retired.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE ARMED NEUTRALITY; LANSKOI; POTEMKIN'S DESIGNS ON CONSTANTINOPLE; MEETING OF CATHERINE AND JOSEPH II.; STATUE OF PETER THE GREAT; RETURN OF THE PRINCESS DASCHKAW TO ST. PETERSBURG; CATHERINE MAKES HER DIRECTOR OF THE ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES; CATHERINE AND THE EMPEROR JOSEPH AVOW THEIR INTENTION OF SUPPORTING EACH OTHER'S CLAIM UPON TURKEY; ANNEXATION OF THE CRIMEA TO RUSSIA; DEATH OF COUNT PANIN AND PRINCE GREGORY ORLOFF; RELIGIOUS TOLERATION; GRAND PROGRESS OF CATHERINE TO THE CRIMEA; ANECDOTES OF THE EMPRESS.

THE war in which America wrung her independence from England, produced a considerable agitation throughout the south of Europe; and England, France, Spain, and Holland were continually sending forth their armaments to decide whether America should become a free republic, or remain a mere colony of Great Britain. This war necessarily gave an impetus to the commerce of the north, which supplies the bulk of the commodities required for the construction of naval armaments, as well as the stores of corn for the sustenance of the trading and manufacturing nations. The Dutch, who then possessed a great part of the commerce of the Baltic, endeavoured to save the vessels they employed in it from the English cruisers by navigating them under the neutral flag of Denmark. Nevertheless, their ships were frequently captured by our privateers, and carried into the ports of London or Plymouth. The vessels of Hamburg, Bremen,

* "But how did you contrive to find a sufficient quantity of the large books for the bottom rank, since folios are now so much out of fashion?" said a person who happened to call at the bookseller's shop while his counters and floors were loaded with the books just come from the binders for executing this curious order. "Oh, I went to my warehouse, and brought out a number of old German commentators on the Bible, and writers on jurisprudence, where they had lain in quires ever since they were sent to my predecessor for a bad debt of a bankrupt bookseller at Leipsic. There they are. See how gay they look in their new coats. I have only taken care to put up a set of Voltaire, of Rousseau, of Buffon, and other fashionable French authors, in conspicuous parts of the library, to be at hand in case some inquisitive reader should ask for them; and as for the rest, their elegant outsides, as is common in the world, must be a passport for any deficiency within."

and Lübeck often met with a similar fate. The merchants of those towns, therefore, implored the protection of the empress, and were fortunate enough to secure her attention.

Catherine desired to extend the maritime trade of her own people, and her pride was hurt in consequence of the little respect the English paid to ships freighted in her ports, and sometimes even to those which sailed under her flag. Instigated also by France, and solicited to that effect by the ministers of Denmark and Sweden, she adopted the plan of an armed neutrality; and, in the July of 1780, a treaty to that effect was signed by the powers we have mentioned. The principal claims of the confederate powers were thus specified:—1. That all neutral vessels may freely navigate from one port to another on the coasts of the nations at war. 2. That the effects of the belligerent powers shall be safe in all neutral vessels, with the exception of prohibited mercantile goods. 3. That the empress understands, by prohibited mercantile goods, such as are specified in the Articles 10 and 11 of her treaty of commerce with Great Britain, extending her obligation in that respect to the other powers at war. 4. That by a blockaded port, is to be understood only a port so strictly watched by the ships of the powers which attack it, that to enter it would be dangerous. 5. That these principles should be admitted as the sole rule whereby to decide the legality of prizes.—The empress added, that, to enforce the observance of these articles, to protect the honour of her flag, the security of her commerce, and the navigation of her subjects, she was about to arm the greater part of her naval forces; but that this measure should not in anywise injure the neutrality which she intended to observe as long as she was not provoked to exceed the bounds of a just moderation and the most perfect impartiality.

Prussia, Austria, and even Portugal concurred with the other neutral states; and thus a great power was seen dictating a new code of maritime laws to mankind, essentially different from those which for several hundred years had been established among commercial nations, and tending directly to the overthrow of that sovereignty or preeminence on the ocean, which had been so long claimed and maintained by Great Britain. The English minister at St. Petersburg exerted himself in vain to break the league of the neutral powers; his expostulations were disregarded; and, for a short time, the friendly alliance between this country and Russia was jeopardised.

The able Prince Potemkin acquired almost absolute power at the Russian court. His riches were immense, the dignities he enjoyed were numerous; and the court, the army, and the navy were all submissive to him. Marshal Romantzoff alone would not humble himself before the haughty minister—a circumstance for which the latter revenged himself on the Countess Bruce, the sister of Romantzoff, by encouraging a fancy she had taken to Korzakoff, the favourite of the empress, and involving her in an intrigue with that person. Catherine's pride was hurt at the inconstancy of the presumed lover, on whom, as usual, she had showered presents of the most extravagant nature. She dismissed Korzakoff, and commanded the countess to retire to Moscow. Though now at an age when, in most persons, the sexual passions are "humble, and wait upon the judgment,"* yet the amorous empress was unable, even for a brief period, to dispense with the society of a favourite.

The very day that she discarded Korzakoff, Catherine fixed her choice on Lanskoï, one of the chevalier guards—a youth of delicate and almost womanly features, and of a remarkably graceful figure. This person afterwards acquired the distinction—if so it can be called—of being the one of the empress's favourites to whom she was most attached.

Catherine's ambition had long caused her to turn her eyes to the east; but to Prince Potemkin, whose views with respect to conquest in this direction coincided with those of his imperial mistress, is attributed the bold idea of causing Catherine to be crowned in "the queen of cities," the capital of the Ottoman empire! Catherine acquiesced in this extravagant idea, which, if practicable, could only be accomplished by a long and sanguinary war; but Potemkin was more desirous than herself to carry it into execution. As a preliminary he proposed taking possession of the Crimea, to which, as a measure almost ripe for execution, the empress at once consented.

Before entering on this project, Catherine felt the necessity of securing the goodwill of her most powerful neighbours. Desirous of an interview with the emperor Joseph II., she requested him to join her in Poland; and on the 30th of May these two illustrious potentates met at Mohilef.

* Catherine was in her fifty-first year.

Catherine was surrounded by a most gorgeous court; but the German emperor, who travelled under the title of the Count Von Falkenstein, affected a whimsical simplicity in dress and manner, and begged his imperial friend to spare him the necessity of all vain etiquette and constraining ceremony. In the private conversations which ensued between them, they agreed to unite in an attack on the Ottomans—to share a part of the spoils between them, to drive the Turks out of Europe, and to re-establish the ancient republic of Greece. Catherine, also, forgetful of her ally Frederic, engaged to support the emperor against all opposition on the part of the king of Prussia and the other princes of the German empire. These stipulations were afterwards confirmed by a treaty, signed at St Petersburg, which capital Joseph accepted an invitation to visit. During his brief sojourn there, it is said that he was equally astonished at that mixture of refinement and barbarism which the Russian nation presented to his view, and the varied and seemingly contradictory disposition of the empress. He could not conceive how a woman, who seemed formed by nature for leading the whole world in chains, could submit to be governed by two favourites at her own court.

The year 1782 is in some respect memorable at St. Petersburg, in consequence of the inauguration of the famous statue of Peter the Great, executed by Stephen Falconet, who came from Paris for that purpose, and was engaged for nine years in the production of this colossal work of art. Falconet proposed that the pedestal of the statue should consist of a huge and rugged rock, to indicate symbolically to posterity the barren point from which the heroic reformer started, and the tremendous obstacles he surmounted. Catherine was pleased with the idea; and, after considerable search, a rock was found, partly sunk in a vast morass, in a village near the shore of the Gulf of Finland. The weight of this enormous stone was estimated at 3,200,000 pounds, and it lay at the distance of eleven versts, or about 41,250 English feet from the spot where the monument was to be erected. During its passage, it had to be carried over heights, across rivers, morasses, and swampy places; then down the river Neva, and finally to be disembarked, and drawn by land to the place of its destination. The serious difficulty of moving such a mass was sufficient to deter many persons from the attempt; but Catherine delighted to triumph over difficulties; and although nearly four months elapsed before the stone was raised from the earth, the concentration of industry, and the utter disregard of expense in the erection of mechanical appliances, enabled the labourers to accomplish their task. It was noticed as a remarkable circumstance, that neither in the morass, or for some distance around it, was another stone to be found, or any other kind of subtance, analogous to this stupendous rock. Another circumstance respecting it struck the beholders with astonishment. One side of it had been struck and damaged by lightning. On knocking off the shattered fragment, a collection of many kinds of precious stones was discovered; crystals, agates, topazes, cornelians, and amethysts, presented to the eyes of the curious a sight not less unexpected than magnificent, and, to the naturalists, an object of interesting investigation.*

The statue, of which this rock formed the base, was generally considered as a masterpiece of art. The features are regarded as being an admirable likeness of the illustrious original. The artist has represented the hero on horseback, in the act of suddenly arresting the impetuous career of his steed, on the overhanging verge of a steep precipice which he has ascended. The czar is attired in the Asiatic dress which he discarded and condemned—an erroneous conception, we think, of the sculptor. The head of the statue is appropriately crowned with laurels, and the right arm is extended with dignity, while the left grasps the bridle of the horse, whose beauty of form and elegant attitude commands the admiration of most spectators. The fiery courser is represented as trampling on a serpent, which writhes with anguish beneath its feet; a type of the fate of those who, from motives of malignity, opposed the will of the iron-handed and imperious Peter. The statue is gigantic; the figure of the monarch being eleven feet in height, and that of the horse seventeen feet. The expense of this monument was truly imperial, amounting to 424,610 roubles, of which no less than 70,000 were expended on the

* Thousands of these gems, as well as other parts of the stone, were cut and polished into bracelets, rings, necklaces, snuff-boxes, heads of canes, &c.; and found a very rapid sale, not only among people of fashion, but throughout the empire.

transport of the rock from the morass near the village of Lachta to St. Petersburg. Still, a work which so prominently challenges attention, has necessarily elicited much criticism; and a recent French traveller observes, that it is neither antique nor modern, but a Roman of the time of Louis XV. On the 7th of August, the ceremony of the disclosure of the statue to the public took place; and the empress, making her appearance in the balcony of the senate-house, solemnised the event by the distribution of gold and silver medals. She also issued an ukase, terminating every process of more than ten years' standing, discharging all debtors who had suffered a five years' captivity, and remitting all debts to the crown below the sum of 500 roubles.

During this summer, the Princess Daschkaw returned to St. Petersburg from her travels in Germany, Italy, France, and England. She was welcomed and again received into favour by the empress, who appears to have missed her vivacious society and the assistance of her strong intellect. Catherine treated her with great kindness, advanced her son in the army, and bestowed upon the princess an estate having on it about 2,500 peasants. The empress shortly afterwards expressed the eccentric desire of appointing the princess directress of the Academy of Arts and Sciences!

That lady declined the unexpected honour, and then said jestingly—"Appoint me directress of your majesty's washerwomen, and you shall see with what zeal I am capable of serving you." Catherine persisted; and the princess, on her return home, wrote a serious letter of expostulation to the empress on the subject. "I told her," says the princess, "without reserve, that the private life of a sovereign might pass unnoticed in the pages of history; but that an injudicious and hurtful nomination to a public office never would; that nature herself, in making me a woman, had disqualified me for the direction of an academy of science; and that feeling as I did my own literary insufficiency, I had never sought the distinction of being admitted into any learned society whatever, not even when the opportunity offered at Rome of purchasing it for a few ducats."

The princess requested Potemkin to deliver this communication to the empress; but, to her astonishment, he tore it in pieces. Then, to an angry inquiry as to the cause of his conduct, he replied—"Be composed princess, and hearken to me. You are sincerely attached to her majesty; nobody doubts it; why will you, then, distress and grieve her on a subject which, for the last two days, has occupied her thoughts exclusively, and on which she has absolutely fixed her heart? If you are really inexorable, here is pen, ink, and paper; write your letter anew; but believe me, in expostulating thus, I am only acting the part of a man devoted to your interest. I ought, besides, to add, that in urging your acceptance of the place proposed, her majesty has the further object in view of securing your residence in St. Petersburg, and of making it the occasion of a more frequent and more immediate intercourse between you; for, to say the truth, she is worn out with the society of those fools by whom she is eternally encircled." The princess therefore consented, according to her own account very unwillingly, to the desire of the empress, who was really serious in this strange appointment. Setting aside the accidental circumstance of the sex of the princess, which certainly must, in such a matter, be regarded as a disqualification, she seems to have made an active and very excellent directress. She put an end to much of that peculation which is the worm that eats into the heart of most Russian institutions; relieved it by good management from pecuniary difficulties; increased the number of students; and established three new courses of lectures in mathematics, geometry, and natural history, which were delivered in the Russian language by a native professor, gratuitously to all who chose to attend them. The following year the princess was also appointed to preside over a new academy, of a purely national character, founded by the empress for the purpose of perfecting the Russian language, and the advancement of its literature.* In connection with it, she conducted the com-

* The inaugural discourse delivered by the princess on this occasion will, we fancy, be perused with interest, from motives which may vary according to the sex or taste of the reader. The learned lady spoke or read as follows:—"Gentlemen,—A new instance of the solicitude of our august empress for the instruction of her subjects has this day assembled us together. That genius which has already diffused so many benefits over Russia has now given a proof of its protective energy in behalf of the Russian language, the parent and source of so many others. You will surely appreciate, gentlemen, the gift which our great sovereign has conferred on our country and on this assembly. The riches and

pilation of a dictionary of the Russian language, the first that had been accomplished. It was, however, subjected to much adverse criticism; and it did not satisfy the expectations of the empress, on account of its being arranged, not in an alphabetical, but in an etymological order.

Towards the close of the year 1782, the emperor of Germany laid aside the mask, and avowed his intention of supporting both his own claims and those of Russia against the Turkish empire. At the same time the courts of Vienna and St. Petersburg issued memorials, in which they peremptorily insisted that the Porte should not in future, under any pretence, interfere in the affairs of the Tartars; that the privileges of the provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia should not be infringed, nor the free navigation of the Euxine and the Archipelago in any way be obstructed. The consequences of a failure with respect to these demands could not be more fully explained than they already were, by the appearance of large Russian and Austrian armies on the frontiers, and the vast preparations for war made by both those empires. The Porte, though it acted with dignity, yet felt it necessary to submit. The following year, Catherine poured her troops into the Crimea, where, after many intrigues, the khan was deposed, and the principal Tartars compelled to take an oath of allegiance to the empress. Turkey, though extremely irritated, was not in a condition to prevent this annexation, which Catherine justified in a manifesto addressed to the crowned heads of Europe. It is fashionable to denounce the aggressive policy of Russia; but we think there is no necessity for any indignant declamation in this case. Geographically, the Crimea must be regarded as a portion of the Russian empire, to which it naturally belongs. It is utterly dissevered from the Turkish dominions; and for the sultan to exercise a paramount and protecting power over it, must have been an indignity and a cause of uneasiness to Russia. As to the Tartars themselves, they deserved no consideration whatever: they had obtained the Crimea by conquest, and, during the time of their power, had ever been restless, marauding, vindictive, and bloodthirsty neighbours.

copiousness of our language are well known to you. They are such as will render justice to the varied treasures of antiquity. Transposed into our tongue, the nervous eloquence of Cicero, the measured grandeur of Virgil, the attractive sweetness of Demosthenes, the easy eloquence of Ovid, and the thundering flashes of the lyre of Pindar, will lose nothing of their respective beauties. Our mother-tongue unites not only these advantages, gentlemen, but even in all the subtleties of philosophy, in their affinities and oppositions, it furnishes appropriate expressions, and terms the most applicable and descriptive. But with such resources, we have to lament the want of determinate rules; rules for the inflections of words, as well as an authorised definition and limitation of their meaning. Hence have arisen those varieties of construction, those improprieties of imitation and foreign idiom, which have hitherto disfigured and depressed our language. The object of the Imperial Russian Academy is to render it perfect, to raise it to a standard of elevation suitable to the glorious age of Catherine II. This, gentlemen, must be the end and aim of the labours of a society founded and supported by her gracious protection. The different memorials of antiquity spread over the vast surface of the Russian empire, our numerous chronicles, those precious records of the great actions of our ancestors, of which few of the nations of Europe now existing can boast an equal number, present a vast field for our exertions, upon which we are led to advance under the guidance of the enlightened genius of our august protectress. The high deeds of our princes, the exploits of the past and the present ever-memorable age, present an almost boundless range of subjects worthy of our labour. But, gentlemen, the first fruits of our endeavours, the first offering to be laid at the feet of our immortal sovereign, is a grammar of our language, exact and methodical, and a rich and copious dictionary. Allow me to flatter myself, gentlemen, that you will not hesitate to give me credit for the sentiments with which I am penetrated in the honour of being associated with you by my generous sovereign, to concur in the good of an establishment so useful to our country. Believe me, gentlemen, that the zeal which enkindles in my heart the love of that country will never be extinguished, and that in everything which may tend to render our society flourishing and successful, I shall endeavour to supply, by indefatigable application, the deficiency of other qualifications of which I am most sensible. I deem it an indispensable duty, on this first occasion of our meeting, to place before you a sketch which I have had the honour of submitting to the consideration of her majesty, in order that it may have the benefit of your remarks, and the addition of whatever may be considered further necessary to establish the basis of our constitution. Any imperfections which here present themselves will not surely escape your penetration; but there are two considerations which solicit your indulgence. The first is, that I have contracted the habit of exposing to our incomparable sovereign my ideas, however undigested and unarranged they may be, with entire confidence and sincerity, which she is pleased to receive with kindness, from a persuasion of the purity of my intentions. The other, that it never entered my contemplation (and I trust such a vain idea never can), that I, though placed at the head of this academy, should be capable, in my own person, of upholding the labours and glory of such an institution. It is on your aid, gentlemen, that I count; and the confidence which I place in it, is the strongest proof I can give of my profound esteem for you."

They were, indeed, little better than a nation of robbers, whose independence was not consistent with the safety of peaceable people. Russia did wisely in annexing the Crimea, and governing her turbulent people by the sword: under such circumstances England would have acted in the same manner.

The empress assured the Tartars that they should be placed on an equality with the ancient subjects of Russia; that they should enjoy the most absolute liberty of conscience, with the full exercise of their public worship and religious ceremonies. She also exhorted them to imitate the submission and zeal of the rest of her people. The Tartars were not affected by these exhortations, and resolved to free themselves from the yoke just imposed upon them. Prince Potemkin, informed of their design, gave orders to General Prozoroffski to seize on the principal persons concerned, and put them instantly to death. That officer recoiled from a charge which he regarded as inconsistent with the honourable duties of a military man, and replied, that he was not calculated for an assassin. General Paul Potemkin, cousin to the minister, was less scrupulous; and under his directions no less than 30,000 Tartars, of both sexes, were massacred in cold blood. Such terrible incidents are, we fear, ever the inseparable attendants of conquest, even in humane times.

While Russia was engaged in this work of annexation, she preserved an attitude so formidable that Turkey despaired of being able to encounter her in arms with any hope of success. An army of 70,000 men, under the orders of General Potemkin, was assembled on the frontiers of the Crimea. These Prince Repnin was ready to support with another army of 40,000 men; while Marshal Romantzoff, with a third army, held his general quarters at Kief. The squadrons of the Euxine were armed; and ten sail-of-the-line, with several frigates, were only waiting the signal for proceeding from the Baltic to the Mediterranean. Under these circumstances France had no great difficulty in inducing Turkey to negotiate, rather than fight, with Russia. On the 9th of January, 1784, a new treaty, between the empress and the sultan, was signed at Constantinople, by which the entire sovereignty of the Crimea, of the Isle of Taman, and a great part of the Kuban, was ceded to Russia. To these places the empress restored their ancient names: the Crimea was called the Taurica, and the Kuban the Caucasus—titles which never fail to remind us of the fables of ancient Greece; Iphigenia in Tauris; the race-ground of Achilles; the cities Pantikapæum, Bosphorus, and Tanais; of the chained Prometheus; and of the tribes of Caucasus and Circassia, still famous for the beauty of their women.

Before Catherine obtained this accession of territory, she had lost two of the principal chiefs of the conspiracy that had placed her on the throne. Count Panin and Prince Gregory Orloff died within a very short time of each other; the first at St. Petersburg, the other at Moscow. Panin, supplanted by Prince Potemkin, had fallen a prey to grief and vexation, and died on the 31st of March, 1783: he left behind him the character of an honest and generous man, though he certainly did not always merit the first of these epithets. The close of the life of Gregory Orloff was in gloomy accordance with that poetical justice of which we hear more than we see. Though in the possession of an immense fortune, and married to a young and handsome wife, he was rendered miserable by the knowledge that the smiles of the empress were lavished upon younger favourites. During the latter part of his life he travelled almost incessantly, and a despondency into which he had fallen was increased to a profound melancholy by the loss of his wife, at Lausanne, in 1782. He returned to St. Petersburg, in the hope of recovering his serenity by mixing in the scenes of his past pleasures. The court itself afforded him no relief, and he soon startled his friends by conduct which indicated a disordered intellect. He would sometimes give himself up to an extravagant gaiety, and then as suddenly burst out into reproaches against the empress. After a time he retired to Moscow, where he became the victim of a consuming remorse. He was incessantly haunted by a vision of the murdered Peter III.; and, in the month of April, 1783, he expired in the agonies of despair.

The empress had long lost her affection for Orloff; but she was deeply moved in the following year by the loss of her favourite Lanskoï. To him Catherine was so greatly attached, that she addressed herself, personally, to remove the defects of his education, and that with so much success, that he soon became as distinguishable for his acquirements and the elegance of his manners, as he was already by the graces of his person.

Whether her love for Lanskoï would have been more enduring than that which she entertained for her previous favourites, it is difficult to say, as he was attacked with a violent fever, and perished in the flower of his age, in the arms of his imperial mistress, who lavished upon him, to the very last moment, all the tenderness the most passionate affection could inspire. After his death Catherine abandoned herself to the most poignant sorrow. For some days she refused all food, and remained three months within the walls of her palace. She afterwards erected a superb mausoleum to his memory in the gardens of the palace of Tzarsko-selo. Two years afterwards, while walking accidentally near this monument, she burst into tears on beholding it.

Many persons at court were ambitious of filling the post left vacant by the death of Lanskoï; and the Princess Daschkaw has the reputation of endeavouring to obtain it for her son. This she denies. Certain it is that the young Prince Daschkaw, though possessed of a face and a figure calculated to make an impression on the heart of the susceptible empress, was not successful. Catherine at length selected a lieutenant of the name of Yermoloff, on whom to confer her favours.

It has been observed that the spirit of toleration which prevailed during the reign of the empress was a remarkable feature in a despotic government. Throughout her long reign she never permitted any person to suffer punishment on account of his religious opinions. She could not be induced to visit those denounced as heretics with the signs of her displeasure. "Poor wretches," said she once, with a meaning smile, "since we know that they are to suffer so much and so long in the world to come, it is but reasonable that we should endeavour, by all means, to make their situation here as comfortable to them as we can." A writer on this subject aptly remarks—"The intolerant of more polished nations might go to the provinces of Esthonia, Livonia, Finland, and Russia, to take lessons of moderation and Christian forbearance. But at St. Petersburg, the general and peculiar feature in the public character is toleration—a virtue which, in some sense, has long since taken root in the nation at large; but, from the confluence of such numbers of people of various persuasions and the most diversified systems of faith, has acquired so general and extensive a sway, that certainly it is not easy to find a spot of earth upon the globe, where, in this respect, a man may more quietly pass his days than at St. Petersburg. It is to be understood, moreover, that the word 'toleration' is not here confined to that narrow meaning in which it is usually taken, in speaking of an extorted and commanded forbearance in matters of religion, or of the permission for the weaker party to exist by a stated law. The idea here connected with the term includes a voluntarily and universally-diffused forbearance, in every place, and towards every person, his manner of thinking and acting. It therefore comprehends not only religion, but also political and social toleration; and is remarkable, not as the characteristic of the form of government, but as entirely that of the public."

The liberality of Catherine was displayed by the sanction of a seminary of Jesuits* at Mohilef, and by the protection of Mohammedanism in the Crimea. Indeed, almost every year she exhibited to her people some remarkable instance of the protection she granted to the liberty of worship. On the day of the benediction of the waters of the Neva, her confessor, at her orders, invited to his house the ecclesiastics of all communions, and gave them a grand entertainment, which the empress called the "Dinner of Toleration." It was commonly attended by the priests of no less than eight different forms of religion; and at the conclusion of the repast, the metropolitan usually said, with a loud voice, either in Russ or Latin, "Glory to God in the highest!—On earth peace!—Good-will towards men!"

It was not in religion alone that the empress displayed an active liberality. Her labours for the diffusion of instruction amongst her people were unremitting. She had already opened many schools in the large towns; but she now resolved to spread these benefits to the future men and women of Russia, as far as practicable, throughout the empire. With this object she opened a commission of public instruction, for the institution of normal schools, which were established on the same principle as those then existing in Austria. Catherine took much interest in her schools, and gave herself a great deal of trouble about them. Occasionally she visited them herself during

* However, to guard against the danger commonly apprehended from this order of monks, they were not permitted to leave the two or three towns which had been assigned to them as places of residence.

the hours of instruction. It was, indeed, a pleasing trait in the character of the empress, that she was always fond of children, and frequently bestowed great care upon them. She generally had a number of them in her apartments, where they enjoyed the same liberty with her grandchildren, and she returned their caresses with extreme kindness.

Catherine's favourite, Yermoloff, contrived to make himself obnoxious to Prince Potemkin, to whom he is said to have behaved with ingratitude. The irritable minister at length said to the empress—"Madam, there is but one alternative; you must either dismiss Yermoloff or me; for so long as you keep that white negro,* I shall not set my foot within the palace." The empress yielded; Yermoloff was dismissed, and a new favourite of the name of Count Momonoff succeeded him.

On the 18th of January, 1787, Catherine started on a magnificent progress to Kherson and the Crimea. So extensive were the preparations that had been made for this journey, that it was reported the Cleopatra of the North intended to be crowned queen of Taurida, and to be declared protectress of all the nations of Tartars. Catherine had an important political object in this intended display of magnificence and power. She proposed, after having taken the sceptre of the Crimea, and awed the surrounding nations into submission, to conduct her grandson Constantine to the gates of that Oriental empire over which she had designed him to rule. So fixed was this idea in the mind of the empress, that Constantine, from his birth, was placed in the hands of Greek nurses, dressed in the Greek costume, and surrounded by the children of that nation, that he might acquire their language, which he soon spoke with great facility.

The illness of the young prince, which compelled the empress to leave him at St. Petersburg, together with some other circumstances, induced Catherine to abandon the idea of the coronation, the assumption of new titles, and to dispense with the large military force which it was intended should accompany her. Yet, to give dignity to the occasion, Catherine had induced the emperor, Joseph II., to consent to meet and confer with her at Kherson. Stanislaus, the poor shadow-king of Poland, the last of the monarchs of that divided country, also swelled the triumph of the autocratrix by joining this distinguished party. The Porte took the alarm; and a storm was gathering throughout the Ottoman empire, to burst forth at no distant period. Catherine, however, either despised, or affected to despise, the effeminacy and the ignorance of the Mussulmans, and the dull life of their sultans, whose horizon did not extend beyond the walls of their harem. "These imbecile despots," said she, "weakened by the pleasures of the seraglio, ruled over by their ulemahs, and captives to their Janizaries, can neither think, speak, fight, nor administer public affairs; their infancy is perpetual."

The empress started on her journey in the depth of winter, attended by a brilliant suite, and a cavalcade composed of fourteen carriages and 184 sledges. "The cold," said Count Ségur,† who, in his capacity of ambassador from France, accompanied the empress, "rose to seventeen degrees; the road was excellent, and our carriages, mounted on a sort of lofty skates, were drawn along with such rapidity, that they seemed to fly through the air. To protect us from the cold, we were wrapped up in furs of bear-skin, which we wore over pelisses finer and more valuable, and we had on our heads caps of sable. With these precautions we did not feel the cold, even when it rose to twenty or twenty-five degrees. In the houses where we lodged, the stoves gave us reason to fear an excess of heat rather than of cold. At this time of the year, when the days were shortest, the sun did not give us light till very late, and, at the end of six or seven hours, he disappeared, and the darkest night succeeded. But in the midst of this darkness we were not left in want of light. At short distances from each other, and on both sides of the road, enormous piles of fir, cypress, birch, and pine had been raised, which were set on fire, so that we posted through a range of fires more brilliant than the rays of daylight. It was thus that the proud empress of the North, in the midst of the deepest night, willed and commanded that there should be light."

Away went the imperial *cortége*, with an almost incredible celerity, over vast plains covered with snow, across frozen marshes, and through forests of fir, whose dark branches, hung with innumerable icicles, sometimes irradiated by the faint gleams of

* Potemkin called Yermoloff by that name, because he was thick-lipped and extremely fair.

† *Memoirs and Recollections.*

a winter's sun, bore a brief resemblance to the lustre of the crystal and the diamond. For some little distance beyond the towns and villages, the road was thronged by citizens and rustics, whose curiosity led them to brave the severity of the cold, and venture forth to salute their sovereign with acclamations.

Count Ségur relates the following anecdote of the empress, which occurred during the journey; and though not in itself of any great moment, may contribute something towards enabling us to take a just view of her character. "One day," he observes, "as I was sitting opposite to her in her carriage, she expressed a desire that I would repeat to her some little pieces of poetry which I had composed. The delightful familiarity which she permitted to those who travelled with her, the presence of her young favourite, the remembrance of those who had preceded him in her favour, her philosophy, her gaiety, her correspondence with the Prince De Ligne, Voltaire, and Diderot, having led me to suppose that she would not be shocked at a tale of gallantry, I recited one to her which was, in truth, a little free and gay, but still sufficiently choice in its expressions to have been well received at Paris by the Duc de Nivernais, by the Prince de Beauvais, and by ladies whose virtue equalled their good-humour. To my great surprise, I saw the laughing traveller suddenly assume the deportment of a majestic sovereign. She interrupted me by a question altogether foreign to the purpose, and changed the subject of conversation. Some minutes afterwards, in order to show that I understood her lesson, I entreated her attention to a piece of verse of a very different kind from the former, and to which she lent the most obliging attention. As if desirous that her weaknesses should be respected, she took care to cover them with a veil of decency and dignity. This anecdote reminds me of what my brother said, with so much justness and originality, when speaking of the indulgence permitted by women thoroughly virtuous, and the apparent severity of those who are not quite so perfect. 'Where virtue reigns,' said he, 'the show of nice decorum is useless.'"

After six days' travelling the empress became fatigued, and remained for three more at the picturesque city of Smolensk. On the second evening there she gave a grand ball, at which 300 ladies, splendidly attired, evidenced the progress which the provinces of the empire had made in imitating the luxuries, the fashions, and the elegance of the capital. The journey was renewed, and ten days' more travelling brought the imperial party to Kief, the ancient capital of the first princes of Russia, situated upon the bank of the river Dnieper. Here Catherine was compelled to remain until the 1st of May. Still, in this ghost of a once great city she kept a numerous and certainly remarkable court. Around her were to be seen warlike princes from many nations; the nobles and beauties of Poland, who, forgetful of the wounds of their country, had flocked there to meet the proud autocratrix whose sword hung suspended over it; officers of all the imperial armies, including those of the Don Cossacks, richly clothed in the Asiatic costume; Tartars, Circassians, and Calmucks; together with envoys from many warlike and mostly wandering tribes, often beaten, but never subdued. "It was," said an observer, "the whole East congregated to see the modern Semiramis receiving the homage of the monarchs of the West. It was like a magic theatre, where ancient and modern times seemed to be mingled and confounded with one another, and where civilisation went hand-in-hand with barbarism."

Count Ségur, disappointed at seeing so little of the countries through which they passed, ventured to complain that it was extremely vexatious to travel so far and never to see anything but a court, never to hear anything but Greek masses, and never to attend at anything but balls. The empress, hearing of it, said to him—"I am informed that you censure me for traversing my empire, in order to give nothing but audiences and *fêtes:* but listen to my reasons. I do not travel to see the places, but to see the people; I know enough, by charts and descriptions, with regard to a matter which a rapid progress will not permit me to investigate. That which is essential to me, is to give the people the means of approaching me; to open a way for their complaints, and to make those tremble who dare to abuse my authority in the expectation that I shall not discover their errors, their negligences, or their injustice. Such, then, is the advantage which I expect to derive from my journeys; their mere announcement does good; and my motto is—*The eye of the master fattens the horse.*"

When the returning spring thawed the

waters of the ancient Borysthenes, the empress prepared to renew her journey. Before doing so, she visited the monastery of Petscherski, and distributed many favours and decorations, diamonds and pearls. "The Cleopatra of Kief," said the witty Austrian soldier, Prince de Ligne, "does not swallow pearls, but she gives many away." The galley on which she embarked was attended by a fleet of more than eighty vessels, manned by about 3,000 men. The vessels containing the empress and her immediate companions, had splendid apartments, glittering with gold and silk, constructed on the deck. Every galley carried a band of music; the warlike strains of which, added to the shouts of the spectators and the roar of cannon, assisted in producing a most imposing spectacle. The snow had thoroughly disappeared when the empress departed from Kief; the earth was covered with a rich verdure, and even, in some spots, enamelled with early flowers; above all, a brilliant sun animated, enlivened, and coloured every object. The rocks that intercepted the navigation of the river, had been partially broken down for this memorable occasion.

At Kanieff the fleet cast anchor to receive Stanislaus, the king of Poland. Catherine had not beheld her early lover for the space of three-and-twenty years, and she seemed momentarily affected at the interview; but on assembling at the dinner-table, she displayed more than her customary cheerfulness. On rising, the king took from the hands of a page the gloves and fan of the empress, and presented them to her. Catherine returned the courtesy by handing to him his hat. "Ah! madam," he remarked, in allusion to the crown of Poland, "you formerly gave me a much finer one."

At Krementchuk the empress was lodged in a magnificent mansion, and entertained by a mock battle carried on by 12,000 men in new uniforms. This was arranged by Prince Potemkin, who showed an extraordinary ingenuity and a boundless extravagance in providing for the amusement of his imperial mistress. Every means was adopted to give an appearance of life and fertility even to the barrenness of the desert. Large flocks had been collected for the occasion, to impart animation to the meadows in the neighbourhood of the villages; groups of peasants enlivened the banks; and boats, full of youths and maidens, singing the rustic airs of their country, sometimes surrounded the galley of the empress.

Joseph II. met Catherine, on the 18th of May, near Kaydak, and from thence they proceeded by land to Kherson. "We entered," says the gossiping Count Ségur, "upon what in Russia is called the Steppes—vast and solitary meadows, altogether destitute of trees, and varied only at great intervals by hillocks quite bare, with some paltry rivulet winding at their feet. We often traversed seven or eight leagues without encountering a man, a house, or a bush. Africa has its deserts of sand; those of the East are less barren—they are the deserts of verdure. Immense flocks of sheep, and a numerous breed of horses, alone inhabit these profound solitudes, where they are left to rove about the whole of the year. At the first view, this immense and verdant horizon, where nothing checks the sight, produces on the mind the same impression as the ocean. It seems to give greater grandeur to the imagination, and greater depth to reflection; but, in proportion as you advance, the uniformity occasions weariness; you become excessively tired of continually beholding, above and around, nothing but the sky and green fields, which have no limits."

The visit of the empress to the city of Kherson, called by the Tartars "Kisikerman," or City of Daughters, was celebrated with many festivities. It was here that she beheld a gate bearing a Greek inscription, meaning, "By this the way leads to Byzantium." This incident has been magnified into the statement, that she erected a triumphal arch at this place, and, in a fit of arrogant prophecy, inscribed those words upon it. The visit of the empress to the Crimea, though necessarily displeasing to the Porte, was not conducted in open defiance of it. Long before leaving St. Petersburg, she had certified her intention to the divan at Constantinople; the messenger being directed to soften the communication by the statement, that some necessary internal regulations were the only objects of his sovereign in this visit to a part of her subjects. The Porte, however, exhibited symptoms of uneasiness, and appeared undecided as to whether they ought not to consider the visit as an aggression. They even sent four ships of war, while the empress was at Kherson, to anchor at the mouth of the Borysthenes. This proceeding so resembled a threat, that Catherine beheld the vessels with much excitement, and, turning to her courtiers, exclaimed—"Do you see! one would suppose that the

Turks had no recollection of Tschesmè!" Her indignation was the greater on finding that the Ottomans were assisted by French officers and engineers. Prince Potemkin reproached Count Ségur with this circumstance; but the latter answered, that the Russians could scarcely be astonished at precautions dictated by common prudence.* Catherine, for some days, treated the French minister with coldness, but soon received him again into her favour.

Crossing the famous lines of Perekop, the imperial party proceeded to the city of Bachtchi-Saraï, and took up their residence in the palace of the ancient khans. The Turkish and Tartar merchants looked on with an apathetic pride. On the approach of a cavalcade they showed neither surprise nor active displeasure. Regarding their conquerors as infidels and dogs, they retained their stupid pride; and instead of imputing their reverses to ignorance, attributed them to fatality alone. The pride of the empress was natural and justifiable: it had been reserved for her—a woman—to annihilate the Tartar power in the Crimea, and to subdue beneath the Russian sceptre a race who had formerly been the conquerors of Russia, ever delighting in ferocious excesses; and who, but a few years before their overthrow, had shown that they still retained their brutal and brigand-like spirit.

On the return of Catherine, she visited the famous battle-field of Pultawa. There a Russian army of 50,000 men was divided into two bodies, and gave a mimic representation of the conflict between Charles and Peter. During the charging of troops and the roar of cannon, Catherine felt the full excitement of the scene, and her eyes sparkled with animation and delight. On some of the courtiers pointing out to her an error committed by the Swedes, she observed—"Here we may see on what a small matter the fate of empires depends. Had it not been for this fault, we should not be here." At Moscow the emperor Joseph took leave of Catherine, and returned to his dominions; while she and her court proceeded to St. Petersburg, having traversed nearly the whole length of the empire.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

TURKEY DECLARES WAR AGAINST RUSSIA; SWEDEN DOES THE SAME; EXTRAVAGANT DEMANDS OF GUSTAVUS; CONSTERNATION AT ST. PETERSBURG; SUCCESSES OF THE RUSSIANS AND THE TURKS; CAPTURE OF OTCHAKOFF, AND MASSACRE THERE; GUSTAVUS OBTAINS A NAVAL TRIUMPH OVER THE RUSSIANS; PEACE BETWEEN SWEDEN AND RUSSIA; SUWARROW AND THE BATTLE OF THE RYMNIK; DEFEAT OF THE TURKS AT MARTINESTI; THE TAKING AND MASSACRE OF ISMAIL; ECCENTRICITY OF POTEMKIN; HE GIVES AN EXTRAVAGANT ENTERTAINMENT TO THE EMPRESS; CATHERINE'S LAST FAVOURITE; DEATH AND CHARACTER OF POTEMKIN.

TURKEY had been too bitterly wounded long to submit in silence to the humiliations it had received at the hands of its northern neighbour. The Porte demanded the restitution of the Crimea. Fresh, though trivial, disputes arose; and on the 18th of August, 1787, the sultan, secretly instigated both by Prussia† and England,

* Count Ségur was also so fortunate as to enjoy the confidence of the emperor Joseph, then accompanying the empress under the assumed title of the Count de Falkenstein. Notwithstanding the treaty between Austria and Russia, the count considered the emperor as but little disposed to second the ambition of Catherine. "Constantinople," said Joseph, "will ever be an object of jealousy and a ground for discord, which will always render it impossible for the great powers to agree in a division of Turkey." He appeared also very little struck with the progress of the Russian establishments. "I find," said he, "more of show than of reality. Prince Potemkin is active, but more fit to begin great works than to finish them. As to the rest, all becomes easy if we are prodigal of wealth and of human life. We could not venture in Germany nor in France upon what is hazarded here without opposition. The master commands, and troops of slaves obediently labour. They are paid little or nothing; they are badly fed; they dare not let a murmur escape them; and I know that, during three years in these new governments, fatigue and the unhealthiness of the morasses have destroyed 50,000, without its being complained of, or even alluded to."

† Frederic the Great was no more. He died on the 17th of August, 1786, in the seventy-fifth year of his age, and the forty-seventh of his reign. To his nephew and successor (Frederic William II.) he left a kingdom enlarged from 2,190 to 3,515

declared war against Russia, and sent the ambassador of that power to the castle of the Seven Towers. M. de Bulgakoff was, however, permitted to be attended by his secretary and some servants, and an elegant pavilion was constructed to enable him to enjoy the fresh air. Shortly afterwards Sahim-Gueray, the former khan of the Crimea, was strangled at Rhodes, as a punishment for his ancient concessions to the Russians.

The Turks and the Russians were each busied with preparations for a war, which France strove in vain to prevent. England had more influence with the Porte, into whose quarrel it entered with some warmth, in consequence of the jealous feelings with which it beheld Russia form a treaty of commerce with France. The divan ordered 80,000 men to march, in order to cover Otchakoff; advanced a formidable army to the banks of the Danube, and called upon all true followers of the prophet to arm in defence of his successor. The call was readily obeyed; for the Turks were furious at the recent visit of the empress to the Crimea, covered as it was by the vicinity of an army of 150,000 men, and astonished that a progress so insulting had not been prevented. The brave old capudan-pasha, Gazi the Victorious, who had recently returned from the Archipelago, declared, that though grown gray in the service of his country, he still felt himself strong and vigorous, and that there was nothing upon earth he wished for so passionately, as to close his life with the glorious act of driving the infidels out of their fraudulent usurpations in the Crimea and on the Euxine, and of replacing the ruined nations of Tartars and other Mussulmans in their ancient possessions. He soon afterwards entered the Black Sea with a fleet of sixteen ships of the line, eight frigates, and several galleys, intent on erasing the memory of the disaster of his country at Tschesmè. The Tartars, also, on being invited to return to their former allegiance, met and elected a fresh khan, Par-Gueray, who soon beheld under his command an army of 40,000 men. It was in vain that Catherine had loaded the Tartars with presents, and caused the Koran to be printed at St. Petersburg for their use: they beheld in her the Christian potentate; while they longed to be ruled by a true follower of the prophet.

The empress had long regarded a renewal of the war with Turkey as a probability, and had made preparations accordingly. She had already a great force in the Kuban, or Caucasus, and her armies were advancing in detachments to the Crimea. Potemkin, who longed for military distinction, assumed the command of all these forces; while Suwarrow, Kamenskoï, Korsakoff, and other generals of reputation, served under him. The famous Marshal Romantzoff, disdaining to swell the fame of Potemkin, assigned his advanced age as an excuse for holding aloof. A Russian fleet, consisting of eight ships of the line, twelve frigates, and nearly 200 gun-boats, made its appearance in the Black Sea, and two strong squadrons were in readiness at Cronstadt, to sail for the Mediterranean. Catherine also induced the emperor, Joseph II., to support her with an army of 80,000 Austrians, who proceeded to Moldavia; and not a few statesmen anticipated the approaching overthrow of the Ottoman empire. Catherine also appealed to that deep sense of superstition in her people which, in reality, she despised. She caused papers to be circulated amongst them, containing the assumed prophecies of the Russian patriarchs, Jeremiah and Nicon, in which the speedy ruin of Constantinople was affirmed. On the other side, a Tartar prophet made his appearance, and affirmed that an angel had revealed itself to him in a wood, and promised to raise against the Russians all the hordes of the Caucasus.

The Turks suffered a severe defeat before Kinburn, where no less than three actions took place. Suwarrow, who commanded, was himself wounded, but 4,000 Turks perished; Otchakoff was laid siege to, but vigorously defended: the same was the case with Choczim. But the other powers of Europe

German square miles; about 70,000,000 of dollars (£10,000,000 sterling) in the treasury, and an army of 200,000 men. Prussia had become a great power in Europe; but political errors soon lessened the new sovereign's influence with foreign cabinets; while useless wars, and the extravagance of favourites, wasted the treasure he had inherited. Tyrannical, sensual, and superstitious, Frederic William abandoned himself to the society of his mistresses, and allowed his mind to be influenced by the mystics known as the *Illuminati*, who pretended to make Moses and Jesus appear to him; and on another occasion, during supper, called up for his satisfaction, or rather seemed to call up, the ghost of Cæsar. This foolish monarch was also so lavish in bestowing titles upon his favourites, that a satirical writer observed, that it would soon be more difficult, in Prussia, to find a *man* than a *nobleman*.

did not view the conduct of Russia without uneasiness. Turkey was secretly encouraged by France, and also by Prussia; while England was sending it supplies. This Catherine might, perhaps, have anticipated; but she had not foreseen that Gustavus III. of Sweden would have had the boldness to declare war upon her. The policy of Russia had long been to prevent Sweden from ever recovering her former rank among nations, or any part of that influence which she once held in the political scale of Europe. A nominal king without power or effect; with a nation constantly rent and distracted by jarring factions, any of which she might occasionally support against the others, as best suited her immediate purposes, would, in process of time, afford her such continual opportunities for interference and regulation, and such frequent pretences for sending armies into the country to support her decisions, that all the substantial benefits of conquest would thus be obtained without the odium and jealousy ever inseparable from that term. These schemes were destroyed by the Swedish revolution, which regenerated the government of that country; and the Russian cabinet regarded with jealousy an active monarch, under whose rule her coveted prey had eluded her. When, therefore, Gustavus offered his services to avert the war, by mediation between Russia and the Porte, they were rejected by the former power with contemptuous scorn. This aroused into activity the hereditary hatred between Sweden and Russia; and Gustavus, moreover, felt that it might be a more prudent policy to attack his gigantic neighbour while she was occupied in a war with Turkey, than to permit her subsequently to turn her hostile armies against him. Gustavus was, moreover, subsidised by Turkey; while Prussia lent him money; and England (now openly showing its ill-will towards Russia) promised him the assistance of a fleet.

The Swedish fleet captured two Russian frigates as they were cruising off Sweaborg; while Gustavus himself, at the head of 30,000 men, marched against Fredericshaum—circumstances which created both astonishment and alarm at St. Petersburg. That city was almost unprotected; for all the Russian troops had been sent off to fight against the Turks; and Gustavus trusted to cover himself with glory, by retaking from Russia the provinces lost by Charles XII. He even, on the 1st of July, haughtily demanded that Catherine should restore them; that she should accept of his mediation to restore peace between her and the Ottoman Porte, and authorise him to offer to the Porte the cession of the Crimea, and the restoration of her frontiers as they existed before the war of 1768. Catherine's astonishment at these extravagant demands was exceeded by her indignation and her intrepidity. In a tone of irony she asked the French ambassador what he thought of them. "It seems to me, madam," replied the count, "that the king of Sweden, deceived by a flattering dream, fancies that he has already obtained three brilliant victories over your majesty." "And if he had gained them, count," rejoined Catherine with warmth—"were he even in possession of St. Petersburg and Moscow, I would still show him of what a woman of high character is capable, at the head of a brave and devoted people, and standing erect on the ruins of a great empire." Yet Catherine experienced considerable uneasiness; Gustavus had taken the Russians by surprise, and it was extremely possible that he might be able, for a short time, to expel the empress from her capital, and recover possession of Livonia. Gustavus himself was so confident of such a result, that he actually invited the ladies of Stockholm to the ball he promised to give them at Peterhoff, and to the *Te Deum* he intended to celebrate in the cathedral of St. Petersburg.

It was rumoured throughout the city that the palace was all in alarm; that the jewels, furniture, objects of value, and private papers of the empress were packing up; that a great number of horses were in readiness at every post, and that Catherine intended to leave in the night, and seek for safety at Moscow. The empress heard, and contemptuously denied, the rumour. "I have given orders," said she, "for a great number of horses to be immediately collected along the road to Moscow, but only to bring up, in all haste, the regiments I have called for. I remain in my capital; if I should quit it, it would only be to go and meet the king of Sweden." It was not without reason that that brilliant and vivacious Austrian, the Prince de Ligne, gave her the name of the *imperturbable!*

The Swedish troops were opposed by such Russian forces as could be hastily collected; and several petty actions took place, in which the former were generally successful. The Swedish fleet cruised about the gulf, and advanced defiantly even within sight of the batteries of Cronstadt. From the harbour of that great fortress, Admiral Greig issued with a strong fleet to counteract the designs of the enemy. There were many British officers besides the admiral on board this Russian fleet; for numbers, finding, at the conclusion of the American war, neither reward nor active employment in their own country, had tendered their services to the empress. The notorious buccaneer, Paul Jones, who had gained so much distinction by piratical efforts against his countrymen during the American war, was also received by Catherine into her service, and made a Russian admiral. The English officers considered it a degradation to serve with such a man, and threatened to lay down their commissions rather than act in any capacity whatever with a pirate and a renegade. The court of St. Petersburg was both vexed and embarrassed. Punctilios of honour, operating in the face of command, was a thing unheard of in that service. No Russian, unless of the highest rank, would dare to insinuate such an idea. The conduct of the British officers was regarded as a direct insult to the Russian government, and would, no doubt, have been resented as such at any other period. But the necessity of the time prevailed; Paul Jones was recalled from his command in the Cronstadt fleet; and a circumstance shortly afterwards occurred, which induced his retirement from the Russian service.

On the 22nd of July, 1788, the Russian and Swedish naval forces met off the island of Hoghland. An engagement of two hours followed; when each side, having lost one vessel and had several others disabled, claimed the victory. In a subsequent engagement, the Swedes were thrown into some confusion, and lost the *Gustavus Adolphus*, a ship of sixty guns, which was taken and burnt by the enemy. The Swedes, precluded from the means of refitting, continued during the campaign shut up in the harbour of Sweaborg; while the Russian fleet cruised triumphantly about the gulf.

The military efforts of Gustavus were rendered almost powerless by a disaffection which spread among his officers, especially those in high commands, several of whom, he found, carried on a traitorous correspondence with the enemy. A great number of others declared openly, that they could not, without a violation of their conscience and the oaths they had taken to their country, draw their swords in a war undertaken without the consent of the states of the kingdom, and therefore contrary to the constitution. To such an extent was this mutinous feeling carried, that at the siege of Fredericshaum, the officers refused to lead their troops to the attack, and many regiments of the men laid down their arms. At the same time, an irruption of the Danes—who acted in concert with Russia—into the richest provinces of Sweden, induced Gustavus to abandon his refractory army in Finland, and hasten to drive this new foe from his dominions. Such was the ill-success of a monarch who, on entering into the war, had been so carried away by his ambition, as to say vauntingly—"Should fortune favour the arms of my people, of all the monuments of Russian insolence I will only spare the statue of Peter the Great, in order to engrave upon the pedestal, and immortalise, the name of Augustus." Fortunately for Sweden, there existed in Europe an alliance which proved a counterpoise to the combined power of Russia and of Austria. A treaty, with that object, had been concluded between England, Prussia, and Holland; and the king of Denmark was compelled, in consequence of their threats, to withdraw his troops from Sweden, and to conclude a peace with Gustavus.

During this period two or three desperate engagements had taken place between the Turkish and Russian fleets in that broad lake which is formed by the Dnieper and the Bug before their junction with the Black Sea. In these, notwithstanding the valour of the Turks, the Russians were victorious. Indeed, such is the constitutional indolence of the Turks, that they showed themselves totally ignorant of the navigation of a river which for ages had been in their possession.

The Russians defeated the Tartars of the Kuban in several encounters, and made themselves masters of Georgia. A Russian army, estimated at 150,000 men, under the orders of Prince Potemkin, assisted by the most distinguished generals of his country, including Suwarrow, frequently beat the Turks; who, in their turn, inflicted a severe check upon the Austrians. Potemkin, who had himself done little to contribute to the success of the Russian arms, considered, or affected to consider, it to be the consequence of his having built a new church to his patron saint, and declared, with an arro-

gant impiety—"I am, indeed, *the spoiled child of God!*"

Potemkin had been long employed in the siege of Otchakoff, which was protected by fortifications of uncommon strength, and supplied, not only with a numerous garrison, but also an abundant supply of ammunition and provisions. As to the Russians, they died in great numbers every night, from the severity of the cold, and suffered from want of provisions. The cold, however, enabled them to attack the fortress from the waterside, where it was less fortified, and now approachable upon the ice. It was taken by assault, led by subordinate officers, while Potemkin himself remained in his camp with his mistresses. This was the result of eccentricity rather than fear; for only a few days before, he had passed many times to and fro, with the utmost coolness, under the very cannon of the ramparts, because he had heard that some one had presumed to suspect his courage.

The Turkish garrison within Otchakoff defended themselves with the utmost bravery; and almost the whole of these unfortunate men were sabred by the victors. Many of the inhabitants shared the same fate, and the town was given up to plunder. A horrible revel of blood and debauchery lasted during three days, and cost the lives of 25,000 Turks. Amongst the captives were 4,000 women, who were spared less from motives of pity than from those of sensuality. The Russians, however, did not obtain their triumph cheaply, as they were ten times repulsed, and lost no less than 12,000 men in the assault; an expense of life at which even victories were undesirable. This was felt by the empress, who, early in 1789, ordered a fresh levy of recruits throughout her dominions, and even brought exiles from the wilds of Siberia to serve in her armies. So infuriated were the Russians at Otchakoff, on account of the severe losses they suffered, that two days after the assault, when the fury of the battle-hour might be supposed to have cooled, on finding Turkish children who had been concealed, they threw them into the air, and caught them on the points of their bayonets, saying, "These, at least, shall do no harm to Christians."

It is not necessary to dwell upon all the events of this war; and we may thus sum up the events of the year 1788. The Turks had been beaten at Kilburn, and repulsed in the Crimea; in the Black Sea they had experienced several reverses, and lost many of their ships. They had lost Otchakoff, with the adjacent territory; they had been compelled to evacuate Wallachia, while the Tartars of the Kuban had been dispersed. The Austrians, despite some reverses, had taken Dubitza, Sabatch, and Novi; and the king of Sweden was driven out of Russian Finland, and his fleet blockaded at Sweaborg. At this period, France made some effort to bring about a peace; but Catherine desired first to effect a fourfold alliance between Russia, Austria, France, and Spain, for the purpose of promoting each other's interests, and counteracting the influence of England and Prussia. Fortunately, neither France nor Spain could be brought to coincide with the views of the empress. Prince Potemkin also began to entertain different ideas upon the subject; for, finding that the emperor of Austria desired to back out of the war, and regarding the support of France as uncertain, he changed his system, and began to recommend to his sovereign a connection with England and Prussia, as being more formidable enemies, and more useful friends.

During the year 1789, the Swedes experienced several reverses, but scarcely of a kind to render them incapable of continuing the war, or to give much distinction to their enemies. Indeed, Gustavus found, in his talents and courage, resources proportioned to the greatness of the perils which threatened him.

It was the year 1789 which saw the destruction of the infamous Bastille, and the outbreak in France of that terrible revolution which eventually convulsed Europe and astonished the world. The crowned heads of the continent beheld the preliminary throes of this social storm with surprise and perplexity, but none of them appeared to foresee what was to follow. It did not occur to one of them to consider what would be the result, "if, indeed, that dark living chaos of ignorance and hunger, five-and-twenty millions strong, under his feet, were to begin playing!"*

Gustavus, in 1790, himself took the com-

* *The French Revolution; a History:* by Thomas Carlyle. The eccentric and eloquent author thus points to the true causes of this great convulsion, this "truth clad in hell-fire:"—"Shall we say, then, Woe to philosophism, that it destroyed religion; what it called 'extinguishing the abomination (*écraser l'infame?*') Woe rather to those that made the holy an abomination, and extinguishable; woe to all men that live in such a time of world-abomination and world-destruction! Nay, answer the courtiers, it was Turgot, it was Necker, with their mad innovating; it was the queen's want of etiquette; it was he, it was she, it was that. Friends! it was every scoundrel that had lived, and, quack-like, pretended to be doing, and had only been eating and *mis*doing, in all provinces of life, as shoeblack or as sovereign lord, from the time of Charlemagne and earlier. All this (for be sure no falsehood perishes, but is as seed sown out to grow) has been storing itself for thousands of years; and now the account-day has come. And rude will the settlement be: of wrath laid up against the day of wrath."

mand of his fleet; and, after a desperate battle, defeated that of the Russians, under the command of the Prince of Nassau, from whom he captured thirty vessels. The Swedish monarch followed up this advantage by disembarking several battalions of infantry, and some squadrons of light troops, at a distance of not more than thirty miles from St. Petersburg. The city and the imperial residence was thus again struck with consternation; but the empress remained at her summer palace. She commanded General Igelstrœm to spare nothing in the attempt to recapture the post taken by the Swedes, and to drive them from her dominions.

By sea, Gustavus experienced first a reverse, and then a great victory. The Russian fleet was twice as large as that of the Swedes, but half of it was destroyed or captured, together with no less than 10,000 men. The Prince of Nassau, who commanded the Russians, imagined that they had purposely allowed themselves to be defeated, with the base object of tarnishing his reputation. With this impression he wrote to the empress—"Madam, I have had the misfortune to fight against the elements, the Swedes, and the Russians. I hope that your majesty will do me justice." As Catherine readily accepted this apology, we may presume that there was some truth in the supposition of the prince. Still she must have experienced much secret humiliation at having been defeated by a power which, until recently, she had despised.

Gustavus had retrieved his reputation, and was by no means unwilling to retire from a war on which he had so imprudently entered. Catherine, also, had more fighting on her hands than she desired, or even her vast resources were calculated to meet. When, therefore, Spain offered her mediation, it was at once accepted; and Catherine, with an affected generosity in this instance, proposed liberal terms to her Swedish neighbour. She requested no more than the re-establishment of the treaties of Neustadt and Abo, and the total oblivion of the late hostilities. Peace was signed at Varela on the 14th of August, 1790. It will excite little surprise that the news of the peace was received with much joy at Stockholm; but it was remarked with astonishment, that the public rejoicings at St. Petersburg were carried to an extreme, which seemed little consistent either with the pride of that court, or with the contempt with which it had so recently affected to regard its late adversary.

We must return to our narrative of the war which Catherine was waging against her eastern neighbours, the Turks, whose sultan, Abdul Achmed IV., died in the year 1789, and was succeeded by the capricious, but enlightened reformer, Selim III. Though the empress had failed in her scheme of driving the Turks out of Europe, and placing her grandson Constantine on the throne of the ancient Greek emperors; though the jealousy of the other great powers of Europe had also induced her to abandon her next favourite object of erecting the provinces of Moldavia, Wallachia, and Bessarabia into an independent sovereignty for her favourite minister, Potemkin; yet, with respect to the Crimea, the Black Sea, and all other points of her claim upon Turkey, she maintained an inflexible firmness. England and Prussia expostulated with warmth, and even wore a threatening aspect. This it was that had made the empress anxious to conclude a peace with Sweden; for if the energetic Gustavus had been supported by English fleets and Prussian armies, he might have been enabled to carry fire and sword into the heart of the Russian empire. But this difficulty provided against, Catherine relaxed no jot of her efforts against the Turks. Prince Repnin and General Suwarrow, who had taken Otchakoff, obtained magnificent presents from the empress. Suwarrow, whom Byron has tersely described as

"Hero, buffoon, half-demon, and half-dirt,"

received, amongst other things, a gorgeous plume of brilliants to wear in his hat; a strange present for a man whose habits were so disgusting, that he sometimes took off his shirt, when amongst the Cossacks, and directed them to hold it to the fire, saying,

that it was the best way of killing the vermin.

Catherine showered rewards not only on her generals who captured Otchakoff, but even on the subalterns and common soldiers. This excited an active spirit of emulation in the Russian armies, and their progress now seemed one continued triumph. During the year 1789, Prince Potemkin took the island of Beresan; Prince Repnin drove the Turks from the borders of the Solska; while Suwarrow defeated them at Fokshiani. The latter then hurried, at the head of 8,000 men, to the assistance of the Prince of Saxe-Coburg, who, with 30,000 Austrians, had been attacked by an army of 100,000 Turks. The Austrians were already flying before their enemies, when Suwarrow came up with his handful of men, and changed the fortune of the day. "My friends!" said he to his soldiers, "never look at the eyes of your enemies. Fix your view at their breasts; it is there you must thrust your bayonets." A furious charge followed, the Turks were routed with a dreadful carnage, and he remained master of the field of battle.

Suwarrow has been accused of wanton cruelty—a charge which is not without foundation; but, on this occasion, he deemed it expedient to give the Turks no quarter, on account of their great numbers; and there can be little doubt that, judged as we must judge such matters from a military point of view, he was right. Besides, Suwarrow was a soldier of impulse, not of intellect and calculation; and he gave way, in the hour of victory, to that savage excitement which exists in a latent state, to some extent, in most men; even in those who, under ordinary circumstances, are generally actuated by feelings of benevolence. Thus, on this occasion, Suwarrow stood upon an eminence surrounded by his staff, and while he watched the progress of the terrible carnage caused by the artillery firing incessantly upon the wretches who had plunged into the river Rymnik, exclaimed repeatedly, "Yes, yes; as I always say, the bayonet for victory, and then hurrah for the cannon and the cavalry to sweep up the runaways." This was in accordance with his mode of warfare, which is best described in his own brief sentences; such as—"Forward and strike!—No theory!—Attack!—Push with bayonet!—Trust to the naked steel!—The ball is a fool; the bayonet a hero!" So confident had success made him in these tactics, that when, on another occasion, an Austrian general recommended a *reconnaissance*, he responded, "*Reconnaissance!* I am for none of them; they are of no use but to the timid, and to inform the enemy that you are approaching. It is never difficult to find your opponents when you really wish it! Form column—charge bayonets—plunge into the centre of the enemy: these are my *reconnaissances*." This extraordinary creature, eventually regarded by his countrymen as the first of Russian generals, was as singular in his appearance as he was repulsive in his habits. Miserably thin, and almost a dwarf in stature (being only five feet one inch in height), the unpromising nature of his exterior was increased by a pug nose, and a mouth of uncommon size. He appeared to regard contempt for cleanliness as a soldierly virtue. He slept upon hay or straw; his wardrobe consisted of his uniform and a sheepskin; and he seldom wore linen, except on occasions of ceremony or parade.

This victory, gained near the river Rymnik, procured for Suwarrow the surname of Rymnikski;* while the titles of count, both of the Roman and Russian empire, were conferred upon him. Shortly afterwards he captured Turtukai in Bulgaria; and many other towns, both in Bessarabia and on the Danube, were taken by the Russians. Indeed, defeat became almost habitual to the Turks, and the Ottoman power shook to its foundations.

The Russians learnt to despise their foes; while the Turks feared that the hand of the prophet was against them, and that they were fated to humiliation. In the month of September, 1790, a combined force of Austrians and Russians, under the Prince of Coburg and General Suwarrow, estimated only at about 30,000 men, had the temerity to attack the grand Turkish army, amounting to 90,000. The battle took place near Martinesti in Wallachia; and the allies, with little loss or difficulty, gained a signal and extraordinary victory. It was, indeed, rather a slaughter and a dispersion than a battle. About 7,000 Turks perished, and nothing but the blunted sabres and tired horses of the pursuers checked the butchery. No prisoners were taken; for the Turks, maddened by shame, disdained to accept of quarter. Their whole camp fell to the victors; and 300 camels, 400 oxen, 5,000 loaded waggons, 3,000 tents, six mortars, seventeen pieces of heavy cannon, sixty-four

* That is, "He of the Rymnik."

field-pieces, near 100 standards, and a prodigious quantity of ammunition and stores, were among the spoils. The loss of the victors amounted to but a few hundred men killed and wounded.

The Russians pursued their conquests to the Black Sea; but Ismail, or Ismailow—an unskilfully fortified town in Bessarabia, at the mouth of the Danube—still held out. It had been besieged by Potemkin for seven months; but at length, growing impatient, he resolved upon taking it at any cost of life whatever.

In the camp this extravagant and eccentric man passed his time like one of those ancient satraps whom he equalled, and almost surpassed, in luxurious sensuality. Abandoned to indolence and pleasure, he was surrounded by a crowd of parasites and women, who employed every effort to amuse him. One of these ladies, pretending to read the decrees of fate in the arrangement of a pack of cards, predicted that he would take the town at the end of three weeks. Potemkin, with a smile, replied, that he had a mode of divination far less fallible, and immediately sent his orders to Suwarrow to come from Galatz and take Ismail within three days. Suwarrow was the idol of the Russian soldiers; and, on his arrival, they were animated by a feeling of enthusiasm. The fortifications of Ismail had been erected without advanced works; and Suwarrow, on glancing at the crumbling wall and half-choked moat on the landward side of the town, at once resolved on an assault. To excite still more the ardour and ferocity of the soldiers, he promised to give the town up to them to plunder, and commanded them to yield no quarter until it was taken. On the 21st of September he twice summoned the city to surrender, and threatened the inhabitants with the fate of Otchakoff in the event of refusal. The Turks, however, disdained his threats, and he gave orders to prepare for the assault. In the evening he assembled his chief officers, and gave his final directions for an escalade, in seven columns, an hour before daybreak on the following morning. Admiral Ribas was to assist by attacking with his whole force, at the same hour, on the side of the Danube. The advanced troops were not only to carry ladders, but bags of earth, to fill up more completely, where necessary, the filth-choked ditch. Having concluded his explanations to his officers, Suwarrow dismissed them, saying, "You now understand what is to be done, and how to do it. Two hours before daybreak I shall rise, say my prayers, dress myself, go out in front of the tent, and crow like a cock. The men must then be immediately got under arms. At the second crow, which will be just half-an-hour after the first, I expect everything to be in readiness for the advance; and, at the third crow, you will push forward according to my directions. And do not forget what I have already told you—that, till resistance has entirely ceased upon every point, the men must not be encumbered with prisoners."

At four o'clock the cock-crow was given, and so natural a sound before daybreak did not alarm the Turks. The assault took place; but the assailants were twice repulsed with terrible loss. The Cossacks, unused to storming operations, were mostly shot down or cut to pieces. At length the city was entered; but the hottest part of the struggle took place within it. Every inch of ground was savagely contested; every street was converted into a fortress; every house became a redoubt. Amidst the roar of cannon, the clash of sabres, the wild cries of the assailants, the imprecations of the Moslems, and the shrieks of the wounded, was heard, at intervals, the voices of the Russian officers, shouting, "Forward! Strike! No quarter! No prisoners!" Still four hours of horror elapsed, after the Russians entered the city, before they were enabled to fight their way to the market-place, where the Tartars of the Crimea were collected. For two hours more they fought with all the fury of despair, neither seeking nor giving mercy. They were at length all massacred; but the struggle was still kept up in the streets. At last a passage was made for the cavalry into the city, and they charged through the streets, and cut down men, women, and children, until four o'clock in the day, when resistance ceased. Then—to quote the language of one of the greatest of our modern poets—

> The crescent's silver bow
> Sunk, and the crimson cross glared o'er the field,
> But red with no redeeming gore; the glow
> Of burning streets, like moonlight on the water,
> Was imaged back in blood, the sea of slaughter."

The fighting ceased at four o'clock, but not the carnage; for Suwarrow gave the devoted city up to be plundered by his maddened and ferocious troops. This work of horror was prolonged for three days and nights, during which many Turks sacrificed

their lives in defending their property, and many women were slain after poniarding the ruffians who attempted to violate them. Suwarrow, in the meantime, dispatched a bulletin to Prince Potemkin, which, in doggerel Russian rhyme, expressed the following meaning—"Glory to God! Glory to thee! Ismail is ours, and I am in it." Yet this man appears not to have been altogether destitute of human emotion. On an English traveller (who afterwards met him in the Ukraine) asking him if, after the massacre at Ismail, he was perfectly satisfied with the conduct of the day? he replied, that he went to his tent and wept.

It is estimated that no less than 33,000 Turks were killed or severely wounded, and 10,000 (including women) taken prisoners. Eight days were occupied in burying the dead or throwing them into the Danube. It was said that the Russians purchased this sanguinary triumph at a cost of 15,000 men; though that is, no doubt, an exaggeration, as Suwarrow himself stated his loss at 2,000 killed and 2,500 wounded. The very day after the assault, Suwarrow, who was extremely superstitious, and very attentive to all the formulas of religion, caused a solemn service of thanksgiving to God to be celebrated in the convent church of St. John. There was something shocking, if not blasphemous, in this proceeding, as the intonations of the priests and the responses of the military congregation were constantly broken in upon by the shrieks, curses, and pistol-shots arising from the authorised plundering and violence then in full operation without and around the building.

After the taking of Ismail, Prince Potemkin returned to St. Petersburg, to enjoy the honours which were really due to Suwarrow. The empress received her eccentric minister with transports of joy, and bestowed on him another palace, which had been fitted up for his reception at an expense of 600,000 roubles; and also a coat laced with diamonds, which cost 200,000. Potemkin himself exhibited a pomp and an extravagance which would have appeared excessive in the most splendid court in Europe. The expense of his table alone, was, on ordinary occasions, about 800 roubles a-day. In the depth of winter he purchased all the cherries of a tree reared in a hothouse, at a rouble the cherry. He possessed an enormous quantity of jewels, some of which he never looked at again after he had purchased them. On one occasion he took a dislike to his diamonds, and ordered them to be sold: not long after, he desired to repossess them, and directed them to be repurchased at any price. In the latter part of his life, this man, who had all Russia at his feet, suffered greatly from depression of spirits. At these times he would spend long winter evenings playing with his diamonds, as children do with toys. Sometimes he would sit pouring them from one hand into the other; then he would amuse himself, for hours, by spreading them out on a black velvet in the forms of circles, crosses, and fanciful figures. During these periods of depression, he would pass a couple of hours in biting his nails as he walked up and down his apartment, though there were a score of persons present.

Potemkin probably cultivated eccentricity as a source of distinction. This he obtained, apparently, in a proportion far exceeding his merits; for though there were many princes in Russia, most of them his superior by birth, yet he was always called *the prince*, by way of excellence. The lustre of gigantic talents would necessarily eclipse that of high birth; but the abilities of Potemkin, though considerable, could not be regarded as great. He was indebted largely to personal qualifications for his elevated position, and his genius may be said to have been rather physical than mental. His eccentricity was blended with a strong acquisitiveness, and he had a childish eagerness to procure the most costly things of every kind. Though he never played on a violin in his life, yet he had ten or a dozen which had cost him an exorbitant price; one of them being estimated at the value of 6,000 roubles. Yet he allowed them all to be either spoiled by the dust or gnawed by the rats. When some one spoke to him of a magnificent library, he observed, that he had one of greater value than the most learned man in Europe could show. He then opened a small case, containing several shelves of books, which, on being taken down, were seen to be boxes, gilt and lettered at the back, filled with bank assignats, and rouleaux of imperials and ducats, to an amazing amount. With all this wealth, it was with great difficulty that he could be brought to pay his debts; for, like all profligates, he loved display more than justice. To those who paid their court to him, he usually

behaved with great insolence; and he more than once struck a Russian prince or general in public—a gross indignity, which certainly no gentleman out of that empire would submit to. Yet, from a knowledge of the Russian character, and, no doubt, from motives of policy, he was kind and condescending to the soldiers, who, accordingly, were attached to him in return. Many strange projects of ambition were attributed to him. It was even supposed that he designed taking advantage of the influence he had over the troops, for excluding from the throne the Grand-duke Paul and his sons, on the death of the empress, and of causing the eldest of the grand-duchesses to be crowned. It was added, that he designed to marry her, or, at any rate, to have reigned in her name.

After the fall of Ismail, Potemkin remained for several months at St. Petersburg, during which period he expended upwards of 1,200,000 roubles. An entertainment which he gave to the empress at the Tauridan palace, reminds us of the fabulous scenes of magnificence in the fairy tales of the East. His mind was probably weakened by long-continued debauchery, and he felt a presentiment that this would be the last blaze of his grandeur. He resolved, therefore, to distinguish the occasion by a gorgeousness which should elevate the whim of an hour to the dignity of an historical incident. A month was passed in preparations, and several hundred persons were daily assembled for the purpose of rehearsing the final entertainment. The empress, the imperial family, the court, the foreign ministers, the nobility, and great part of the people of condition in the city were invited. When Catherine entered her carriage, immense piles of garments, lofty pyramids of eatables, and an enormous supply of liquors, were distributed to the populace. On her entrance into the Tauridan palace, she was greeted by the music arising from an orchestra of 600 performers. When she and the brilliant company had taken their seats, four-and-twenty couple of the most beautiful persons of both sexes, and of noble birth, including among them the Grand-dukes Alexander and Constantine, opened the dances with a quadrille. Their dresses, the value of which was estimated at 10,000,000 of roubles, were all white, and the wearers were only distinguishable by the colours of their girdles and scarfs. The music to which they danced was accompanied with singing, and a famous vocalist concluded the scene with a solo.

The company then proceeded to another hall, hung with tapestry of the most costly kind. In it stood an artificial elephant, decorated with emeralds and rubies. It was led by a Persian, who struck upon a bell, at which signal a curtain rose and displayed a magnificently-decorated theatre, where two ballets and a dramatic piece were performed. On the termination of the latter, the company divided into the several rooms of the palace, all of which were illuminated with a magnificence which struck the spectators with amazement. The walls and columns seemed to glow with various-coloured fires, while large mirrors, attached to the sides of the apartments, or made to form pyramids and grottoes, multiplied the effect, and even made the whole enclosure seem to be composed of sparkling stoves. Six hundred persons then sat down at one table to supper, and the rest were entertained at sideboards. Every article of use was of gold or silver; flowers were in the most delicious abundance; a multitude of servants, in superb dresses, were in attendance; and nothing that the most studied epicurism was able to procure could be asked for in vain!

Catherine was pleased, and, for the first time for many years, made an exception to her general rule, by staying till midnight, in order not to disturb the pleasure of the host and his company. On her entering the vestibule after supper, the choir of voices melodiously chanted a hymn to her praise. Surprised and affected, she turned round to the prince, who, overpowered with emotion, fell on his knee, and, seizing her hand, bedewed it with tears. A gloomy foreboding seemed to shake his whole frame, and his countenance was expressive of the conviction, that this was the last time he should ever, on that spot, pour out his gratitude to his magnanimous patroness.

Having passed five months at St. Petersburg, Potemkin, satiated with pomp and grandeur, quitted it to return to the army. Pleasure no longer satisfied him; he felt a conviction he should never return; he was restless and uneasy, and his frequent sighs betrayed the gloom that filled his mind. Some time before his departure the empress had dismissed Count Momonoff, and taken another lover into favour. "That extraordinary woman," said Ségur, "presented in her character an astonishing mixture of the strength of our sex and the weakness of her own. Age had set its stamp upon her features; but her heart, as well as her self-love,

preserved their youth; both the one and the other were now severely wounded."

Catherine not only behaved to Count Momonoff with her accustomed liberality, but even permitted him to extort from her the most extravagant sums. Love was not to be expected from a man in such a position; but he might have refrained from insult. Young enough to be her son, he felt his life to resemble that of a slave, and groaned beneath the yoke of a favour which restrained his liberty. His prison was a palace, and his fetters chains of roses; yet still he sighed for freedom. In this condition he contracted a passion for the Princess Scherebatoff, one of the ladies of honour to the empress. The princess returned his attachment; and having received from him assurances of constancy, is presumed to have granted him those favours which ladies usually reserve for their husbands. This amour was for some time known to all the court except the empress. At length she became aware of it, and told Momonoff that he had not surrendered to her the whole of his heart. She added, that, as she wished his happiness, she had formed the design of uniting him to the young Countess Bruce, one of the richest heiresses of the empire. Momonoff declined the intended honour, and the empress desired to know the cause of his reluctance. As, in spite of his embarrassment, she insisted on being informed on this point, he threw himself at her feet, confessed that he had plighted his faith to the Princess Scherebatoff; that, though ashamed of his ingratitude, he was incapable of changing his sentiments; and implored the clemency of his sovereign. Irritated by this information, Catherine quitted the court, and secluded herself in her apartments. She, however, speedily recovered from a passion and a weakness little worthy of her. Commanding the presence of Momonoff and the princess, she had them affianced before her, gave a rich dowry to her maid of honour, and a valuable estate to the count. She even attended at the marriage ceremony; and, in accordance with custom, herself placed a set of diamonds on the head of the bride. Having gained this victory over her pride, she commanded them to retire from her court.

Whatever were the weaknesses of Catherine, meanness was not one of them. She was entitled to at least respect from the man whose ingratitude towards her she had the power to punish. The count, however, had the meanness and the want of prudence to mention to his wife the particulars of his interviews with the empress, and the countess had the dangerous folly to divulge them with a levity injurious to her imperial mistress. That sovereign punished the babbler with peculiar and eccentric severity. The newly-married couple had retired to Moscow; and one night, after they had gone to rest, the master of the police of that city entered their apartment. Then showing them an order from the empress, he left them in the hands of six men disguised as women, and retired to an adjoining chamber. The pretended women then seized the talkative lady, and having entirely stripped her of her night-clothes, whipped her severely with rods in the presence of her husband, whom they forced to kneel down and witness this humiliating flagellation. When the chastisement was over, the police-master re-entered the room, and said, "This is the way the empress punishes a first indiscretion. For the second, people are sent to Siberia."

It might have been supposed that, in the neighbourhood of the Hyperborean regions, the passions, if not dormant, would be at least moderate, and that the men would consequently be temperate, and the women chaste. Facts, however, lead us to a contrary conclusion; and it is left to the philosophers to determine, whether the double windows and heated rooms of St. Petersburg, added to an affectation of Oriental manners, be not to the full as critical, in respect to female virtue, as the climate of Naples or Turin. Though now declining in years, the empress still gave way to those sensual pleasures to which she had ever shown so strong a partiality. Momonoff was no sooner dismissed, than she received Plato Zuboff, a young officer of the guards, into her favour. His name suggested to Russian wits the pun, that the empress, after all her amours, concluded with Platonic love. This person rendered himself so agreeable to the empress, that in a short time he became almost omnipotent at St. Petersburg. Not content with wealth and honours, he affected public employments. He was decorated with the title of prince, and received the post of grand-master of the artillery. Nearly all the admirals, generals, and ministers of the empire were to be seen at his *levée*, anxious to obtain his smile of approbation, and even paying their compliments at the same time, in great form, to his favourite monkey.

The king of Prussia had signed a treaty with the Turks, and another with the Poles. Catherine thus lost an ally, and was exposed to the probability of having a new enemy to contend with. But though Frederic William did not draw the sword against her, he sent his troops into Poland, under pretence of defending that country; and, what perhaps occasioned still more irritation at the Russian court, he took possession of the cities of Dantzic and Thorn.

Catherine saw at length, that her victories over the Turks were not only dearly purchased, but, in fact, ruinous; and that remote conquests might bring on the loss of the provinces which she possessed in Poland. Though she felt peace to be necessary, yet her pride forbade her to seem to desire it; and rather than do so, she chose to continue the war. This involved the heavier responsibility, as the death of her ally, the emperor Joseph II.,* on the 20th of February, 1790, left her to contend with the Ottomans singly.

Victory still favoured the Russian troops, and they continued to gain unfruitful triumphs. In the May of 1791, General Kutusoff defeated a combined army of Turks and Tartars at Babada in Bulgaria; and in the July following, Prince Repnin, at the head of 25,000 men, entirely routed 70,000 Ottomans, whom he met and engaged not far from Matzin. General Gudovitch also, brother of the favourite of Peter III., captured the fortresses of Sudyuk-Kaly and of Anapa, on the frontiers of the Crimea and the coast of Circassia. But Austria concluded in this year (1791), at Szistowa, a peace with Turkey, by which she restored all conquests to the latter power.

The revolution which was convulsing France produced a considerable revulsion of feeling in the empress Catherine. Falling into the common error which attributed that great and terrible outbreak to the writings of the French philosophers, she discountenanced the study of them, and banished the busts of Voltaire and of our own statesman, Fox, to a lumber-room. When the French ambassador left her court, she observed to him, "Your predilection for the new philosophy and for liberty, will probably incline you to support the cause of the people; I shall regret it; for aristocracy is my profession, and I must adhere to it." The state of France, and her desire to extinguish the revolution, inclined Catherine to forget, or try to forget, her animosity towards England; the more so, as this country, taking advantage of the moment when she was detaching herself from France, endeavoured to revive the amicable connection that had formerly existed between Russia and Great Britain.

England, therefore, proposed to mediate between the empress and the sultan, on condition that, in making peace, Catherine should consent to give up her conquests, and to take the treaty of Kainardshi as the basis of the new arrangements. The northern Cleopatra acted with a proud independence, and treated a special envoy, sent from this country, with alternate conciliation and cold reserve. But Catherine had resolved on making peace with the Porte, and she accepted the mediation of England, which was carried on in conjunction with her allies, Prussia and Holland. These three powers agreed to propose to Turkey the terms to which the empress was disposed to submit, and declared that, in the event of the refusal by the Turks, they would abandon their cause and leave them to prosecute the war alone with Russia.

Preliminaries of peace between Russia and the Porte were signed on the 9th of January, 1792, at Jassy. It was calculated that, in this war, Austria lost 130,000 soldiers, and expended 300,000,000 of

* Count Ségur observes—"This prince, without being a great man, was a monarch equally just, virtuous, and prone to toleration; severe to himself, indulgent to others, kind, indefatigable, accessible to truth, even occupied in relieving misfortunes, in encouraging the arts, and in rewarding merit. Prince de Ligne, who sincerely deplored his loss, wrote the following lines to the empress Catherine:—'It will be said by the soldier—Joseph II. stood many a cannon-shot at the dike of Beschania, and many a musket-shot in the suburbs of Sabatch; he has had medals struck as rewards for bravery. By the traveller—what splendid establishments for schools, for hospitals, for prisons, and for education! By the manufacturer—what encouragement given to commerce. By the common labourer—he has himself ploughed the ground. By the heretic—he was our protector. By the president of every department, the heads of all offices—he was our chief clerk, whilst at the same time he was superintending us. By the ministers—he was falling a sacrifice for the state, of which he called himself the first subject. By the sick—he never ceased to visit us. By the citizen—he embellished our town with squares and public walks. By the peasant and the servant—we spoke to him whenever we pleased. By heads of families—he aided us with his advice. By society—he was safe and of agreeable manners; he related agreeably; there was much point in his conversation; truth could be told to him upon every subject.'"

florins. Russia lost 200,000 men, five ships of the line, seven frigates, and fourteen smaller vessels, and expended 200,000 roubles. The Turkish loss was estimated at 330,000 men, six ships of the line, and four frigates, with several other vessels; and an expense of 250,000,000 piastres. Yet the peace placed affairs much on the standing in which they were before the commencement of this sanguinary and expensive conflict. The Dniester was recognised as the boundary between the two empires; the ancient rights of Moldavia and Wallachia were confirmed; and the Porte agreed to put a stop to the proceedings of the barbarous corsairs, and to restore all Russian prisoners.

The presentiments of Prince Potemkin were not without foundation. He did not live to witness the conclusion of the peace with Turkey. Having repaired to the congress of Jassy, he was there attacked with an epidemical fever. On hearing that he was ill, the empress sent two of her most experienced physicians to his assistance. He, however, disdained their advice, and lived with his usual freedom. Nothing could induce him to control his appetite. His breakfast usually consisted of the greater part of a smoke-dried goose from Hamburg, and slices of hung beef or ham, after which he drank a quantity of wine and Dantzic liqueurs. At dinner he was equally voracious. It cannot, therefore, create surprise that his disorder gained upon him; though a groundless suspicion was afterwards entertained that he had been poisoned. Fancying that a removal from Jassy might benefit him, he set out for Nicolaieff, a town he himself had built. Scarcely, however, had he travelled ten miles, when he felt himself to be dying. He was taken out of his carriage, and laid down on the grass by the roadside, under a tree, where he expired in the arms of his niece, the Princess Branicka. His death took place on the 15th of October, 1791, at the age of fifty-two. His body was removed to Cherson, where a magnificent mausoleum was raised to him by command of the empress.

The name of Potemkin holds a conspicuous place in the annals of Russia. Nature, in order to render him remarkable in every point of view, had given him a gigantic stature, and a proportion of bodily strength such as, in fabulous times, excited astonishment in a Hercules and a Theseus. When first beheld, he had something savage in his appearance, which exhibited an extraordinary mixture of rude and of cultivated nature. His look was animated, lively, and piercing; his countenance, fine, pliant, and lofty, bespoke the head of a Richelieu or a Mazarin, on the robust shoulders of a savage. Prone to taciturnity, and eager to listen, his silence was the silence of thought and reflection. Active, indefatigable, turbulent, bold, and discreet, with a capacity more comprehensive than just, he was capable both of undertaking and accomplishing the most dangerous enterprises. He paid little attention to the opinions of a world which he pretended to despise, and his passions acknowledged no restraint, because his heart was destitute alike of morality or principle. His mind was influenced by boundless ambition, a thirst for independence, a love of sway, and also by many noble, and all low, passions. He was a wolf held by a golden chain; but that chain was in the hand of Catherine.

CHAPTER XL.

CATHERINE, INTENT ON THE FURTHER DISMEMBERMENT OF POLAND, DECLARES WAR AGAINST IT; SHE IS JOINED BY PRUSSIA; SECOND PARTITION OF POLAND; REVOLT OF THE POLES UNDER KOSCIUSKO; AUSTRIA LENDS HER ASSISTANCE TO CRUSH THE POLES; DEFEAT OF THE LATTER AT MACIEJOVICE; STORMING AND MASSACRE OF PRAGA UNDER SUWARROW; FINAL DIVISION OF POLAND, AND ITS EXTINCTION AS A NATION; CATHERINE PROMISES MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO THE FRENCH ROYALISTS; SHE CONCLUDES A NEW TREATY OF COMMERCE WITH ENGLAND, AND PREPARES TO ACT AGAINST THE FRENCH REPUBLIC; THE YOUNG KING OF SWEDEN ABRUPTLY BREAKS OFF A MATRIMONIAL ALLIANCE WITH ONE OF THE GRAND-DAUGHTERS OF CATHERINE; SHE ANNEXES COURLAND TO THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE, AND DIRECTS HER ARMS AGAINST PERSIA; DEATH OF THE EMPRESS; HER APPEARANCE AND CHARACTER.

CATHERINE was soon reconciled to the loss of Potemkin; and the business which had been under his direction she divided amongst her other ministers and her favourite, Plato

Zuboff. The second dismemberment of Poland is said to have been suggested by this person, and the idea was instantly sanctioned by the empress. Indeed, she was eager to punish the Poles for the constitution which they established in 1791—a constitution which abrogated the former one (dictated by violence in 1775), and afforded some prospect of a happy and stable government; if, indeed, such a thing could exist in Poland while the power of the state was in the hands of its own worthless nobles and priesthood. The Poles, also, had contracted an alliance with Prussia, in contempt of the aversion of the empress to such a measure, and in preference to one with her; and for this, also, she longed to exact vengeance.

She therefore, in 1792, declared war against Poland. The Poles received this ungenerous declaration with calmness, and prepared for their defence with enthusiasm; for they felt inspired with new life by every breeze which came from revolutionary Paris. But they were neither powerful nor united, and their troops soon fell back before the far more powerful armies of the empress. The plains of Poland were again drenched with blood; and, despite some advantages obtained by the army of that country, it was soon overwhelmed, and almost consumed. It was in this campaign that the subsequently illustrious patriot, Thaddeus Kosciusko, first rendered service to his country, though he had previously won some distinction by fighting with La Fayette for the purpose of obtaining the emancipation of America from the misgovernment of George III.

Catherine also fought with other weapons than the sword. Notwithstanding the coldness that existed between her and the king of Prussia, she opened a negotiation with him, and proposed the definite partition of Poland. In fact, she had contrived to reduce Frederic William to the alternative either of defending Poland against Russia, by virtue of his alliance with that state, or of making a second partition of it in conjunction with her. Frederic William chose the latter, and sent a body of Prussian troops into that country, 1,100 German square miles of which they immediately occupied. He had bound himself to assist the Poles, but he utterly deserted them in their extremity.

The gold of Russia also did its work among the corrupt Polish nobility; and Stanislaus Augustus, still the slave of Catherine, was induced by her to make a public declaration, that it was necessary to yield to the superiority of the Russian arms. In 1793, the confederation of the partisans of Russia assembled at Grodno, where the Russian general seated himself under the canopy of the throne he was about to overthrow. Sievers, the Russian minister, also published a manifesto, in which he declared that his sovereign intended to incorporate with her domains all the territory of Poland which her arms had conquered. The Russian troops, by their ravages and depredations, struck terror into the Poles, and the defenders of the nation were compelled to disperse. The result was a second partition of Poland in 1793, by which Prussia took 22,500, Russia 83,000, and Poland retained 85,000 square miles.

For a short time this unhappy country was breathless and silent; but, maddened by so many calamities, the Poles resolved on a great effort to free themselves from Russian oppression. An extensive conspiracy was organised, and the revolution broke out in the spring of 1794, on the arrival of Kosciusko from Italy, where he had retired. Such was the confidence placed in him, that all ranks of the people hurried to join him, and ladies sold their jewels to furnish him with the means of sustaining the struggle. Oaths of obedience were taken to him, and he was invested with the full and absolute powers of a dictator. In conjunction with the national council, he issued proclamations enfranchising all the peasants, who had hitherto been serfs quite as much as their own class in Russia, and calling upon them to arm themselves as best they could, and to be ready to attack the enemies of their country, and of all national and personal liberty. The measure would have been a wise one, had it been adopted a century before. This had been prevented by the selfishness of the nobles; and now Poland was doomed because she had no PEOPLE—superstitious serfs denationalised by generations of bondage, and even ignorant of liberty; but no people in the sense in which that word is understood in free states. It was impossible at once to elevate the serfs of Poland to the dignity of citizens, or convert them into enthusiastic patriots. Many scarcely understood the advantages offered them; others truly thought that the benefit had been withheld until the hour when the noble and wealthy

classes found they could not do without them; and they doubted that the promises given in a season of danger, would be kept when the peril was past. For these reasons, the proclamation of enfranchisement produced but a very partial effect. Many of the serfs did indeed fight bravely in the conflict which succeeded, but these were mostly followers of the few patriot nobles. Many of the nobles, even in this hour of darkness, when the smitten nationality of Poland was staggering towards that steep precipice over which it was so soon to be hurled, were alarmed and irritated at the proclamation; for they had ever bitterly opposed even a gradual emancipation, and still looked upon their serfs in the same light in which the owners of plantations regard their negro slaves. With a haughty, grasping, and worthless nobility, a bitterly intolerant priesthood, a brutalised sea of serf-life in lieu of a people, and scarcely any middle class, Poland had not in it the elements of national life. It was in a state to invite aggression and spoliation, and it fell in accordance with inevitable natural laws; laws which must eventually produce the annihilation even of British nationality, if the same fatal causes were at work in this empire.

At first success smiled upon Kosciusko, and he obtained a victory at Raslowice with 4,000 Poles (two-thirds of whom were armed only with scythes), over an equal number of efficiently-armed and disciplined Russian troops. The battle lasted for five hours; 3,000 of the Russian troops were killed, and eleven of their cannon taken. The revolt of Warsaw followed; and the troops of Russia and Prussia, after two days and nights of murderous street-fighting, were expelled from that city. The struggle lasted for several months, and the whole country was one vast arena of butchery and bloodshed. The troops of Russia and Prussia were assisted by those of Austria, the emperor of which power had at first held aloof; yet, notwithstanding the terrible inequality of the contest, they appeared unable to crush the patriots, who fought with the fury of enthusiasm for their national independence. In September, the savage dwarf, Suwarrow, arrived with another Russian army, resolved on terminating the struggle by striking some appalling blow.

Kosciusko, on receiving intelligence of the approach of Suwarrow, resolved, if possible, to prevent his junction with the other Russian forces under General Fersen. With this object the patriot marched against the latter, and gave him battle, on the 10th of October, at Maciejovice. Kosciusko had about 21,000 men, undisciplined and half-armed. The Russians had about thrice that number of regular and practised troops, and a large park of artillery. The Poles, nevertheless, fought with great bravery, and the struggle was maintained for more than five hours; then their ammunition was exhausted, and the battle became a massacre. Nearly the whole of the Polish army was cut to pieces, or compelled to surrender. Kosciusko himself, after receiving three sabre wounds, and a thrust from a spear, dropped exhausted from his horse, exclaiming, *"Finis Poloniæ!"* For some time he lay in a state of insensibility amongst the dead. On his being recognised, some Cossacks, who had approached with the intention of plundering and stripping him, testified a rude respect and a generous feeling towards the fallen hero. Making a rude *brancard* with their lances, they placed him upon it, and carried him to General Fersen, who ordered his wounds to be attended to, and treated him and his comrades in misfortune with kindness. The empress Catherine acted less generously. As soon as Kosciusko was able to walk, he was removed to St. Petersburg, and there condemned, as a Lithuanian, and, consequently, presumed subject of Russia, to imprisonment for life—a harsh sentence, which was revoked on the death of the empress.

All who escaped from the battle-field, shut themselves, together with the remnant of the patriot forces, up in Praga, the eastern suburb of Warsaw—separated from that city by the Vistula, as the borough of Southwark is separated from the city of London by the Thames. Their numbers have been variously estimated from 15,000 to 26,000 men, and they had 104 pieces of heavy cannon, with which to defend the bridges of the Vistula and the approaches to the capital. The latter were not calculated to sustain a vigorous assault; and Suwarrow, on his arrival, surveyed them with a grim smile of anticipated triumph. His force consisted of 22,000 men and eighty-six field-pieces; but, as might have been anticipated from a general of so much decision, who held human life so cheaply, he resolved to assault at once, and carry the Polish lines at the point of the bayonet. "Let my children know," said Suwarrow to his officers (for "children" was the affectionate term which this strange man applied to his semi-savage troops), "that I

intend repeating Ismail here, and that without delay." The words were echoed from mouth to mouth, with ferocious glee, by the Russian soldiers, who understood the implied permission that, Praga once taken, they might give themselves up to a hideous revel of murder, lust, and plunder.

After cannonading the defences of Praga for two days, Suwarrow gave directions for the assault to take place at daybreak on the 3rd of November. As at Ismail, the signal was to be three cock-crows, given by the general himself, on which the attack was to commence, and no prisoners were to be made until all resistance had ceased. Notwithstanding the badly-armed state of the Polish troops, and their deficiency of ammunition, their trenches were not carried until after a desperate struggle of five hours' duration. Then the Russian infantry pressed forward, delivering close volleys of musketry, and sending an incessant storm of grape-shot from their cannon into the crowded suburb. Thus a road, running with blood, and strewed with mangled bodies, was made into its centre, towards which the attacking columns all converged. Suwarrow, impatient at the opposition, heightened the horror of the scene by ordering the wooden houses, of which Praga was for the most part built, to be set on fire. The result of these varied means of destruction was terrible indeed. It is estimated that 10,000 Polish soldiers, and no less than 12,000 citizens, of every age and sex, were shot, bayoneted, sabred, burnt or suffocated in the flames, or driven into, and drowned in, the Vistula. Happily, the end of the bridge over that river, which abutted upon Warsaw, broke down, and saved the city from the fate of Praga. But its unconditional surrender was inevitable, and followed in a few days. Suwarrow, on receiving the keys of the city from the principal magistrate, pressed them to his lips, and, with a glance towards that heaven whose edicts of mercy he had recently so terribly outraged, exclaimed, "I render thee thanks, Almighty God, that thou hast not exacted the same price for these keys as for the possession of Praga." The empress Catherine was so gratified with the successes of Suwarrow, that she made him a field-marshal, and gave him a staff of command, made of gold, with a wreath of jewels in the form of oak-leaves, the diamonds alone of which were valued at 60,000 roubles. To this she added the present of a large and valuable estate.

The following year (1795) witnessed the division of the remainder of Poland, between Russia, Prussia, and Austria; the last partition treaty being finally settled in October. By it Austria had Cracow, with the country between the Pilitza, the Vistula, and the Bug. Prussia had Warsaw, and the territory to the banks of the Niemen. All the rest—the lion's share—fell to Russia. Thus was Poland erased from the map of Europe, while England and France were passive spectators of a spoliation which, unjust as it was, affords room for many arguments of extenuation. The fate of the dismembered provinces differed according to the governments under which they fell. The Austrian yoke was the harshest; that of Prussia somewhat less so; but the advantages which the Polish subjects of this state enjoyed, were counterbalanced by a decided tendency to establish Germanism on the ruin of everything that was national. Russia's share of Poland was the best treated of the three: in it the national language was preserved in all official transactions, and an excellent system of public education introduced into the university of Vilna. Stanislaus Augustus, who had never been a king but in name, retired to the town of Grodno in Lithuania: he signed a formal abdication of a throne which really no longer existed. The three partitioning powers bestowed upon him a pension of 200,000 ducats, and also undertook to pay his debts. He afterwards removed to St. Petersburg, where he died in the month of February, 1798, about fifteen months after the death of the empress, of whom he had been the lover, the dupe, and the tool.

Catherine's treasury was too much exhausted by her war with the Ottomans to enable her to join in that for the suppression of the French revolution. She, however, induced her late enemy, Gustavus III. of Sweden, to do so, and subsidised him for that purpose. But the assassination of that monarch, on the 16th of March, 1792, arrested his project. French emigrants of distinction were now continually arriving at the court of St. Petersburg, where they applied for military aid, which, though the empress did not refuse, she considered it imprudent to grant. Indeed, though she gave a welcome reception to all the French who protested their attachment to their old form of government, she severely proscribed the rest, from an apprehension that the principles on which the revolution was effected

might find their way into Russia, and there occasion some combustion subversive of the throne. She even compelled all the French in her dominions to take an oath of allegiance to the Bourbon claimant of the crown of France, and to swear an eternal hatred to the republic. Those who refused to do so were expelled from the empire. But Catherine was far from being the only sovereign whom terror and astonishment at the execution of the unhappy Louis XVI., in 1793, drove to acts of intolerance and ungenerous severity.

Turning again towards England as she receded from France, Catherine, in the March of 1793, concluded a new treaty of commerce with this country; that which had expired in 1786 not having been renewed. At the same time she published a foolish edict, prohibiting the introduction of French merchandise into her dominions. Giving rein to her increasing animosity of revolutionary principles, she even promised to send a Russian squadron to co-operate with the English fleet, and she gave commands for the acceleration of the armament at Cronstadt. The progress of the republican armies of France, and the meteor-like successes of Napoleon, gave Catherine considerable anxiety, and Suwarrow constantly entreated her to send him against "the French atheists," as the merciless little monster called them. "That youngster goes too fast," he frequently observed, "and should be stopped at once. That would not be difficult for me and my children, if our lady-mother would give us leave."

On the death of Gustavus, he was succeeded by his eccentric and weak-minded son, then but in his fourteenth year. The youth of this arrogant boy, whose capricious humour eventually cost him his crown, rendered a regency necessary, and the affairs of government were placed in the hands of his uncle, the Duke of Sudermania. The latter arranged a marriage between the young king of Sweden and a princess of the house of Mecklenburg, apparently with the motive of avoiding an alliance with the imperial family of Russia. At this, Catherine expressed displeasure, and stated, that the late monarch had promised her the hand of his son for one of her grandchildren, the grand-duchesses. Some negotiations and intrigues were terminated by the acceptance of an invitation by the young king and the regent to St. Petersburg. They arrived in the August of 1796. Catherine received them with great magnificence; and Gustavus Adolphus, captivated by the charms of the Grand-duchess Alexandra, consented to abandon his engagement with the Princess of Mecklenburg. Proposals were made and accepted, and the day was fixed for the ceremony of the espousals. But, on the contract being presented to the king for his signature, he refused to put his name to it, unless the princess previously changed her religion—a circumstance which, he said, the fundamental laws of Sweden obliged him to require. Neither solicitation nor flattery could induce him to forego a demand which, urged at such a moment, had the appearance of a studied insult. The empress then rose with dignity, and retired from the apartment, followed by Paul, the grand-duchess, and their children. So great was the impression made upon her by this indignity, that, on reaching her own apartment, it is said, she had a slight fit, the precursor of that which, so short a time afterwards, terminated fatally. The following day, Gustavus Adolphus and his retinue quitted St. Petersburg.

Even to the close of her life, Catherine continued to enlarge her dominions. In this year (1796) she contrived, by political intrigues, to annex the duchy of Courland to the Russian empire.* Courland, like Poland, may be said to have had no people: they were no better than serfs; and the land was all in the possession of a selfish, petty, and domineering nobility. Their sovereign was Duke Peter Biren, son of the infamous man who, as the favourite of the weak empress Anna, so long tyrannised over Russia. Peter Biren was avaricious, litigious, and much disliked; and his people, availing themselves of his absence, made a formal surrender of their allegiance to the empress of Russia. This was accepted; and certainly the Courlanders lost nothing except a worthless prince. The acquisition of Courland was of great importance to Russia. It produces both corn and timber in abundance, and has several ports advantageously situated on the Baltic. That of Vindau, which is never obstructed by ice, might, by a little improvement, be

* Courland, situated between the 56th and 58th degree of north latitude, is divided into three parts—Courland Proper, Semigallia, and the circle of Pilten. It is bounded by Livonia, Lithuania, Samogitia, and the Baltic. The Dwina parts it from Livonia on the north, and waters its frontiers for a space of more than sixty leagues. A glance at a map of Russia will show its immense importance to that empire.

rendered capable of containing a hundred ships of the line.

Age did not deprive the empress of her almost ceaseless activity. She now resolved to turn her arms against Persia, and, under pretence of defending Lolf-Ali-Khan, gain possession of those provinces of Persia which border on the Caspian. She endeavoured to draw in the Turkish government to second her design; but the divan wisely remained immovable. A Russian army, under the command of Valerian Zuboff (a brother of the favourite), advanced into Daghestan, and captured Derbent, but afterwards experienced a check at the hands of the Persians. Catherine sent reinforcements to Zuboff, and felt her usual confidence that success would soon attend him. Catherine, indeed, looked forward to a still greater triumph than any success over a crumbling state like Persia could afford. She had just concluded a treaty with England and with Austria, which was to secure to her the assistance of those two powers against Turkey; while she undertook to furnish them with an army of 65,000 men to act against the French republic. Thus she trusted that the last great act of her life would be the most gigantic and brilliant; no less, indeed, than the accomplishment of her cherished scheme of driving the Ottomans out of Europe, and placing one of the imperial family on the throne of Constantinople. But to have realised all her ambitious projects, this extraordinary woman must have been immortal; for she had also addressed herself to humble the power and haughty conduct of the French republic.* Death, however, is a revolutionist that has no respect even for the most powerful and illustrious of monarchs.

The empress had been unwell for several days; but, on the evening of the 15th of November, she was in unusual spirits, amused herself with her buffoon, and rallied him upon the dread he was known to entertain of death. However, she retired to her chamber rather earlier than usual, saying, that too much laughing had given her slight symptoms of colic. The following morning she rose in good spirits, and took her usual breakfast. Afterwards she went to her closet, where she staid an unusual time. The women who waited upon her at length became alarmed, and, opening the door, they found their mistress in a state of insensibility. Medical aid was immediately sent for, but three-quarters of an hour elapsed before the arrival of her chief physician, Dr. Robertson. That gentleman, considering her to be suffering from the effect of a fit of apoplexy, caused her to be twice bled. The operation restored her to partial consciousness, but she never spoke again. In this state of torpor she remained until the following evening, when, between nine and ten o'clock, she expired so gently, that the physicians were not aware of the moment of her death. Paul, who was absent from St. Petersburg, did not arrive until the evening when she died; the empress still breathed, but she did not appear conscious of his presence. It has been surmised—but, we think, without sufficient authority—that, had she been conscious in her last moments, she would have disinherited Paul, and bequeathed the throne to one of her grandchildren. The empress died in the sixty-seventh year of her age, and the thirty-fourth of her reign.

Catherine had been handsome in her youth, but she got corpulent as she advanced in years, though she preserved an air of gracefulness, mingled with dignity, to the latest period of her life. In person she was not above the middle size; but as she was well-proportioned, and carried her head high, she had the appearance of being tall.

* It was the policy of the empress, who detested the French republic without loving the Austrians, to let both parties exhaust themselves; determined, however, whatever might be the fate of their arms, to prevent either from acquiring an uncontrolled sway in Germany. Orders were issued for a levy of 150,000 troops, destined to act, in some shape or other, for the relief of the emperor of Germany. It has been questioned, whether it would not have been wiser policy in Catherine to have moved for the assistance of the confederates sooner? She, perhaps, entertained a persuasion, that the allies would stand firm together, and make a more successful opposition to the republic. She was, no doubt, well enough pleased to see almost all the other powers of Europe weaken themselves by war; whilst, at the same time, it must have been her intention, as has since appeared, to interfere more and more in the general conflict, in proportion as the party she detested gained ground on a sovereign prince; who, though a neighbour and an ancient enemy, yet possessed an hereditary throne, and had ceased to be a formidable rival. It is to be considered farther, that had she moved sooner, the Turks, on the other side, instigated by French intrigues, might have moved also. The empress waited, too, until she should secure peace, on the most formidable frontier, by a marriage between her grand-daughter and the young king of Sweden; an object which she had much at heart, though it was found impossible to accomplish it without a concession to that headstrong boy, inconsistent with the dignity of the Russian empire.

She had a bold, expansive forehead, an aquiline nose, an agreeably-shaped mouth, and a chin which, though too long for beauty, was not displeasing. She had a profusion of auburn hair, in which she took great delight; and her eye-brows were dark and thick. Her eyes were generally said to be blue, though some observers have affirmed them to be brown, and others gray. They sometimes expressed a feeling of gentleness, though that was frequently displaced by one of pride and haughtiness. Though her face was by no means deficient in expression, yet she had such a command over her features, that no one could discover, from gazing upon them, what was passing in her mind.

The empress, on all public occasions, dressed with great magnificence, and wore a profusion of jewellery, especially diamonds, of which gems she was particularly fond, and possessed a prodigious number. In general, she usually dressed after the ancient Russian fashion, for the most part wearing green, out of compliment to the nation. Her hair, slightly powdered, flowed down upon her shoulders, and was topped with a small cap, covered with diamonds. She wore rouge, after the fashion of the ladies of the French court; and in the latter part of her life she put on a great deal, in order to prevent the ravages of time from being visible on her face. She was always strictly temperate with respect to the pleasures of the table, and that at a court where a little deviation would not have given occasion to much scandal. A slight breakfast, a moderate dinner, and two or three glasses of wine, constituted her usual diet. Supper she never indulged in.

The personal vices of Catherine have not been able to obscure her glory as a ruler, or do more than faintly sully her greatness. A modern historian, who certainly will not be suspected of any undue lenity towards crime or immorality, has observed of her, that "few sovereigns will occupy a more conspicuous place in the page of history, or have left in their conduct on the throne a more exalted reputation."* After the death of Frederic the Great, Catherine remained the most illustrious among the crowned heads of Europe, and even towered amongst them as an empress among petty princes. She had the ambition to aim at any object, however lofty; the courage to attempt its accomplishment, however difficult or dangerous; and the perseverance and genius usually to succeed in it. She devoted herself to the civilisation of her subjects, by means more gentle and gradual than those employed by Peter the Great, and, consequently, more effectual. It has been said that she effected much real, and more seeming good; and, doubtless, many of her actions had a meretricious glare about them, which, when it had attracted popularity, or created a sensation, proved of no further value. Catherine loved to dazzle her people with the gorgeous display of that vast power which she knew so well how to grasp and direct. But she was not content to stay at this point; and her mind was frequently directed to raising her subjects in the social scale, and to conferring upon them substantial benefits. She did much for education, much towards a better administration of the law, and much for the advancement of art and science. She even attempted to emancipate the serfs of the empire; and though prevented, by the interests or prejudices of her nobles, from accomplishing this great measure, she succeeded in ameliorating their condition. She has been rightly called the great regenerator of Russia after Peter the Great, and she had the good fortune to labour under more favourable circumstances.

Attached to literature, Catherine was herself an authoress. It has been urged, that her works could scarcely be of much value, or they would be more generally sought for than is now the case. The argument is a fallacious one; for distinction is not always the reward of merit; and in the great arena of letters and of genius, both prince and peasant stand almost upon level ground. We have had many royal authors in England; but their works are seldom read now, except by curious scholars and antiquarians. Every person in this country, of any pretension to education, is more or less familiar with the writings of Shakspere; but the pedantic bombast of James I. appeals to posterity in vain. The works of Catherine, moreover, with the exception of the famous *Instructions*, were of an unambitious kind. They chiefly consisted of dramatic pieces, written in the Russian language; and tales, penned with the object of instilling moral principles into her grandchildren. Her published letters to Voltaire are considered to exhibit more grace and playfulness of style than those which that distinguished philosopher addressed to her.

* Alison.—*History of Europe.*

We do not infer that her ability in this direction was great, but we conclude that it was more than respectable. Had she been less illustrious as an empress, she might have been more regarded as an authoress. As it was, the gorgeous and glowing brilliance of her jewelled sceptre eclipsed the feeble radiance of her pen. Her detractors have affirmed, that she merely coquetted with literature, and that it made no advances during her reign. That she gathered a reflected glory from the association of her name with those of the gifted amongst men, and that to do so constituted one of the motives which induced her to shower gifts and smiles upon them, is no dishonour to her. We are scarcely justified in expecting a higher or more critical motive than this from any monarch whose time was largely occupied with the highly responsible duties inseparable from the active administration of the affairs of an extensive empire. The remainder of the sneer is a falsehood, designed to utter that bitterness which some writers lose no opportunity of expressing towards Catherine personally, and towards the Russian policy and people generally. Russian literature scarcely existed prior to her time, during which it made as much progress as could reasonably be anticipated in a nation not of a studious or literary tone of mind, and in the higher ranks of which, military accomplishments were those mostly, if not almost entirely, regarded.

Of Catherine's generosity to literary men, we have recorded several instances. She was a great promoter of the arts, both useful and elegant; even of music, which, personally, she almost disliked, being sometimes unable to bear the noise of a large orchestra. Great numbers of valuable pictures were purchased by her, including the Houghton collection from England—a circumstance which, while it added to her glory, disgraced this nation in the estimation of foreigners. She was, indeed, in every respect generous, even to a lavish prodigality—at once a grace and a fault; but of which all that is reprehensible may be easily forgiven in a great potentate; the more so in her case, as she doubled, if she did not even treble, the revenues of the empire.* Nor, while speaking of her virtues, must we forget that she was magnanimous, and could readily forgive. During a portion of her reign, Russia was the only country in Europe in which French newspapers were not prohibited; but the *Moniteur* having taken great liberties with her name, and spoken with unflattering plainness of the Grand-duke Paul, she desired it should not be circulated in future until it had been submitted to her inspection. Shortly afterwards, she found a paragraph in it, which described her as the Messalina of the North; yet, instead of being offended, she remarked, that as it concerned only herself, it might be distributed. Certainly this magnanimity

* "Both Anna and Elizabeth prosecuted expensive wars, and executed many costly public works, without bequeathing to their successors any national debt. The outlay of Catherine on wars, colonies, charitable, industrial and educational foundations, besides the lavish pomp and extravagant splendour of her court, could not have been sustained without a still greater levy on the country It is true that she remitted many duties and taxes; that she abolished some of the ancient farms, and even a few of the rich monopolies that had been enjoyed by the crown; but, on the other hand, her empire obtained vast accessions of wealth during her reign. The channels through which they were procured may be thus enumerated: annexations by conquest; the extension and encouragement of commerce; the reduction of the property of the church, the bishops, and the monasteries, by which the crown obtained a great number of boors, large tracts of forests and productive lands, and several valuable mines and works, that had previously been rendered lucrative by the enterprise of the clergy; by the introduction of the *obrok;* by bestowing greater care and more vigilant superintendence upon the mines; the establishment of new duties; the diffusion of the poll-tax over provinces that had hitherto been exempt from its operation; and by a variety of reforms in the collection of the revenue. In this respect, Catherine may be regarded as the first sovereign of Russia who brought to the fiscal department the advantages of decision, system, and activity. The Gotha calendar of 1790, estimates the annual revenue at £35,000,000; an amount that has been adopted, from that work, in several subsequent statistical publications. Mr. Coxe, whose general accuracy entitles his opinions to be received with respect, calculates the net income at nearly £42,000,000. At the same time, he expresses some surprise how the empress could have maintained, by resources comparatively so limited, the munificence and pageantries of her court. In the last edition of Lévesqués history, the annual revenue is estimated at £47,114,084, by the continuators of that work. Tooke exhibits an elaborate view of the various items of finance, and sums up the whole at upwards of £46,000,000; expressing, at the same time, his belief that it amounted to still more; and stating that, by another calculation which he had made, he brought the total to £48,000,000. From these contradictory speculations, it will be evident that the means of furnishing an authentic table of the revenues of Russia do not exist."—Lardner's *Cyclopædia.* We have no recent return of the revenue of Russia, but it is now estimated at about 400,000,000 silver roubles; 45,300,097 of which are derived from the domains of the crown. The debt was, in 1853 788,573,112 silver roubles.

was not invariable: she was at times guilty of acts of tyranny; and, on one occasion, banished an accomplished Russian gentleman to Siberia, because he had written a pamphlet against despotism. This, however, was a matter which excited but little surprise in Russia, and was not considered a stretch of imperial power. Catherine's motive was, doubtless, entirely passionless and political, for she was above most of the prejudices of her time and nation. She always encouraged liberal institutions, until the wild extravagances and revolting murders of the revolutionists in Paris, created in her that natural alarm which was felt, more or less, by all the princes and nobles of Europe. Of Catherine's comprehensive toleration in matters of religion we have already spoken.

The vices of the empress Catherine were many. Though far from being cruel (for she was, in most respects, a mild and forgiving sovereign), yet she was resolute to crush her enemies, or those who might become so. All who had the misfortune to stand between her and the imperial sceptre, perished. The shades of Peter and of Ivan will ever rest like dark and accusing visions over her tomb. In neither case can the act of murder be traced to her command; but she alone profited by their deaths. It has been urged, in extenuation (though, in this instance, the plea is not a very potent one), that she consented to the assassination of her husband on the principle of self-defence. However it may be viewed, the deed was a shocking, and, if performed at her command, an infamous one. A profound dissimulation must be ranked among her vices, though she used it rather in political transactions than in social intercourse; indeed, in the latter, she was often most open, unrestrained, and genial. Yet she was a perfect mistress of artifice when she desired to employ it.

Catherine's licentiousness was gigantic and unbounded; and were we writing merely as moralists, could not be too strongly condemned. But on the broader and more worldly view the historian is compelled to take, it must be remembered, that her vices in this respect were personal, and did not necessarily affect the condition or morals of her subjects. Whether they actually did so or not, has been both affirmed and denied. Some writers have accused her of setting an example of debauchery which was almost universally followed. This is scarcely true. The Russian court was extremely dissolute when Catherine ascended the throne; and though some ladies of rank probably imitated the empress in keeping favourites and lovers, yet, as we have shown, Catherine was offended by any display of immorality, or even want of decorous reserve in matters of gallantry, and appeared desirous, by an external austerity of manners, to make up, in some degree, for the depravity of her private actions. Many scandalous stories are circulated respecting her and her confidants, but these are unquestionably gross exaggerations in some cases, and impure inventions in others. It has been well observed on this point, that "it is an invidious thing to pry, with too much curiosity, into the frailties of such a character. The severest critic has not been able to charge her with anything unnatural, or, in her predicament and situation, not easily to be forgiven."*

We will conclude this estimate of an extraordinary character with a few lines, which are not only happily expressed, but probably possess more of authority than our own words. "No personage in our own times has attracted a greater share of censure and eulogium than Catherine; and no woman, in any age, ever exhibited more of the masculine greatness of one sex, and the feminine weakness of another. As a woman, she appears, at times, the slave of passions, and the puppet of her courtiers; but while we behold her diminishing, in this point of view, into insignificance, we look again, and contemplate the *sovereign*, towering like an immense colossus; and with one foot placed on Cherson, and another at Kamtschatka, waving her iron sceptre over the subject nations, and regulating the destiny of a large portion of mankind.

"The frailties, however, of the woman will soon be forgotten, while the glory that encircles the brows of the legislatrix and conqueror, will long continue to dazzle the eyes of an admiring world. The present age, however, shudders at the untimely fate of Peter and Ivan; and posterity will not easily pardon the degradation of Stanislaus, the partition of Poland, and the massacres of Ismail and of Praga."†

* *Annual Register* for 1796.

† *Encyclopædia Britannica.* By the *present* age the writer means the early part of this century, when the remembrance of the events to which he alludes was still strong in the public mind of Europe. More gigantic incidents have since rather obscured them.

CHAPTER XLI.

DOUBTFUL PARENTAGE OF PAUL; HIS PERSONAL APPEARANCE; HIS ACCESSION; HE INSULTS THE MEMORY OF CATHERINE, AND CAUSES THE COFFIN OF PETER III. TO BE EXHUMED AND CROWNED; PAUL ANNOUNCES HIS INTENTION OF PURSUING A PACIFIC POLICY; HE RELEASES KOSCIUSKO AND OTHER POLISH PATRIOTS FROM CONFINEMENT; HE RESTRAINS THE DANGEROUS POWER OF THE GUARDS; HIS DESPOTIC CONDUCT TOWARDS THE OFFICERS WHO RETIRE; HIS ECCENTRICITIES AND PETTY CRUELTY; HE DISMISSES THE FAVOURITES OF THE LATE EMPRESS; PROHIBITS THE USE OF ROUND HATS, AND PUNISHES THE WEARERS OF THEM; FORBIDS THE HARNESSING OF HORSES IN THE RUSSIAN FASHION; REVIVES THE BARBAROUS CUSTOM OF PROSTRATION BEFORE THE EMPEROR; PAUL'S IRRITATING INTERFERENCE WITH THE ARMY AND WITH THE TRIBUNALS OF THE EMPIRE; HIS CENSORSHIP OF THE PRESS, AND FINANCIAL EXPERIMENTS.

PAUL, when he ascended the throne, was forty-two years of age. Catherine, who never exhibited towards him the affection of a parent, kept him during her life under restraint, and in comparative retirement. This, doubtless, arose chiefly from a feeling of jealousy on her part towards one who was to succeed, and who might, by the disaffected, be made an instrument to dethrone her. Such an emotion is common amongst monarchs, and was entertained by each of the first three of our four Georges. But this was not the only cause of Catherine's dislike for Paul. That he was the son of Peter III. is highly questionable; and some doubt exists as to whether he was even the son of Catherine. We have alluded to the natural disqualification under which Peter suffered; and this, joined to the facts that Paul was not born until between eight and nine years after the marriage of his presumed parents, nor until after it was notorious that Catherine had violated the fidelity of the marriage vow; also that Peter, though he indulged in many amours, had no son by any other woman—gives rise to more than a suspicion (indeed, a strong probability), that Paul was not, on his father's side, a scion of the imperial family.

The supposition that Paul was not the son of Catherine, though not without an appearance of probability, rests on a more unsure ground; upon conjectures, and not upon evidence. It was suspected by many persons, that he was one of the children of the empress Elizabeth, and of her secret husband Rasumoffski, or some other favourite less known to the world. This belief received some colouring from the mean appearance and Tartar cast of the features and figure of Paul. Others, again, have represented him as a Finnish foundling, adopted by Catherine from political motives, and, therefore, in no way connected by blood with the imperial family: we are not, however, aware that this suggestion rests upon any authority of a kind to entitle it to credence. Neither can we place much reliance upon the general law of the hereditary transmission of appearance or character from parent to child, simply because it is general and not universal, but admits, indeed, of constant exceptions. If we could, Paul's claim to be the son of Catherine must not be admitted. Diminutive in his figure, extremely ugly in his features, having a pug or turned-up nose, and a smirking air which struggled strongly with an expression of a sense of self-importance and arrogance, so great as to amount to disease—narrow in his capacity, and petty in his views and habits, he was as wide a contrast to the handsome, strong-minded, and commanding Catherine, as it was possible to conceive. But as this matter is rather speculative than historical, we will not pursue it further than to add, that the empress's strong dislike of Paul, has been regarded by some as tending to prove that he was her child by her husband Peter, and that the natural repugnance she bore to the father, descended to his offspring. For reasons above stated, we place no dependence on this conjecture.

Catherine had frequently expressed an unfavourable opinion of Paul's judgment and disposition; and, indeed (as the reader will presently see), she must have been strangely partial had this not been the case. We have already referred to the common belief, that she would have disinherited him had she been able to do so. Certainly, her conduct towards him had made his temper even more sour and splenetic than it was by nature. Though the empress was prodigally liberal to all her favourites, and to those who deserved reward at the hands of the state, yet she restrained Paul to an allowance less than the income of many an untitled English gentleman. She also ex-

cluded the grand-duke from all participation in public affairs, kept him at a distance from the court, and surrounded him with spies. She even took away his children from the time of their birth, and had them brought up beneath her care, as if she considered it improper to trust their education to a person of such mean capacities as their father. Sometimes the grand-duke and the grand-duchess were not permitted to see their children for months; and it appeared as if the empress desired to alienate their affections from their parents. We cannot be surprised that such conduct, prolonged over a period of years, made Paul reciprocate the dislike with which he was regarded by his mother. Hints were several times given to him, that a strong party only wanted his sanction to bring about a revolution which should dethrone the empress, and place the imperial sceptre in his hand. Paul did not encourage them; but it is presumed (and we think justly so), not from a respect for the empress, but from a dread of the danger of failure.

Immediately upon the death of Catherine, Paul was recognised as emperor. With a politic and dramatic flattery, his wife was the first who paid him homage as sovereign, though he had never treated her with that affection which a woman naturally expects at the hands of her husband. She and her children knelt at his feet and saluted him as their emperor directly it was known that the great Catherine had breathed her last. Paul raised and embraced them. On the partner of his comparative obscurity he shortly afterwards bestowed a princely revenue; while to each of his sons he gave the command of a regiment of the guards, and appointed the eldest to the important post of military governor of St. Petersburg. Less than a century before, Peter the Great denounced the practice of conferring high places upon inexperienced individuals, and set the example, in his own person, of rendering service and merits the only passports to offices of responsibility; but Paul fell at once into those vices of old governments from which Peter sternly held aloof, and Catherine but seldom committed.

Paul experienced no opposition in ascending the throne. After his wife had rendered him homage, the chief officers of the different departments, and of the army, did the same, and took the customary oath of allegiance. This example was followed by the soldiery; and the next day Paul was everywhere proclaimed emperor, and his eldest son (Alexander) czarevitch, or heir-presumptive to the throne.

For a short time, the new monarch suppressed the cynical and capricious bitterness which years of restraint, acting upon a mean nature, had engendered. He behaved with apparent cordiality to Plato Zuboff, the lover and one of the chief ministers of the late empress. He retained the favourite in his offices, and even thanked him for the attachment he had shown to his mother. The other ministers, and the heads of the different departments, were also confirmed in their posts, and some of them were even promoted. This was done to secure them to his interests; but he acted in a very different manner as soon as he knew himself strong enough to do without them. For some years he had drawn up a number of regulations with respect to the future direction of the succession to the crown. These he now produced, and caused to be invested with the power of law.

Paul's next step was one which appears to have given to his perverse and splenetic nature a feeling of intense satisfaction. He resorted to every means possible, without doing violence to public decorum, of casting contempt upon the grave of Catherine, and of bringing to remembrance the darkest blot upon her character. Every circumstance connected with her funeral he took under his own immediate direction. The bones of his assumed father he caused to be removed from the obscure grave in the convent of Alexander Nevski, where they had lain for nearly five-and-thirty years. When the coffin was opened, Paul wept over the remains of the murdered emperor; and, perhaps, on this solemn occasion, there might have been something of sincerity in the tears he shed over the bones of one whom he, at least, doubtless believed to be the immediate author of his being. After this display of emotion, he caused the coffin to be conveyed to the palace with extraordinary pomp, and placed in a temple constructed for the purpose, side by side with the corpse of Catherine, which was then lying in state. Then the coffin containing the dust of Peter was solemnly crowned; for the living emperor had been hurled from the throne before he had undergone that ceremony. As if in sardonic mockery of the terms on which Catherine and Peter had lived together during the period of

their unhappy marriage, their coffins were linked together with a kind of true-love knot, bearing, in the Russian language, the inscription—"Divided in life; united in death." Enormous crowds of people were admitted to behold this grand and semi-theatrical scene, and to kiss the coffin of Peter and the cold hand of Catherine. She had been badly embalmed; it has even been said purposely so, by order of Paul. Certainly, the result was such as might have gratified a petty malignity. The empress was so disfigured, as not only to be scarcely recognised by those who had only seen her in public, but her remains had become so far subject to corruption, as to inspire disgust, if not horror, in those who approached them. Her face was swelled, much discoloured, and not in a state fit for public exhibition, while her hands were blue and yellow.

Paul thus punished the dead empress for any share she might have had in his reputed father's death. The revenge he took upon the actual murderers was remarkably eccentric. Count Alexis Orloff and Prince Baratinski were immediately, on the death of Catherine, commanded to repair to St. Petersburg, and assist in the funeral by bearing the pall which covered the remains of the emperor Peter. For three hours they were compelled to remain, one on each side of the coffin, in the presence of the assembled court. During this period the countenance of the iron-nerved Orloff exhibited signs of the mental agony he endured; but it is probable that this arose as much from fear as from remorse, as the regicide doubtless anticipated that this would be but the beginning of his punishment. He, however, bore up during the ceremony, and was then dismissed with a *permission* to travel abroad. This he immediately availed himself of, and left St. Petersburg for Germany, from which he did not return until after the death of Paul. Prince Baratinski, whose nerves were not so strong, nor his sensibility so blunt, as that of the coarse, large-limbed Orloff, suffered intensely during the funeral ceremony of the unfortunate monarch whom, five-and-thirty years ago, he had assisted to murder. There must, indeed, have been something strangely terrible to a guilty conscience, in the scene in which he was compelled to be a principal actor. The black hangings, the sombre plumes, the subdued and spectral-looking light of the tapers; the almost painful silence, broken only occasionally by the wailing chant of a dirge for the dead; the oppressiveness of the air which such grim, charnel-house pageantry seems to produce on the awed spectator; and, above all, the presence of the mouldering bones of the wretched victim, who seemed as if he had risen from his obscure grave to point out his murderers to public execration—must have fallen, cold and sickening, almost like a sentence of death, upon those scared assassins. Baratinski fainted under the infliction of this wild punishment, and was only enabled to remain in his position during the ceremony, by the frequent application of volatile salts and other stimulants. He was not subjected to any other punishment further than what was contained in the information that his presence at court was no longer necessary.

The Princess Daschkaw was not forgotten by the Emperor Paul. She was commanded to retire to her estate at Novgorod, "and reflect on the events of 1762." As the village which was assigned her for a residence in her exile, was only a collection of cabins, she suffered considerable hardship until her friends procured her partial pardon, and permission to live at Serpukh, in the neighbourhood of Moscow, where she resided till her death on the 4th of January, 1810. It would have been more politic had Paul appeared to have forgotten the past; for these proceedings excited more surprise than sympathy at St. Petersburg. It was believed that his conduct was less a tribute of love to the memory of his father, than a reproach to the memory of his mother. He, however, sought out and loaded with favours several old officers who, in 1762, had opposed the revolution, and retained their allegiance to the unhappy Peter. One of them, the aged Baron Sternberg, who had long renounced all interest in the affairs of state, was made general-in-chief, and invested by the emperor with the riband of St. Alexander. "See," said he to the veteran, as he directed the attention of the latter to a picture of Peter III., which had been placed in the chamber, "I will have him to witness my gratitude towards his faithful friend."

An unfavourable opinion had been generally entertained of the character of the new emperor; but he at first adopted several measures which raised him in the popular estimation, and excited hopes that his mind was not so narrow, and his nature so morose, as had been commonly supposed. He issued a ukase, announcing a pacific policy—a cir-

cumstance which created great joy amongst the people; for the interests of Russia required repose after the great military disbursements of the preceding reign. This ukase also annulled a command given by Catherine, shortly before her death, to raise a body of recruits, in the proportion of one peasant in every hundred. Such an escape from the severities of military service, which is regarded with detestation by the great mass of the Russian peasants, was hailed by them with delight. It was also extremely acceptable to the nobility, whose interests would have suffered by the intended conscription.

Paul also went in person to release the unfortunate Polish patriot Kosciusko, who was in confinement at St. Petersburg, still suffering severely from the effect of his wounds, and the despondency resulting, in his imaginative nature, from the ruin of his country. Respect for his high personal character had caused the rigours of imprisonment to be dispensed with in his case. Thus, while his fellow-prisoners were closely confined in the dismal castle of Schlusselburg, or in the fortress of the capital, he was permitted to live at the house of Count Anhalt, in which apartments were assigned to him, together with an officer who acted as his guard. Paul appears to have been moved by the appearance of the unfortunate patriot, who, pale and attenuated, and with his head still wrapped in bandages, presented a pitiable appearance. He treated him kindly, and offered him an estate in Russia, with a number of peasants upon it. This was declined by Kosciusko, who accepted, instead, a sufficient sum of money to carry him to America, and make a provision there for the remainder of his life. All the companions of Kosciusko were likewise set at liberty. These generous acts made a great impression upon the people, who regarded them as evidences of a noble nature, which had previously been restrained from following out its natural bias. They were deceived; Paul was magnanimous for the moment, either from caprice, or a desire to act in all things contrary to the will of his illustrious predecessor.

For the first few days of his reign, Paul almost hourly announced some beneficial change, decreed some just punishment, or awarded some merited favour. The guards, who for several reigns had been the acting power in every revolution, and had bestowed the sceptre on those whom they pleased to favour, he resolved to place under strong restraint. They had been the military despots of the court; and it was through their influence that Peter III. was hurled from the throne. In fact, they had long held a position in the capital which kept the sovereign in a state of comparative fear Paul was well aware of the power they possessed, and of the difficulty of openly disbanding them. He therefore incorporated into the different regiments of guards the battalions that had served under him at Gatshina, promoting the officers two or three steps, and dispersing them so freely through the corps of St. Petersburg, as, by the force of numbers, to absorb the influence of the old companies. By this means the guards were unable to combine for the purpose of conspiracy; and many of their regiments were under the command of men who owed their appointment to the emperor. Another result followed. The old officers of the guard—most of whom were connected with the first families of the empire—were incensed at finding juniors of plebeian extraction, who, in some cases, had but a short time before served in the ranks, suddenly promoted over their heads. Irritated, also, by the novel and harassing discipline to which they were subjected, the wealthy threw up their commissions, and the remainder sullenly submitted to what they could not resist.

The emperor was annoyed at the withdrawal of several hundred officers into private life; and probably felt some alarm at the extent of the disaffection. His despotic character instantly showed itself. He went in person to the barracks, and, after making many encouraging promises to those who remained at their posts, he expressed his determination to exclude from all civil or military employment every officer who had retired, or who should do so. Not satisfied with this severity, he commanded all officers or subalterns who had left the guards, or might subsequently do so, to quit St. Petersburg at once. In the execution of this tyrannical decree, many persons were taken from their beds, and at once expelled from the city; some nearly destitute of clothing, and all of them without any provision for the future. Several of these unfortunate men perished from exposure to cold and want.

Paul speedily cast away the little popularity which he had gained by the early acts of his reign. He had no talent for deception, and apparently but little desire to practise it. He soon trampled beneath his feet the mask of generosity and a mild rule which, at his accession, he seemed disposed to wear. Irritable, peevish, and arrogant, he was restless and miserable himself, and therefore resolved that all around him should be so likewise. He has been frequently pronounced insane; and though we do not rest absolutely in that conclusion (for he appears to have understood the nature of his conduct sufficiently for him to be held accountable for it), yet it is difficult to consider him as the possessor of a brain untouched by disease. Masson* thus attempts to depict, or rather illustrate, his character:—"The sovereign whom Paul appears to have chosen for his model is Frederic William, father of the great king of Prussia. The same austerity of manners, and the same passion for soldiers, are found in the Russian autocrat. For the rest, I have drawn, I conceive, the character of Paul in relating his actions; if not, the task, I confess, is above my powers. It is well known, that nothing is so difficult to paint as an infant, whose physiognomy is as yet unsettled; and it is the same with the character of an eccentric man. The most favourable plea we can make for him is, that the light of the French revolution had touched his brain and disordered his intellect. It had already disturbed the much stronger head of his mother. It is said, that the people of Paris, crowding to see Paul (then a youth), cried, 'My God, how ugly he is!' and that he had the good sense to laugh at it. He has not improved since he has grown old, bald, and wrinkled. The empress appears, by his side, like one of those beautiful women who are painted with a little deformed blackamoor near them, as a contrast to their dignity and grace. The singularity which he affects in his dress, and the severity of his manners, add greatly to his deformity. Without excepting even the Calmucks and the Kirghises, Paul is the ugliest man in his extensive dominions; and he himself considers his countenance as so shocking, that he dares not impress it upon his coin.

"I shall here subjoin some traits, which will serve to describe Paul by his own actions; and will prove, that when grand-duke, he announced what we have seen of him since his accession.

"Near his castle of Pavlofski he had a terrace, from which he could see all the sentinels, whom he delighted to station about him wherever there was room for a sentry-box. On this covered terrace he spent a part of each day, and observed, with a spy-glass, all that was passing about him. Often he sent a servant to a sentinel, to order him to button or unbutton a little more of his coat, to keep his musket higher or lower, to walk at a greater or less distance from his sentry-box. Sometimes he would go himself nearly half a mile to give these important orders, and would cane the soldier, or put a rouble into his pocket, according as he was angry or pleased with him.

"Pavlofski was an open village; yet guards were appointed, who wrote down the names of all who entered or went out of it; and who were obliged to tell whence they came, whither they were going, or what they wanted. Every evening each house was visited, to learn if there were any strangers there. Every man who wore a round hat, or had a dog with him, was arrested. The village, which had been much frequented because of its beautiful situation, soon became a desert; many persons turned out of their way to avoid it: and when Paul was perceived at a distance, he was carefully shunned. These circumstances increased his displeasure and suspicions, and he often caused the persons who thus sought to avoid him to be pursued and questioned.

"One day he put all the officers of his battalion under arrest, because they had saluted him awkwardly in filing off after their drill; and he ordered them to be called out, for eight days successively, to file off and salute before him, sending them regularly back to the guard-house till they were able to perform according to his fancy.

"As he was one day exercising his regiment of cuirassiers, the horse of an officer threw him. Paul ran furiously towards him, crying, 'Get up, rascal!' 'Your highness, I cannot, I have broken my leg.' Paul spat upon him, and retired swearing.

"Passing, at another time, unexpectedly and secretly by one of his guard-houses, the officer, not knowing him, did not order out his men; upon which he instantly turned back, boxed the ears of the officer, and ordered him to be disarmed and put under arrest.

* *Mémoires Secretes*, &c. It will be observed, that this sketch was penned during the life of the emperor, and by one who had ample opportunities of observing him.

"One day, travelling from Tzarsko-selo to Gatshina, the road to which was in the middle of a marshy forest, he suddenly recollected something, and ordered the coachman to return. 'Presently, your highness,' said the coachman; 'the road is here too narrow.' 'How, rascal!' cried Paul, 'won't you turn immediately?' The coachman, instead of answering, hastened to a spot where it was possible to comply. Paul, however, called to his equerry, and ordered him to arrest and punish the rebellious coachman. The equerry assured him that he would turn in a moment. Paul flew into a passion with the equerry also. 'You are a pitiful scoundrel like himself,' said he. 'Let him overturn the carriage; let him break my neck; but let him obey me, and turn the instant I command him.' During this dispute the coachman succeeded in turning; but Paul had him chastised on the spot.

"Since his accession, one of his horses stumbled with him in one of the streets of St. Petersburg. He alighted immediately, held a sort of council with his attendants, and the horse was condemned to receive fifty lashes with a whip. Paul caused them to be given on the spot, before the populace, and himself counted the strokes, saying, 'There, sir, that is for having stumbled with the emperor.'"

The new czar had, immediately upon his accession, behaved with kindness to Plato Zuboff, and confirmed him in the various offices he held. Shortly afterwards Paul sealed up his papers, and dismissed him from the court with contemptuous abruptness. The corrupt conduct of the favourite deserved punishment; but the emperor, by his previous cordiality, had expressed an implied forgiveness of all that was past. For some time the springs of the Russian government had been chiefly in the hands of Zuboff, who perverted them for the purposes of self-interest. He promoted the war in Persia, with the double object of enriching himself by plundering the army, and conferring a lucrative command upon his brother. All offices of state he conferred upon his parasites, his favourites, or his family. His father he elevated to the office of a judge; and had the shameless audacity to turn the appointment to account by buying up all the old causes in the court, and then obtaining decisions in his own favour. In addition to this, he had exercised the most arrogant tyranny over the oldest generals and counsellors of the empire. Such a man deserved degradation and punishment; but Paul's conduct had, in fact, exonerated him. The dread of being charged with inconsistency, never curbed the acts or eccentricities of the emperor. Zuboff's secretaries were banished, the officers of his suite dispersed in different corps throughout the empire, and he himself commanded to quit Russia. This severity towards the favourite was not attributed to any desire on the part of the emperor to punish corruption, but to the implacable resentment with which he regarded every person who had been attached to his mother. Several other cases are recorded in which Paul flattered and caressed, on the first day of his reign, those whom, within a few weeks afterwards, he degraded or punished.

That, however, of the early acts of Paul's reign which most attracted attention, was the minute details of police and military discipline which he commanded to be observed, and devoted the greatest portion of his time to seeing carried out, even to the smallest particulars. With an unaccountable singularity, he prohibited the wearing of round hats in the streets of St. Petersburg, and directed the soldiers and the police to take them away from those who appeared in them, and to tear them in pieces in case of resistance being offered. Many tumultuous scenes followed this petty and irritating edict, especially before it was generally known. An English merchant travelling in a sledge was stopped, and his hat snatched off by a soldier. Imagining himself to be assailed by a robber, he leapt from his sledge, knocked the man down, and called the guard. They soon arrived on the spot—not to assist, but to overpower and bind him. As the merchant was being carried off to answer before the police for his assumed offence, he was fortunate enough to meet the carriage of the English minister; and he instantly claimed the protection of that gentleman. Sir Charles Whitworth complained to the emperor, and remonstrated in a very spirited manner. In consequence of this the merchant was set at liberty; and Paul modified his mandate, by publishing that strangers who were not in the emperor's service, or naturalised, were exempt from the prohibition. Persons who wore round hats were no longer subjected to the indignity of having them torn from their heads but they were taken before the police, that their country might be ascertained. If found to be Russians, they were compelled to enter the ranks as soldiers; and if Frenchmen, they were expelled from the empire as Jacobins. This might lead to the supposition that round hats were regarded as the badge of some political society, or as expressive of some offensive sentiment on the part of the wearer. Such was not the case. The prohibition arose solely from the fact, that Paul had for some years entertained a peculiar aversion to round hats, in the same way that certain individuals entertain unaccountable antipathies to some common or harmless object. This would have been a sufficient reason for his setting another fashion in the matter of hats, or prohibiting any one from appearing before him in one of the objectionable shape. But it in no way excused the peevish and petty tyranny—trivial as the whim of some ill-tempered school-boy—to which he gave way. There are few who will not sympathise with another Englishman in St. Petersburg; who, on his hat being taken from him by an officer of the police, folded his arms, and, surveying the official with a look of compassion, exclaimed, "Ah, friend! how I pity thee for being a Russian!" So earnest was Paul in this absurd matter, that he commanded the *chargé d'affaires* of the king of Sardinia to quit St. Petersburg within twenty-four hours, because he had ventured to indulge in some raillery about the proscription of round hats, and to say that such trifles had often been on the point of occasioning seditions in Italy.

Another of Paul's petty, silly, and vexatious regulations, was that which prohibited the harnessing of horses after the Russian mode, and commanded the German fashion to be adopted instead. With strange peremptoriness, only a fortnight was allowed for those who kept carriages or other vehicles, to provide themselves with the new harness that was requisite to enable them to comply with the imperial mandate. The police were ordered, on the expiration of that time, to cut the traces of every carriage they happened to find harnessed in the old fashion. As may be presumed, the harness-makers availed themselves of the occasion to charge enormous prices for their labour and their commodities. But the new regulations extended from the harness to the coachman, who were commanded to adopt the German style of dress, which was neither more convenient nor more elegant. Indeed, those of the *ishvoshtohki*, or coachmen, who could be induced to part with their beards and their kaftans, and tie a false tail to their hair, cut an extremely ridiculous figure. The majority, however, of these poor people obstinately adhered to their old costume. That commanded to be worn was assailed with ridicule; and Paul was at length compelled to soften his mandate into a request, that the people, if they desired to merit his favour, would dress in the German fashion.

In the more barbarous times of the empire, a slavish custom prevailed, according to which, every person, whether noble or serf, male or female, used, on the appearance of the czar, to alight from their coach or horse, and prostrate themselves in the snow or the mud before him. This base custom was abolished by Peter the Great, in whom it excited so much manly indignation, that he ordered every person to be caned who practised it, and not unfrequently administered the punishment himself. Paul, who had not the sense to see that such a humiliating and semi-idolatrous salutation, on the part of the ruled towards the ruler, was a dead, rotten vestige of the past, which could not be permanently revived, resolved to re-establish it in all its rigour. It is a strange reflection, that this miserable despot, deficient both in the intellect and fair personal proportions usually falling to the lot of the human race—seeming, by his dwarfish and disgusting appearance, and his malignant tricks, to bear a closer affinity to the monkey than the man, should yet be so strangely anxious to compel God's creatures to bow perpetually into the dust before him. Perhaps this morbid desire, that men should observe towards him the most humiliating external forms of reverence, arose from a strong consciousness of his own natural meanness and inability to command the respect of his fellowmen. The etiquette observed within the palace was rendered more servile than it had ever been before. Those who were permitted or required to kiss his hand were compelled to make the floor resound with the stroke of their knee as they knelt, and to let the sound of the kiss be plainly heard as an evidence of its genuineness. Foreigners, on visiting any of the palaces or imperial gardens during the absence of the emperor, were compelled to remain uncovered the same as if he was present. Paul thus arro-

gated, even to his residences, the ceremonials that are commonly observed only in the temples of religion. Any neglect of these trivial and offensive regulations was punished as if it had been a serious crime. A general officer, who passed on without his coachman's observing the emperor riding by on horseback, was immediately stopped and arrested. Prince Galitzin was also put under arrest by Paul himself, on account of his having kissed the hand of the imperial idiot in too negligent a manner.

Another of these early and contemptible regulations of Paul, was a command to all tradesmen to obliterate from the front of their shops the French word *magasin*, and substitute the Russian word *lavka*, or shop. The reason assigned for this frivolity was, that only the emperor could have magazines, and that it was the duty of tradesmen not to make use of lofty terms, but to make known their occupations in the plainest language. The real cause of this alteration was Paul's dread of French revolutionary principles, and his consequent aversion to everything derived from France. This feeling caused him to descend so far into absurdity, as to issue one ukase forbidding the academy from employing the word *revolution* when speaking of the course of the stars; and another, commanding the actors to use the word *permission*, instead of *liberty*, in the bills of the theatres. Many other new regulations were made, many of which contradicted or frustrated one another: thus, what was ordained one day, was often obliged to be modified or annulled the next.

These changes, with respect to civil affairs, were outdone by those which Paul introduced into the army. He had almost a mania for military meddling, and the assumption of the duties of the corporal and the army-tailor. It is generally admitted that many reforms were required in this direction; but, assuredly, Paul was not the man to effect them. He was altogether devoid of military talents, and merely loved to play with soldiers, and dress and drill them as children do dolls. The changes Paul effected were not improvements, and in no way promoted the efficiency of the troops. The dress of the Russian soldier was simple, convenient, and adapted to the severity of the climate. It consisted of two garments only; a red and green jacket, which was fastened by a girdle within the folds of the loose *chavari*, or red pantaloons, terminating in boots which were not only put on with ease, but, from their size, admitted of such additions underneath as protected the wearer from the inclemency of the atmosphere. Yet it was with the dress of the soldiers that Paul most delighted to interfere. He compelled them to adopt the military costume of Prussia, which was not only detested by the men as graceless and anti-national, but regarded as unsuited for them. The costume we have briefly described was thrown aside, and the whimsical, lacquey-like dress of the Prussian troops given to the soldiers instead. The men had to spend an hour every morning in plastering down their hair with powder and pomatum, or rather with grease and flour, which Paul ordered to be used instead as more economical; and in buttoning their tight black spatterdashes. The annoyance of the men amounted to irritation, the more so as these alterations were discountenanced by the most distinguished of their generals. When the brave and eccentric Suwarrow received orders to establish these novelties, together with little sticks as models for the soldiers' pigtails and side-curls, he expressed his contemptuous feelings in some doggerel lines, which are not destitute of wit. "Hair-powder," said the blunt soldier, "is not gunpowder; curls are not cannon; and tails are not bayonets." The sarcasm was repeated through the whole army, and reached the ears of Paul, who was so incensed that he dismissed Suwarrow from his command, and exiled him to his estates, where the eccentric veteran chiefly occupied himself in practising bell-ringing, hopping a long distance upon one leg, and similar odd pastimes, until the exigencies of the empire compelled Paul to restore to him his military honours.

The emperor commenced his new regulations from the very morning that he first grasped the imperial sceptre. The palace and its courtyards were at once thrown into the utmost confusion. It is said they had the appearance of having been taken by assault by foreign troops, as the men who mounted guard there, differed so much, in dress and style, from those who had done so the day before. Every morning the new emperor, before he would attend to any other business, devoted three or four hours to manœuvring his soldiers, and teaching them to mount guard after a fashion of his own, which, according to military authority, was as original as it was singular. His *wacht-parade* (guard-parade) he regarded as

a most important institution, and the central point of his military system. This he had tried, with what he believed to be success, when he was grand-duke, when he had no authority to consult but his own will, and no opinion to regard beyond the limited circle of his own staff. He believed that it would apply, with equal certainty in its results, to the imperial army; and that idea so engrossed his attention, that he almost abandoned all other objects in order to dedicate himself assiduously to this strange and fruitless design. So intent was he upon the morning exercise, that he would not permit any one to approach upon other business, of whatever importance, while he was thus engaged. In order to take away all excuse for disturbing him at this time, he established a sort of office on the stairs of the palace, in which all letters were deposited; Paul promising to read them in due time, and furnish the necessary answers. Every morning, no matter how intense the cold might be, he was to be seen in the courtyard of the palace. There, in a plain dark-green uniform, jack-boots, and a large hat, he exercised his guards, gave his orders, received reports, published his favours, rewards, and punishments; and there every officer had to be presented to him, as he stood, surrounded by his sons and aides-de-camp, stamping his heels on the pavement to keep himself warm, his bald head bare, his nose cocked up, one hand behind his back, and with the other raising and sinking his cane in due time, and crying "Raz, dva; raz dva" (one, two; one, two.) He prided himself in braving a cold of fifteen or twenty degrees of Reaumur without furs. After this, none of the officers dared any longer appear in pelisses; and the old generals, tormented with coughs, gout, and rheumatism, were obliged to form a circle round Paul, dressed like himself.

Though an advocate of the most servile, passive obedience, and regarding himself as the chief emblem in Europe of the autocratic principle, Paul delighted in constant and rapid changes in every department of the state. So frivolous were his motives in many instances, that it has been observed, for anything to have subsisted under the reign of his mother, was a sufficient reason why it should cease to exist under him. The changes which he commanded to be observed in the civil departments of the state, were even more capricious and unreasonable than those he had accomplished in social and military circles. The emperor was, in fact, influenced by a rage for alteration, which extended itself over every branch of the public service. All the provincial tribunals of the empire were remodelled, and their seats changed. These sudden movements produced great confusion and misery, for upwards of 20,000 persons, holding responsible appointments, were thrown out of employment.

The population of Russia had been divided into two classes—the nobles and the peasantry. The middle class was so inconsiderable, that it can scarcely be said to have existed. The reader will have seen that rank in that empire was rather a personal than an hereditary affair. The will of the sovereign could raise persons of the lowest origin to the dignity of nobility, as Peter the Great converted a peasant girl into an empress, and an itinerant pie-boy into a prince; and as Catherine II. had raised obscure officers to the highest rank which a subject, not of the imperial blood, could attain to. The path to nobility lay through a variety of channels. It was sometimes attained through military talents or civil service, but more frequently by corruption and favouritism. Paul abolished the former dignities, probably with a view to conciliate the old nobility. The result, however, was the creation of a middle order of society, possessed of wealth and the advantages of education. These were repulsed from the exclusive circle of the aristocracy, and thrown back upon the community below them. It has been well observed, that "if ever a revolution of a popular character were to take place in Russia, it would spring from the sympathies which were by this means generated between the middle class and the serfs; the former, in a spirit of retaliation, endeavouring to elevate the latter, and both combining against the nobility. But the overawing power of the throne, embodied in the absolute authority of the emperor, who may at any moment revoke or reconstruct, give or take away the rights of his subjects, renders the prospect of such a struggle extremely doubtful. Russia is, in fact, governed by ukases; and all orders in the country, as well as all its laws and institutes, exist solely by the breath of the supreme and irresponsible monarch.* The whole

* This state of things was materially strengthened by the absolute Paul during his brief reign, and was rigidly maintained by his sons Alexander and Nicholas. There was more freedom in Russia under

empire, throughout its most minute ramifications, may be regarded as the most perfect example of arbitrary government that has ever subsisted in the world. So comprehensive and searching has been its despotism, that even if political freedom were granted to the people, they would be incapable of turning it to advantage. They have been kept in such a state of vassalage that they are literally ignorant of the full meaning of liberty. They understand it to mean nothing more than exemption from labour, and permission to leave the glebe to which they are confined, and wander vagrantly, like loosened cattle, into other pastures. Domestic servitude has become second nature to them, and their notions of a happier mode of existence do not extend beyond a release from immediate oppression."

An instrument so dangerous to despotic governments as the press, was not likely to escape the restrictive and rigorous hand of Paul. He established a censorship of so inquisitorial and severe a kind, that it amounted almost to a prohibition of the printing-press. Only three were allowed to be used, and they were to be confined to printing the numerous ukases of the emperor, books for the church, and such works as should be approved of by the government and the chief ecclesiastical dignitaries. The importation of foreign catalogues was forbidden, that the people might not be made acquainted with the progress of literature and philosophy in other countries. Even the insipid and emasculate volumes that were permitted to be published, were obliged to have stamped on their title-page the fact that they had passed the censorship, and obtained the imperial permission to be circulated. Any person, also, who received a book or newspaper of any kind from abroad, was compelled to carry it immediately to the committee appointed to control the press. In almost any other country in Europe, such a tyrannous edict would have produced a revolution: but books are not even yet a national want in Russia; even the higher classes are not much given to literature, and the intellect of the people is slow and sluggish—indeed, almost latent, as far as thoughtfulness and intellectual culture is concerned.

Thus the severity of Paul's despotic measures with regard to the press, was not so severely felt as it is natural for Englishmen to suppose. The suffering and feeble negro does not feel, as a heavy burden, the chain to which long use has accustomed him. The Russian peasant who could not read, and the Russian gentleman who seldom cared to do so, did not feel very bitterly an oppression which would be so intolerable to Englishmen, that, amongst them, it could not be maintained a day.

The new emperor extended his oppressive regulations from books to education. He forbade all his subjects to send their children into Germany to be educated, assigning as a reason, that dangerous principles were inculcated in that country. All Russians studying at foreign universities were commanded to return home, on penalty of confiscation. At the same time, the appointment of all foreigners to judicial or ecclesiastical positions in Russia, was declared null and void.

But perhaps the most inquisitorial and offensive of all these despotic whims, was a command that all strangers in Russia should regularly attend at their respective places of worship, and rigidly perform all the rites of their religion. Roman catholics were required to attend the confessional, to take the sacrament of penance, and to prepare themselves for receiving the host at Easter. Any neglect in these matters rendered them liable to be punished as rebels; yet, at the same time, the priests were ordered only to give absolution to such as should merit it—a regulation which made the good-will of the priest necessary for the safety of the individual. The catholic church, which had been almost deserted, was now crowded. The priests belonging to it—French, Germans, Italians, and Poles—took their seats in the confessionals. box was placed before every confessional, and into it the presumed penitent was compelled to drop a card, containing his name, occupation, and address. Every evening these cards were taken to the emperor, who forgot the dignity of his exalted station in performing the petty and obnoxious duties of an agent of police. Every person, after

the sway of Catherine II. than there has ever been since. Under that enlightened ruler, the Russian empire bid fair to reach a degree of civilisation and popular culture which it is now vain to expect, unless another sovereign of her intellectual calibre and liberal sentiments succeeds to the sceptre of the north. In reflecting upon Russia as it was under the reign of Paul, and comparing it with the empire as ruled by Catherine, we seem to have relapsed into the barbaric past, rather than have gone forward into the future. Catherine was an absolute monarch her successors have been despots.

confession, received a card of absolution, which admitted him to the communion-table, and exempted him from further persecution. The priests soon carried on a profitable trade in these cards, which they readily sold to those who desired the protection conferred by them, yet objected to attending the confessional. With an ostentatious parade of charitable consideration, the sick were informed that they might require the confessor to attend them at home; and the poor, that the host should be carried to them gratis. It can scarcely excite surprise, that after such despotic and eccentric regulations as these, Paul should prohibit the wearing of pantaloons and lapelled waistcoats. These articles of raiment were placed in the same category with round hats, and equally excited the irritability of the moon-struck emperor. To such an extent did he carry his petty persecutions, that hotel-keepers and those who let lodgings were imperatively required to inform against every person entering their houses who wore the condemned pantaloons, hats, and waistcoats, or who did not attend church.

The long wars in which Russia was engaged during the reign of Catherine, together with the great improvements she effected, and her personal extravagance, had, notwithstanding the great increase of the revenue, produced certain pecuniary difficulties which exerted a very injurious influence on the circulation. To meet the heavy demands upon her, required greater means than could be safely obtained by taxation, in the existing state of the empire. Catherine, therefore, adopted the expedient of introducing paper money into circulation, and the Russian assignat came into existence. In Russia a singular cause operated in producing a diminution in the circulation of the precious metals. The serfs are not the legal possessors of their own persons, much less of any property they may be fortunate enough to accumulate. If they were known to possess property, they would in most cases soon be deprived of it by the cupidity of their lords,* or the unblushing extortion of some government official. The peasant, therefore, who had saved a little money, commonly buried it in some secret place, frequently concealing the circumstance even from his wife or children, lest they might betray or plunder him. Thus, when a serf was drawn for a soldier, sold by his master, or removed to some other locality, it frequently happened that the buried treasure was never heard of again. Even in Moscow and the large towns of the empire, the same custom was observed; and in this manner large sums were constantly withdrawn from the circulation. Gold was also sent out of Russia, in large quantities, during this reign, for the purpose of purchasing the services of spies in other countries, and to prosecute secret designs for objects of ulterior aggrandisement. Thus, in Poland, immense sums were lavished on the traitors who facilitated the slavery of their native land; in Moldavia, to win over the nobility; in Constantinople, to keep up a system of espionage; and in the Archipelago and other places, to promote an insurrection among the Greeks, and the subjects of the sultan in the Adriatic gulf.

When Catherine had recourse to assignats, she promised that she would not permit the issue of these notes to exceed in value the sum of 100,000,000 roubles, for which a bank, established for that purpose, was rendered responsible. For some time the empress kept her word, and the issue of assignats was in due proportion to the amount of specie in reserve. The convenience of the new paper money, and the confidence reposed in the empress, rendered it so popular, that the course of exchange rose, in time, to between two and five per cent. in its favour. Catherine, ignorant of the science of finance, supposed that this favourable state of affairs might be maintained, though the quantity of assignats in circulation was materially increased. Yielding to the temptation, she therefore violated the promise she had given, and issued assignats to the amount of 600,000,000 roubles, instead of 100,000,000, to which she had promised to limit herself. The result was, that the assignats fell

* The proprietor of the soil seldom hesitates to seize, by some fraudulent pretext, the savings of the peasant, when he discovers them. The following painful example of this kind of oppression is related in Clarke's *Travels in Russia*:—"A peasant, in the village of Selo Molodi, near Moscow, who had been fortunate enough to scrape together a little wealth, wished to marry his daughter to a tradesman of the city; and for that purpose, that she should be free, he offered 15,000 roubles for her liberty; a most unusual price of freedom, and a much greater sum than persons of his class will be found to possess. The tyrant took the ransom, and then told the father that both the girl and the money belonged to him; and, therefore, she must still continue among the number of his slaves."

gradually in value, were at last altogether rejected, and a calamitous panic ensued in commercial circles. Not understanding the cause of this, the empress continued to multiply the quantity of assignats, and thus increased the evil. She even issued a new kind of paper money, called cabinet notes, which partook something of the nature of exchequer bills, and were put into circulation for the purpose of discharging her own private debts. They were payable at the end of a year, and bore interest at the rate of six per cent.; but, in the event of the interest not being claimed immediately after the expiration of the year, it was refused to be paid, nor would the treasury reimburse the holders of the notes until they had exacted a bonus from them. The consequence of this was the ruin of thousands. Tradesmen, into whose hands these notes happened to fall, or who were obliged to accept them in cases of necessity, were glad to negotiate them at a loss of forty per cent.; and at last it became impossible to negotiate them upon any terms. The result of this breach of good faith was the withdrawal of public confidence from the empress, and the rapid disappearance of gold and silver from circulation.

Still in ignorance of the cause of these disasters, the empress persevered in a course of error, by causing the coin of the empire to be progressively adulterated, with the object of diffusing a smaller intrinsic value over a larger space. The inevitable result followed; credit fell rapidly, and the rouble in specie sank below its intrinsic value according to the rate of exchange in London and Amsterdam. Many persons speculated upon this disastrous state of things, by buying up the roubles, and reselling them in Prussia and Austria, where they were melted down, and reissued at a considerable advantage. Gold and silver at length disappeared from circulation, and nothing was left of the metallic currency, except copper. Even this was sent out of the country in large quantities, in consequence of the dishonesty of the ministers, who farmed out the mines to their favourites, and participated in the profits arising from a corrupt system, by which the state was defrauded. By the commencement of the year 1796, the bank, unable to change the assignats, was on the point of bankruptcy; a calamity which the empress endeavoured to avert by giving orders for an adulteration of the coin to such an extent, as to recast them at double their former value; thus, the silver pieces of ten kopecks were to pass for twenty, and those of twenty for thirty. The death of the empress prevented the issue of this fraudulent coin, and the financial difficulties of the state were left to be adjusted by her successor.

Paul, on his accession, immediately suspended the fabrication of this base coin, and did not permit the quantity that had been prepared to find its way into circulation. With more wisdom than might have been expected from him, he strove to restore credit to the assignats; and began by diminishing their quantity. His earnestness in the business, and the punishments he threatened to inflict on any person in authority who should be detected in corrupt conduct with respect to the finances, produced a feeling of confidence, and brought about some beneficial results. The assignats rose in value from ten to fifteen per cent. Paul, however, soon showed that he understood no more of the doctrines of finance and currency than Catherine did. Influenced alike by ignorance and despotism, he issued an order, that the paper rouble should pass at the same value as the silver rouble.* He even employed his son, the Grand-duke Constantine, to perform the dishonourable task of visiting in disguise the shops of tradesmen, for the purpose of entrapping them into a violation of the imperial order. Every one thus convicted of jobbing in money was severely punished.

Of course, this arbitrary and ridiculous expedient soon made matters worse than it found them; for the natural tendency of such regulations is towards the entire extinction of commerce, or the reduction of it to the primitive and inconvenient form of barter. Paul then announced that he intended to raise the assignat in estimation, by publicly burning a number to the value of 6,000,000 roubles. This ceremony was accordingly performed with great gravity, in the presence of the emperor, to whom the ashes of the notes were solemnly presented. The assembled people raised shouts of joy; but it was soon known that the affair was a paltry and dishonest trick, from

* The absurdity and injustice of this order will be better understood if the reader will bear in mind that the value of the silver rouble is about four francs in French, or 3*s.* 4*d.* in English money while the proper rouble is worth only about one franc, or tenpence.

which no good could result, as the assignats which were destroyed did not form any part of the quantity that had been sent into circulation, but were a remnant of the stock prepared by the empress Catherine, to be used as her necessities might dictate. The detection of this miserable subterferge exposed Paul to the charges of insincerity, and of trifling with the public disaster.

The next step of the imperial meddler was to submit the matter to a committee of finance; a thing which he ought to have done at first. They were instructed to take the subject into consideration, and then make such proposals as appeared most likely to effect the object in view. After some deliberation, the committee concluded that the best plan would be to put an increased amount of the precious metals into circulation. This was indisputable; but the question was, how could it be done? Where was the gold, silver, and copper to come from? The mines were so badly managed, as to be comparatively unproductive. Another injurious and oppressive expedient was therefore resorted to. A heavy duty was laid upon all merchandise, whether imported or exported; and this duty was required to be paid in foreign money, which it was intended to recoin into imperials and roubles, and put into circulation in Russia. The result of this regulation was to inflict another serious check on commerce. To pay the duty on his goods, the merchant was compelled to purchase dollars and ducats, which necessarily rose in price as the demand for them increased; so much so, that he was compelled to pay them to the government at a loss of about one-third upon what they had cost him. He therefore placed an exorbitant price upon his goods, besides resorting to smuggling; for which the extent of the frontiers and the dishonesty of the officers afforded great opportunities. Thus, the advantages gained by the new duties were lost by this means; and while these foolish experiments were in progress, the credit of the assignats went down again to the same ruinous point at which Paul found it on his accession.

The finance committee being as ignorant, and, consequently, as unlucky as their master, the emperor devised a new scheme of his own. This was to collect all the precious metals to which the government could lay claim in any part of the empire. Catherine loved to shower gifts upon all who served her, and to shed a splendour over everything connected with her government. In the exercise of this temper, she had caused magnificent hotels to be erected in all the chief towns, for the residence of the heads of the several departments of the local government. She also presented each governor with a costly service of plate, to be used on festivals and other public occasions. There were twenty-three governments possessing services of this kind, the least valuable of which had cost no less than 50,000 roubles. Paul calculated that much relief would be afforded by their conversion into money; and the governors were commanded to deliver them up to the mint. When this order was complied with, it was found that the intrinsic value of the plate was comparatively so small, that it would be of no avail in remedying the scarcity of money. Paul had forgotten to make allowance for the heavy charges of the goldsmiths in fashioning the plate, or for the expense of conveying it to the several provinces. Vexed at this disappointment, the foolish and irritable monarch ordered the plate to be broken up and formed into helmets, cuirasses, and other pieces of armour, to be used at his approaching coronation. This was done, and the silver armour then given to the goldsmiths, as payment for their labour in making it. Such were the financial operations of the emperor Paul!

Notwithstanding the embarrassed state of the national affairs, and the economical pretensions of the new monarch, he soon gave way to an extravagance as unmeaning and frivolous as it was enormous. In his coronation, he attempted to outvie even the sumptuousness of Catherine. The costly crown which had adorned her brow he refused to wear, and ordered another to be made of such magnificence, that its value was estimated at several millions of roubles. Catherine had given extravagant sums to her favourites; but Paul was still more lavish and reckless in his gifts. These were bestowed only on persons already so wealthy, that the increase merely served to pamper their pride and power into demonstrations of arrogance, dangerous both to the safety of the throne and the interests of the people. "Sycophants gorged by frauds," observes an energetic writer, "received presents from Paul that, had they been more judiciously distributed, would have maintained hundreds of families, and rewarded the deserts of thousands who served

the state with zeal, in indigence and obscurity. But it is one of the repulsive characteristics of a pure despotism, that the rich alone accumulate riches, while the poor not only remain poor, but are oppressed in proportion as the higher classes are raised more and more above the reach of the social sympathies. The impolicy of such proceedings is apparent, not only in the criminality of wasting the public resources upon improper objects, but in the creation of a craving and powerful body, whose attachment to the throne being purchased by expensive favours, is liable to be loosened from it whenever the means of buying up their support shall have become exhausted. In this mainly consists the difference between a sovereignty based upon the willing allegiance, the reasoning affections, and the consistent gratitude of a nation; and an authority looking out upon its possessions from behind a barrier of mercenaries, and perpetually coerced into fresh acts of tyranny by the very fears that arise from the consciousness of insecurity."

Not only did the emperor soon lose the popularity that seemed inclined to attach to him, in consequence of the first acts he performed after his accession, but he incurred general dislike. At court, a system of espionage and humiliating etiquette created a constant uneasiness and sense of fear. The people were harassed with petty and degrading regulations. A secret police paid inquisitorial visits, at all hours, to the houses of those who had excited the displeasure or suspicion of the emperor. Midnight arrests took place; citizens suddenly disappeared from their accustomed haunts; eccentric punishments were constantly inflicted; and a general panic prevailed. In the army, the caprice and despotism of the emperor spread terror amongst the officers. Any breach of Paul's minute regulations frequently elicited the severest punishments; and the officers went to the parade pale and fear-stricken. Even civilians, who, attracted by curiosity, had come to witness the exercise of the troops, were placed under arrest by the emperor, if their costume or their looks chanced to displease him. St. Petersburg became a gloomy residence, where all lived in a state of fear. No security remained for life or liberty, and all who could leave the city, did so. Every one dreaded to meet the emperor; and he, aware of the sentiments of fear and aversion which he inspired, lived in a state of constant apprehension. He frequently reflected on the fate of his presumed father, and dreaded the dark designs of the assassin. As his fears increased, his despotism became more intolerable. Suspecting every one, he distrusted even the empress. If she spoke in a low voice, he immediately supposed that some conspiracy against him was in progress. On one occasion, when she was engaged in conversation with a foreign ambassador, he suddenly interrupted her by saying, "You are preparing, perhaps, madam, to act the part of Catherine; but know, that you will not find in me a Peter III."

Amidst Paul's tyrannies, he performed a few charitable actions; these were, however, of so confined and petty a character, as to be almost contemptible. At Moscow, he converted an old building into a hospital, where fifty patients were supported at his expense. Sometimes he caused food to be distributed to poor officers; a mode of bounty which must have created a sense of degradation in those who received it. At other periods, small sums of money were given to certain distressed persons. But it has been truly observed, that his charities, like his military regulations, were essentially microscopic. What good he did proceeded from caprice, and not from benevolence; and when contrasted with the sums he wasted in needless expenditure, became altogether insignificant.

The law promulgated by Paul, regulating the succession to the throne, is regarded as the wisest and most useful act performed by him. This law corresponded with the system generally adopted in the oldest European states. By it the crown was to descend to the eldest son and his male issue; and in default of the latter, the second son and his male issue were to inherit; but in default of males, the children of the female descendants were to succeed, always observing the same order of proximity. When the successor was under age, the reigning sovereign was to appoint a regent; and in the event of his failing to do so, the regency was to be confided to the mother of the minor, or to the nearest relative.

CHAPTER XLII.

PAUL RECALLS THE RUSSIAN TROOPS FROM THE PERSIAN TERRITORIES; HIS HATRED OF THE FRENCH, AND OF REVOLUTIONARY PRINCIPLES; HE ENTERS WITH ACTIVITY INTO THE ALLIANCE FORMED BY CATHERINE WITH AUSTRIA AND ENGLAND, FOR THE PURPOSE OF CRUSHING THE REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT OF FRANCE, AND RESTORING MONARCHY IN THAT COUNTRY; PAUL CAUSES HIMSELF TO BE ELECTED GRAND-MASTER OF THE KNIGHTS OF ST. JOHN OF MALTA; SUWARROW APPOINTED TO THE COMMAND OF THE RUSSIAN AND AUSTRIAN ARMIES IN ITALY; VICTORIES OF SUWARROW; ILL-FEELING BETWEEN THE RUSSIAN AND AUSTRIAN TROOPS.

We have related that Catherine coveted that portion of the Persian empire which extended along the shores of the Caspian, and sought to annex it to her own dominions. The expedition which she had sent there, under General Zuboff, brother to the favourite, had received a severe check, and the result was rather matter of disappointment than of congratulation to Russia. Paul, on his accession, resolved on the recall of an expedition which had been neither wisely undertaken nor successfully conducted. His attention was required in other directions; but even if such had not been the case, he would probably have taken the same course in his eager desire to reverse, wherever it was practicable, the policy of his predecessor.

A war with Persia seemed little more than a mere wantonness and an idle parade of power on the part of the empress. Such was not, however, altogether the case. Her motives have been thus ably analysed by a writer to whom we have before been indebted:—"Catherine had accustomed her subjects to such warlike habits, and had been so incessantly engaged in projects of aggrandisement, that the peace she entered upon with Sweden and Turkey plunged her into a state of inactivity, which presented too sudden a transition to be of long continuance. While she was thus releasing herself from expensive and protracted wars, the whole of the rest of Europe was involved in contention. She had, therefore, hardly closed the Turkish campaign, when her restless spirit, repenting of that hasty measure, longed for new fields of conquest, and discovered, in the unsettled state of Persia, a tempting region, not only for the employment of her armies, but for enabling her, indirectly, to resume that scheme of ambition, in reference to the East, which her treaty with Turkey had inopportunely suspended. Inveterate as were her prejudices towards France, and anxious as she was to embark in hostilities against that power, she was not yet prepared to assist Austria in its calamitous struggles, or to venture upon the succour of Italy, Egypt, and Malta. She perceived, in the spreading acquisitions of France, the seeds of future convulsions and the germ of an European war, and craftily postponed the period of her interference until the belligerent powers should have become so exhausted by their efforts that she could dictate her own terms. England was engaged in a sanguinary war with France, and Prussia was occupied with her new acquisitions in Poland. The disturbed state of Europe was in the highest degree favourable to her plans; and she saw, when it was too late, that, had she not concluded a peace with Turkey, the time was arrived when she might have marched, almost certain of victory, into the dominions of the Porte, and planted her standard on the walls of Constantinople. The only available movement, therefore, which remained opened to her, and which presented the probable means of ultimately extending her territories to the south of Europe and Asia, was an invasion of Persia. The internal troubles which agitated that country assisted her materially in the prosecution of her designs."

Great natural obstacles lie in the way of the advance of an army from Russia into Persia. The stupendous chain of the Caucasus mountains, extending from the shores of the Caspian to those of the Black Sea, seem as if designed by nature as a limit to the nations on either side, and as a barrier against their encroachments upon each other. Yet Peter the Great had endeavoured to extend the power of Russia beyond this gigantic barrier; and, notwithstanding the failure of his effort, Catherine made the same attempt. We have related that General Zuboff and his forces captured the town and fortress of Derbend, the capital of Daghestan; that the Russian army suffered severely from contagion, followed by a great mortality—was exposed to harass-

ing attacks from the fierce mountain tribes, which, though successfully repulsed by the Russians, inflicted on them such losses as seriously reduced their ranks, and made large reinforcements necessary. In addition to these difficulties and misfortunes, the Russians received a severe check in a battle with the Persians and the Lesghians, in which, after a desperate conflict of several hours' duration, neither side were in a condition to claim a victory. Zuboff had put his troops into winter quarters, and was waiting for further reinforcements, when the death of the empress Catherine took place.

Zuboff received, together with the news of this event, an order from Paul to suspend all operations, remain in his present quarters, and make the army swear allegiance to the new sovereign. The latter had resolved on the abandonment of the expedition; but, with his usual eccentricity and want of thought, he recalled the army in a manner which exposed it to be cut to pieces on its return to Russia: this, too, only for the purpose of insulting a general who owed his appointment solely to the favour of Catherine. After the lapse of a few weeks, a courier arrived from St. Petersburg with a large packet from the emperor, for General Zuboff. The latter, upon opening it, was mortified to find that it contained nothing more than a number of sealed despatches directed to the several commanding officers of the various regiments, but not a word addressed to himself. The indignity to which he was thus subjected, was augmented by the discovery that the despatches contained peremptory orders to each officer to return immediately to Russia by the shortest route.

On receiving these commands, the officers represented to Zuboff, that it was not possible for them to march at such an inclement season, especially as they were destitute of forage for the horses, without the requisite provisions for the troops, and when the mountain passes, through which it was necessary to pursue their way, were choked up with snow. The general could only reply, that he had no longer the authority to interfere, and that he durst not tamper with the orders of the emperor. He then dismissed the officers by saying, that however reasonable their statements were, they must, at all hazards, comply with the emperor's injunctions. Broken up into separate detachments, without a leader, or being able to make the necessary preparation for its perilous journey, the army began its march. Each regiment took the route that seemed best to its colonel. Concerted action was therefore impossible, and the troops fell into the utmost disorder on the road. Their ignorance of the country, and the confusion that pervaded their ranks, entailed greater losses upon them than they had suffered at the hands of their enemies. After a miserable march of six weeks, the straggling remnant of the Russian army reached Kislar in the spring of 1797, resembling a military mob rather than an army. Zuboff himself, having received no orders, remained behind with two battalions of chasseurs. His situation was one of extreme peril. In a hostile country, 400 miles from the Russian frontiers, and with a mere handful of troops, he daily expected to be surrounded and cut off by the Persians or Lesghians. As he received no orders to retreat, he at length resolved to do so without orders, though at the risk of incurring the displeasure of the emperor. On arriving at St. Petersburg he resigned his commission; an example which was followed by many of the officers who served under him. This miserable termination of what was intended to be a great invasion of Persia, resulting in the conquest of that country, may be usefully reflected on by those who entertain fears that Russian troops could ever proceed to India, and there contend with the English for the sovereignty of that vast peninsula.

With respect to European politics, Paul seemed at first disposed to adopt a system of neutrality in the great war between republican France and the allied powers. It was, however, difficult for Russia long to remain passive. The triumph of the democratic principles in France, and the brilliant successes of the armies of that nation; its invasion of Switzerland, of Rome, Naples, Malta, and Egypt, added to the hatred which Paul bore towards everything French, induced him to alter his determination. The National Convention of France had now, for several years, assumed a hostile attitude towards all the ancient aristocratic governments of Europe, and not only threatened them with a sweeping democratic propaganda, but also promised that France would grant fraternity and assistance to all people who wished to recover their liberty. This was a fatal position to take up, and necessarily produced retaliation. Austria, Prussia, and England endeavoured to avenge and reinstate the Bourbons; and the wars of the Revolution were the result.

Catherine, though prepared to interfere, had held aloof from the struggle, with the intention of deciding it in favour of Russia when the mutual exhaustion of the conflicting parties became apparent. Prior to the revolution she had liked the French; but that great convulsion, which tore up monarchy by the roots, and, for a while, trampled order into the dust, had excited in her a feeling of dread and hatred, on account of its being the birthplace of those principles which threatened to destroy every European despotism. This was the only point on which Paul sympathised with the late empress, and on this he went beyond it. Not only did he bitterly detest the republican and anti-religious opinions so prevalent in France, but he disliked the French people themselves. Their natural gaiety was offensive to the sullen austerity of his nature, while their repugnance to dead formalisms seemed to censure a man whose life was devoted to the establishment and elaborate performance of minute, and, commonly, senseless and frivolous formalities. Paul insisted on the most rigid observance of the externals of religion, because they formed the bulwark of his government; and though he kept an ugly and diminutive mistress, he professed a great admiration for morality. Never does it seem to have occurred to this strange creature, that his whole life, passed in selfishness, caprice, violence, and cruelty, was one of prolonged outrage upon both religion and morality. He condemned the French for their want of religion and morality. He sincerely believed them to be the most immoral people in the world; and, as it has been happily expressed, "he, with his usual inconsistency and extravagance, hated them less for the faults which he found in them, than for the faults which his implacable prejudices assigned to them. Catherine liked the French, until the revolution inspired her with vengeance against a country which had shown an example so fraught with perils to the old despotisms: Paul hated the French long before the revolution had furnished him with a feasible excuse for hostilities. This was precisely the difference between them: that Catherine acted in a spirit of watchful policy; and Paul took the current of his passions, which happened in this instance to run in the same channels."

Before the accession of Paul, he is reported to have made this memorable observation—"In whatever light, and in whatever circumstances I wish to view an emperor of Russia, his noblest part will always be that of a pacificator." The new emperor was, however, influenced by no principles; and if, as is most probable, he made this remark, he never retained it in mind as a guide of his conduct. In the February of 1795, an alliance, offensive and defensive, was formed between Russia, England, and Austria, with the object of acting against the republican government of France, the extinction of the revolution, and the restoration of monarchy in that country. This alliance was not, as we have shown, productive of any great results at the time. Catherine desired to husband her strength, and to hold the balance between the great contending powers; she aimed, in fact, at being the arbitress of the affairs of Europe. Prussia held aloof from this triple alliance, and, in the April of the same year, made peace with the republic, to which Spain had already submitted.

Catherine, at the time of her death, had an army of from 40,000 to 50,000 men, under General Suwarrow, assembled in Galicia, with the object of joining the troops of her allies against France. Paul, who disliked Suwarrow, and feared a general who was so popular with the soldiery, grasped, as we have seen, at a petty opportunity of depriving him of his command. But the solicitations of Austria and the subsidies of England, now induced Paul to enter into active hostilities against France. He agreed to assist Austria with 60,000 Russians; and in the December of 1798 he entered into an engagement with England, by which he bound himself to furnish an auxiliary force of 45,000 men, to act with the British troops in the north of Germany; in return for which, England was to provide a monthly subsidy of £75,000, and an immediate advance of £225,000.

In entering actively upon the war, Paul was, however, influenced by another and more personal consideration. The island of Malta was granted by the emperor Charles V., in 1530, to the grand-master and religious fraternity of St. John of Jerusalem, who had recently been expelled from Rhodes by the Turks. The knights of St. John thus became sovereigns of Malta, and were independent, with the exception of a trifling annual feudal acknowledgment of

tenure to the king of Sicily. To protect the island against the Turks and the pirates of the Mediterranean, they commenced those famous fortifications which remain to the present day. The knights were divided amongst themselves by dissensions, and a few of their number offered to surrender, or rather to sell, the island to Russia. They had applied to Catherine upon the subject, but she declined to avail herself of their proffered treachery. On the offer being made to Paul, he accepted it; but he was so long in arranging the details of the bargain, that it slipped from his grasp. In 1798, the French expedition which was conveying Napoleon to Egypt, made its appearance before Malta; and the fortress, which was held to be impregnable, capitulated without firing a shot. The cause of this was, that while one section of the knights were engaged in selling the island to Paul, another section, including Baron Homspesch, the grand-master, concluded arrangements for the same purpose with Napoleon. The grand-master was to receive 600,000 francs, a principality in Germany, or a pension for life of 300,000 francs; while to each of the French chevaliers was awarded a pension of 700 francs per annum. The successful conspirators had taken their measures with so much precaution, that when the French fleet arrived, the batteries were unarmed, the garrison was scattered in disadvantageous situations, besides being almost destitute of stores and ammunition. It was fortunate for the captors that such was the case, for the fortifications of La Valette were so strong, that they might have baffled the whole power of the French fleet and army, even supposing that Napoleon could have spared time for the siege. As he and his staff passed through the triple line of fortifications, General Caffarelli observed to him, that "it was lucky there was some one within to open the massive gates to them; for had the place been altogether empty, they would have found it rather difficult to get into it." Thus fell one of the most renowned fortresses in the world; the magnificent plate, and other treasures of the order, were taken on board the French fleet; and Napoleon, leaving a garrison behind him, departed for Egypt.

This disappointment greatly irritated Paul, who had made so sure of possessing Malta, that he had already appointed a governor of it. The power of France seemed to be taking that aggressive course which, in Paul's estimation, was only to be followed by Russia. He was also encouraged by the subsequent destruction of the French fleet by Nelson, at the battle of the Nile—a circumstance which broke the charm of republican invincibility. Now he believed was the time when the arms of France might be effectually resisted; and he published a declaration, announcing that he was ready, with all the force of his arms and the resources of his empire, to assist in restoring the old relations among the European states, and to arrest the progress of anarchy and democratic principles. As to Malta, though it was then in the possession of the French, he became grand-master, in name, of the really now extinct order of the Knights of St. John. Those who resided within the Russian empire, declared the Baron Von Homspesch and his companions to be traitors, and they appealed to the protection of the emperor. Paul gave a gracious response, and caused them, in their names, and in those of their absent brethren, to elect him as grand-master. It was a strange anomaly, to see the head of the Greek church in Russia assume the office of grand-master of the catholic order of St. John of Malta. At the same time, the invasion of Egypt by Napoleon had drawn the Porte into the league against France. A curious and confused spectacle was thus presented. The union with the Turks of the grand-master of Malta, whose first vow was the extermination of the Mussulmans; the advance of the battalions of Russia, decorated with the catholic cross of St. John of Jerusalem, the schismatic cross of St. Andrew of Russia, and the protestant cross of St. Anne of Holstein, fighting beside the standard of the prophet, to re-establish the pope in Rome, catholicism in France, and Islamism in Egypt, was a sight at once strange and perplexing.

The Russian army commenced its march under General Rosamberg, and proceeded to cross the south of Germany. The insolence of some of the Russian officers towards the Austrians, and the misconduct of the Russian troops, who not unfrequently appropriated whatever they could put their hands on, and ill-treated those who complained, caused the emperor, Francis II., to represent to Paul the absolute necessity of recalling Suwarrow, whose influence over the soldiers was absolute, and whose fame would be a *prestige* of victory. For this

there was also a further reason. The Russian officers affected to despise the Austrians, while the latter were too proud to submit to the command of Russian generals who had not acquired a distinguished military reputation. Paul hesitated to appoint Suwarrow, for his ill-feeling towards that remarkable man had not subsided. He was, however, induced, by repeated remonstrances, to sacrifice his personal feelings to what was regarded as the interest of the common cause of the allies.

Suwarrow, on being dismissed from his command, retired, in the first instance, to Moscow. There the stories in circulation concerning his exploits rendered him an object of universal interest. The vindictive Paul, therefore, issued an order requiring the old general to leave the city, and take up his residence in a remote village. When this order was presented to the eccentric soldier, he inquired what time was allowed him for settling his affairs? "Four hours," was the reply of the police officer. "Oh!" exclaimed the veteran, in a sarcastic tone, "this is too kind! an hour is sufficient for Suwarrow." At the end of that time he had packed up his gold and jewels in a case, and was ready to depart. A travelling carriage was placed at his disposal; but regarding it contemptuously, he exclaimed, "Suwarrow has no need of a coach to go into exile; he can go there in the same equipage which he made use of to repair to the court of Catherine, or to the head of the armies. Bring me a cart!" A cart was provided accordingly; and in this uncomfortable vehicle did the general, accompanied by the police officer, perform a dreary journey of 500 versts. On arriving at his destination, he took up his residence in a wooden hut, where he remained under the surveillance of some subaltern officers of the police. There his solitude was made more oppressive by his not being permitted either to write or to receive visitors. On one occasion, Paul, either from caprice or from some better feeling towards the veteran, sent a courier to him with a letter, addressed, "To Field-marshal Suwarrow." "This is not for me!" exclaimed the old soldier; "if Suwarrow were field-marshal, he would not be banished to a village; he would be seen at the head of the army." So saying, he returned the letter unopened, nor could any representations induce him to receive it. Paul was irritated that he could not subdue the spirit of the warrior, and caused the guard about him to be made more strict than before. Shortly after this, Paul was compelled, by his own interests and the representations of the Austrian emperor, to reinstate the field-marshal, which he did with more grace than might have been expected from him. "I have resolved," he wrote, "to send you into Italy, to the assistance of his majesty the king and emperor, my brother and ally. Suwarrow has no need of triumphs or laurels, but my country has need of him; and my wishes agree with those of Francis II., who, having conferred on you the supreme command of his Italian army, begs you to accept that dignity." On receiving this epistle, Suwarrow forgot his injuries, and joyfully accepted the command. The whole of Russia also looked forward, with expectant pride and elated enthusiasm, to the honours which the conqueror of Ismail was to win for the empire.

Suwarrow and his battalions arrived, in the April of 1799, on the banks of the Mincio, and took the command of the allied Russian and Austrian troops in Italy. The extravagant flatteries recently lavished upon him, had naturally fostered the high opinion he entertained of his own genius as a general, and the superiority of his troops over those of other countries. The jealousy of the Austrian officers was revived by the arrogance of his speech and bearing. He already talked of the capture of Paris, the restoration of the government of the Bourbons, and the punishment of all revolutionary atheists. The Austrian generals called a council of war, for the purpose of hearing his plans, and taking them into consideration. Councils of this kind were held in contempt by Suwarrow, and that not without reason. A perfect army acts like a vast living machine, pervaded by *one* undivided and absolute will. Question that will, and its unity is destroyed; destroy the unity of an army, and its efficiency is gone. The members of the council, beginning at the youngest, proposed their several schemes. Suwarrow listened in silence; and, when all had spoken, he took a slate, drew two lines on it, and said, "Here, gentlemen, are the French, and here the Russians; the latter will march against the former and beat them." Then he rubbed out the French line, and added, "This is all my plan; the council is concluded."

Just before the arrival of the Russians, the French army in Italy had suffered a defeat

at the hands of the Austrians at Magnano. In consequence of this, Scherer, the general in command, had been superseded by the able Moreau, who had recently attained great distinction in the field against the Austrians. Moreau found the French troops reduced to the number of 28,000, and so much wasted by sickness and slaughter, that it was impossible for them to maintain their position. He therefore retired towards Milan, leaving immense military stores, parks of artillery, and a bridge equipage in the hands of the enemy. This movement favoured the operations of the latter; for the Archduke Charles (who commanded the Austrian forces) and General Suwarrow had adopted the plan of making such a diversion of the French armies in Switzerland and Italy, as would enable the allies ultimately to prevent all communication between them; and, forming a junction of their own troops, to penetrate into France by the defiles of the Jura and the defenceless Vosges—the same quarter on which the great invasion of 1814 was afterwards effected.

Moreau had deemed it prudent to take up a position on the right bank of the Adda, where he posted his forces in three divisions. Suwarrow, who had lost none of the energy of his earlier days, was speedily upon them, and, before the French had time to concentrate their strength, he forced the passage of the river in two places, thus dividing the enemy's battalions into three parts, which enabled him to beat them in detail. One division was driven back towards Milan with a loss of 2,400 men, of which 1,100 were taken prisoners; another, after a brave resistance, threw down their arms; while the third was thrown into such confusion that they fled at the first shock. It is estimated that, in this opening engagement, the French lost 11,000 men, besides being driven from their most formidable positions. Suwarrow and the allies pushed on for Milan, which city they entered in triumph on the 29th of April. Suwarrow received the captive French officers with an ironical ceremony, which, though very humiliating, was better treatment than they had expected, as the barbarity of the Russian soldiers had become proverbial among the other nations of Europe. Indeed, it has been asserted, that the Austrians found it necessary to escort the captured French soldiers through the ranks of the ferocious Russians, who would otherwise have massacred them without hesitation.

Suwarrow should have instantly pursued the discomfited French; but he remained for more than a week at Milan, absorbed by the festivities with which he was congratulated in that city. During that time the shattered remains of the French army effected their retreat, after securing the communications with the adjacent passes of the Alps; the one towards Alexandria, with a view to occupy the defiles of Bocchetta and the approaches to Genoa; and the other, commanded by Moreau, to the plain between the Po and the Fanaro, at the foot of the northern slope of the Apennines. The commander of the allied imperial forces at length left Milan, and pushed forward with the design of forcing the Po, turning the left of the French, and drawing them into a general and conclusive action.

Moreau poured down upon the allies with such resistless force, that Suwarrow deemed it prudent to retire from the opposite bank of the Po, and to march upon Turin, then the chief depôt of the French magazines. After this he designed to cut off the communication of Moreau with France. Turin was captured by the allies, and the French garrison forced to take refuge in the citadel, and to leave in the hands of the enemy nearly 300 pieces of artillery, 60,000 muskets, and an enormous quantity of ammunition and military stores. This heavy loss deprived Moreau of all his resources, and threatened his army with destruction. But his high spirit triumphed over his apparently desperate circumstances. Invincible to the last, he strove to form a junction with the army at Naples, under the command of Macdonald, and endeavoured to regain his position on the west of the Apennines, so as to cover the avenues to Genoa. With Suwarrow close upon his rear, he succeeded, by indefatigable labour, in making a rugged mountain path across the Apennines, practicable for artillery and waggons, in four days; and over this precipitous track he defiled in excellent order, and reached the southern side of the mountains without interruption. The French army was saved; but the Italian conquests of Napoleon had, with the exception of a few fortresses, been wrested from the grasp of his countrymen. The French standards, which had recently floated on the towers of the principal cities of Lombardy, were now shivering in the desolate snows of the Alps.

Macdonald and Moreau made arrangements for a junction of their forces, with the

hope of dislodging the allies from their conquests. The former, in his progress, with an army of 37,000 men, obtained a victory over Prince Hohenzollern, who lost 1,500 men in the engagement. This success was followed by others; and Macdonald became master of Parma, Placentia, and the whole of the country in that direction. He also compelled Field-marshal Ott to retire behind the Tidone, in preference to risking a pitched battle in the open plains.

Suwarrow was soon on the alert; and on the 17th of June he arrived within sight of Macdonald's forces, which he resolved to attack the following day. The energy of Macdonald, however, led to an almost immediate engagement, which took place on the banks of the Trebbia. The Austrians were at first driven back in great disorder by the impetuous attack of the French; but Suwarrow succeeded in turning the fortune of the day. The French retired in excellent order, until a wild charge of Cossacks on their flank threw them into confusion. The latter, pursuing with too much temerity, received a check in their turn, and great numbers of them were mowed down by the grapeshot of their opponents.

Each army made preparations during the night for a general engagement on the following day. It was, however, noon before the Russians and Austrians were ready, and Suwarrow then led them against the French, who were drawn up in order of battle on the banks of the river. The latter crossed the river and charged the allies; but they met with a repulse. The conflict lasted until night, and was carried on with great fury. When twilight and exhaustion closed this second day's struggle, the French had been driven back across the stream, after suffering a severe loss. The hostile armies lay during the night with their arms by their sides, and the soldiers resting upon their guns. At midnight an alarm took place, and the French rushed into the river and fired upon the Russian videttes. Both armies were aroused, and the firing was continued for some time upon each side.

At ten o'clock the next morning the battle was renewed for the third time. Again the French were the assailants, and plunging into the river, they pushed on vigorously, and outflanked the Russian right. The latter suffered considerably, but fought with great firmness. They were at length driven back; but being reinforced by several battalions, the French were repulsed in their turn, and compelled to recross the river. They also crossed the stream at another point under a shower of grapeshot, and, making a successful bayonet charge on the centre of the allies, succeeded in carrying all the batteries of the Austrians under Melas, and in throwing the whole line into confusion. But their good fortune did not continue; they soon became the assailed instead of the assailants: the battle raged with fury along the entire line, and Suwarrow at length became master of the whole left bank of the river. But his attempts to pass to the opposite side were repulsed by the closeness and rapidity of the French fire. Night again separated the combatants and ended this severe conflict, prolonged over a period of three days.

Each side had suffered heavy losses. That of the French, in killed and wounded, was estimated at 12,000 men; while that of the allies was not much less. Macdonald, exhausted by so severe a conflict, feared to risk a renewal of the engagement. Abandoning his wounded, he retreated during the night, and directed his course towards the Apennines. Unhappily for him, a despatch which he forwarded to Moreau, describing the forlorn state of his army and the line of his retreat, fell into the hands of Suwarrow, who, acting instantly upon this information, commenced a vigorous pursuit. The French were overtaken, and attacked both in front and flank. Immense numbers were taken prisoners, and the rest driven to seek refuge in the mountains. Amongst the captives were four generals and 506 officers. When Macdonald could safely pause to review his broken battalions, he discovered that, in this unfortunate campaign, he had lost no less than 15,000 men. In this famous battle the advantages lay with the allies; but it is only just to admit, that the honours of the day were divided. The French historians are naturally unwilling to admit that Macdonald was defeated. They say that the French could not conquer, but that they were not conquered.

In the meantime, Moreau had met with a better fortune than his brother in arms. While the Russians were pursuing Macdonald, he had thrown four battalions of the Austrians, under Bellegarde, into confusion, and raised the siege of Tortona. Suwarrow, therefore, abandoned the further pursuit of Macdonald, and marched against Moreau.

The latter retreated before the advance

of the Russian general, and, on finding himself hard pressed, retired to his former defensive position in the mountains. It has been asserted, and with much probability, that if Suwarrow had been allowed to have followed up his advantages, he would, in this campaign, have completed the conquest of Italy, and penetrated into the south of France. But the Aulic Council, which governed the great movements of the war, had issued positive orders not to extend the operations of the army beyond the Apennines, until all the fortified places in Lombardy had been reduced. The siege of these fortresses had been interrupted by the other operations of the campaign; and, with the exception of the citadel of Turin, all these strongholds were garrisoned by French troops. Suwarrow, therefore, was restrained from pressing forward at a moment favourable to victory. The truth was, that the cabinet of Vienna was jealous of the successes of the Russians, and by no means pleased to see Suwarrow play the master in Italy. Francis II. desired to check the French, but not to give too great a preponderance to the increasing power of Russia. Francis and his ministers were desirous to get into their own hands the whole of the Italian conquests. Now, therefore, that the republican forces had been shattered by a series of disasters, and that nothing remained to secure the possession of Italy but the subjugation of the fortresses, they wished to relieve themselves from the presence of their formidable ally, whose interference on the shores of the Mediterranean, except under such an emergency as had originally called him there, was not regarded without some vague apprehensions both by Austria and England. An explanation took place between the allied powers, and it was agreed that the whole of the Russian troops, after the fall of Alexandria and Mantua, should be directed by Suwarrow against Switzerland, while the Austrians should be left to prosecute the war in Italy. Indeed, so much ill-feeling existed between the Russian and Austrian troops, that it would have been difficult, under any circumstances, to have held them together much longer. Yet their separation was productive of calamitous consequences, for neither Austria nor Russia alone were a match for the brave and enthusiastic troops of France.

Some time was lost in comparative inactivity by the allies. This the French used to great advantage. The two divisions of their army in Italy were reunited, Macdonald was recalled, large reinforcements arrived from France, and the youthful but brave and gifted hero, Joubert, was appointed to the command. Moreau, superior to any feeling of jealousy, accompanied the army, and, while he served under Joubert, gave him the benefit of his experience. Suwarrow, who, in obedience to his orders, had been watching over the progress of the sieges, on receiving information of the approach of the republican army, immediately made preparations to meet and encounter it. The desperate battle of Novi, which was fought on the 15th of August, followed. Joubert, whose army amounted to 43,000 men, rashly advanced from a secure position into the presence of a far superior force. Suwarrow immediately took advantage of this error, and fell upon the French while unprepared. Early in the day, Joubert was shot while in the act of waving his hat and exclaiming—"Forward, grenadiers! let us throw ourselves upon the tirailleurs!" He expired almost immediately; his last words being—"Advance, my friends, advance!" Great disorder followed his death, but this was retrieved by Moreau, who then assumed the command. The contest was resumed, and the Austrians were driven back, and would have been compelled to retreat, had not the Russians pressed forward to their assistance, at the price of a terrible carnage amongst themselves. The grapeshot of the flying artillery and masked batteries, and the destructive discharge of the musketry of the French, swept down whole companies of those fearless men. Yet as fast as their ranks were destroyed they were replaced by fresh battalions, who were sacrificed in the same way by the steady and effective fire of the French. Yet these courageous troops, closing their ranks as rapidly as they were thinned, still pressed onwards, to the cry of "Perod! perod!"* and "Nieboss! nieboss!"† and, with bayonets charged, advanced, in a spirit of invincible obstinacy, to receive their deaths by the side of their expiring comrades. The conduct of the Russians on this, as well as on every other occasion throughout the war, justifies the remark of Frederic the Great, that "it was less difficult to kill them than to conquer them."

This attempt to force the French lines

* Forward! forward!

† Never fear! never fear! War-cries of the Russians in battle.

utterly failed, and Suwarrow, therefore, resolved to concentrate his forces for a general and decisive attack. This also was withstood by the firm array and masterly organisation of the French, who hurled back their assailants with a storm of fire. The energetic Austrian general, Kray, returned ten times to the charge, and on each occasion was driven back with great loss. A frightful slaughter was continued for four hours, and then, both sides exhausted by fatigue, and perhaps appalled by the sanguinary nature of the battle, lapsed into a suspension of hostilities. The arrival of Melas, with the left wing of the allied army, induced Suwarrow to return to the attack. He himself led the main body of the allied army, like a torrent, against the centre of the French, while Kray and Melas fell upon the right and left wing. The French at length gave way; and Moreau, seeing that the day was hopeless, prepared for retreat. But his troops were so completely surrounded, that it was found impossible to effect this in good order. Whichever way they turned, the bayonets of their antagonists gleamed upon them, and they fled in disorder across the broken grounds in their rear. The allies were too much exhausted to pursue them, and were so crippled by their own losses, that they had little more than the name of a victory. The loss of the allies was estimated at 1,800 killed, 5,200 wounded, and 1,200 prisoners; that of the French at 1,500 killed, 5,500 wounded, and 3,000 prisoners. In addition to this, they lost thirty-seven cannon, twenty-eight caissons, and four standards. Still the battle of Novi led to no material advantage on the part of the allies. Nothing was decided by it: both armies fought with courage and brilliancy; both experienced enormous losses; and the French were able, after its conclusion, to return to their former position. This engagement closed the campaign of the Russians in Italy; "a campaign," it has been well observed, "signalised by that extraordinary resignation to death for which the Russians have since become celebrated, and which, even more than their valour, rendered them so formidable to their opponents."

National honours were bestowed upon Suwarrow by his countrymen. Even the emperor Paul seems to have shared the common enthusiasm, for he conferred upon the successful veteran the title of Prince Italinski; and also issued an ukase, in which, with his usual eccentricity, he ordained that Suwarrow should be considered as the greatest general of ancient or modern times. The latter, in return, promised the emperor that the next campaign should see him enter France in triumph, after he had driven the French out of Switzerland. A careful writer, reflecting upon these events, observes—"To Russia it was of importance to make this, her first essay in the great European war, appear to the world in its most imposing shape; and certainly she was largely indebted to the skill, as well as to the courage, of her renowned general for the triumphs achieved by her arms. Previously to the Italian campaign the Russians were regarded as undisciplined savages, who were completely ignorant of the art of war, and who were indebted for their victories to their fierceness and physical strength, rather than to their power of combination and knowledge of the use of arms. This misapprehension of their qualities operated both advantageously and disadvantageously. It spread at first a species of terror amongst the French, who were led to expect an array of monsters, ogres, or giants, wielding strange and unaccustomed weapons, and enacting superhuman wonders on the field; but it had the ultimate effect, when the preposterous and indefinite notion of their powers was dispelled by actual collision, of inducing the French to treat them with contempt, because they found them nothing more than a race of hardy and obstinate soldiers. Thus, a French soldier, marching to the first *rencontre* with them, is said to have exclaimed, 'We shall see whether they have four arms!' and, upon his return, to have duly observed, 'Well! they have but two, and know not how to make use of them.'

"There is no doubt that the brilliant tactics of Suwarrow in Italy, his perseverance, celerity, and forethought, drew the Russians more rapidly into the theatre of European warfare than the mere temptation of their position could have done. Had Suwarrow failed, it is probable that, instead of pressing with such force upon the south, they would have retired to their own inclement regions, and concentrated their operations towards the east. But so completely did his successes engross the public mind and inflame the vanity of the empire, that it was confidently anticipated he would, in a few weeks, make a triumphant entry into Paris, as he had previously done at Warsaw;

nor were there wanting sagacious people to predict that the Russians and Tartars would once more make the conquest of the entire of Europe. What might have befallen had Suwarrow been permitted to prosecute the war upon the point which he had already shaken, it is difficult to calculate; but the jealousy of Austria prevented that consummation of his plans, and consigned him to another quarter, where an enemy more formidable than any he had yet encountered, awaited his approach."

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN IN SWITZERLAND; DEFEAT OF THE RUSSIANS UNDER KORZAKOFF AT ZURICH, BY MASSENA; SUWARROW ENTERS SWITZERLAND BY THE ST. GOTHARD; HIS TROOPS MURMUR AT THE SEVERITY OF THE PROGRESS; HE REANIMATES THEM, AND DRIVES AN ADVANCED BODY OF THE FRENCH BEFORE HIM; KORZAKOFF SUSTAINS A SECOND DEFEAT; SUWARROW IS COMPELLED TO RETREAT; THE REMNANT OF HIS TROOPS REACH RUSSIA IN A MISERABLE CONDITION; DEATH OF SUWARROW; ILL-SUCCESS OF THE UNITED ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN ARMS AGAINST THE FRENCH IN HOLLAND; PAUL WITHDRAWS FROM THE COALITION AGAINST FRANCE.

NAPOLEON (then General Buonaparte) had, in 1797, seized upon a considerable portion of Switzerland, and annexed it to the Cisalpine Republic, which was the name given by France to the new government it conferred, or imposed, on the Milanese and Mantuan states. In the following year the French spread over the greater part of Switzerland.

The design of the emperor Paul in joining the war against France, partook of the extravagance which characterised all his other notions. Not content with issuing a manifesto, stating that he and his allies had resolved to destroy the impious government that ruled that nation, he even contemplated the accomplishment of a complete and permanent league amongst all the sovereigns of Europe, to arrest the progress of democratic principles, to restore the interests that had been swept away by the French arms, and to combine all denominations of Christians in an universal semi-political church, which should limit education to the point it considered safe and prudent, and constantly teach the doctrines of the duty of passive obedience on the part of subjects, and the divine and unlimited right of monarchs to govern them in what manner and with what severity they pleased.

While Suwarrow had, in the early part of the campaign of 1798, been fighting side by side with the Austrians against the French in Italy, a Russian army, consisting of upwards of 40,000 men, had entered Switzerland, with the object of expelling the French from that locality. It was placed under the command of Rimski Korzakoff, one of the favoured lovers of the late empress Catherine. Like all who had shared her smiles, Korzakoff soon found himself disgraced by the emperor Paul; but the wily soldier regained the good opinion of the capricious monarch by pretending an intense admiration of the changes which the latter introduced into the discipline of the army,* and by calumniating the French

* The writer of the "History of Russia," in Lardner's *Cyclopædia*, observes, with an amusing gravity, that "the military system of Paul must not be confounded with that of Frederic the Great, or of Marshal Saxe, or that which was proposed by Griebert." We certainly should not have dreamed, even in the most disturbed and imaginative sleep, of there being any chance of so remarkable a mistake. The writer then proceeds to describe the "thing of shreds and patches," dignified, by an excess of courtesy, with the title of the "military system of Paul." "It was," he says, "wholly made up of a minute pedantry in regulations for the handling of arms, for the position of the fingers, the curve of the body on parade, the number of buttons on the coat and gaiters, the shape of the hat, the colour of the cockade, and such insignificant matters. These were the points that absorbed his attention; while more serious considerations—the tactics and evolutions of the troops—were left in a great measure to the genius of the commander, who usually acted on the impulse of the occasion, without being much indebted to any previous method or rules of art. It was on this account that Frederic the Great regarded the Russian general, Butterlin, as one of the most dangerous of his enemies. 'One cannot,' he said, 'make any plan of defence against that man; he always acts in a manner directly contrary to every rational supposition.' Perhaps, observes a contemporary writer, Butterlin might have reasoned in reply, that if he had attacked that great master according to the rules with which he was so well acquainted, he

soldiers, whom he arrogantly affected to despise. Korzakoff's instructions were to act in concert with the Archduke Charles, then in Switzerland, for the general plan of the campaign, but to maintain the Russian army separately, that the fame of its exploits should not be shared with the Austrians, as it had been in Italy. The national vanity and insolence of Korzakoff will be at once estimated by the following incident. In a conference held with the archduke (who had proved himself an able general), relative to the positions the allied armies were to assume, the latter, placing his finger upon a spot of the map, said—"Here you must place a battalion." "A company, you mean," responded the Russian. "No; a battalion." "I understand," rejoined Korzakoff, "an Austrian battalion, or a Russian company." The vulgar inflation which dictated this speech was soon to receive a seasonable check.

The campaign had been opened in Switzerland before the arrival of the Russians, who were anxiously expected by the archduke. The French army was under the command of the calm and gifted Massena, the brilliancy of whose military conceptions was so highly appreciated by Napoleon, that he gave him the flattering surname of the "favoured child of victory."* Massena had taken up a powerful position, from which the Austrians had vainly attempted to dislodge him; and on the arrival of the Russians, Korzakoff exhibited so much arrogance, that the archduke determined to leave the field open to him. He accordingly drew off the great body of his troops for the Upper Rhine, leaving the limited force of Korzakoff and Hotze, amounting to 56,000 men, to occupy a line forty miles in length. The French and the Russians were encamped on the opposite banks of the river Limmat, from which they gazed at each other with emotions of curiosity and wonder. The feelings excited in the minds of the French by the sight of their semi-savage adversaries, may be understood by the following observations of a French general who served in this famous campaign. He observed—"I have seen on the right bank of the Limmat, while our army kept the left, posts of Cossacks squatted together in the most grotesque manner. They were seen to eat raw the aliments which are very carefully dressed in all civilised countries, such as meat, pumpkins, cucumbers, &c. The French music came occasionally, and played warlike airs on the banks—not long since so happy—of the beautiful Limmat. At such times, these Cossacks would rise spontaneously to dance in a ring, while the sentinel that they had in front stood leaning on his lance, motionless as a statue. On seeing, for the first time, these strange soldiers, I recalled to mind the travels and the Hottentots of Le Vaillant, or of Abyssinian Bruce. These troops are ill-attended to, badly clothed, and appear more despicable than they really are. There is a marked difference between the Cossacks and regular regiments; and it is difficult to be conceived, on seeing them in the same camp, that they were calculated for understanding each other and serving together. But there exists a difference still more striking between one officer and another of the same regiment. As much education, elegance, and politeness as you will perceive in a certain class of Russian officers, so much will you be surprised at the contrary in another class. Those of the latter are only distinguished from the simple Cossack by the distinctive mark of their rank."

A modern writer, commenting upon these remarks, observes, that the author of them "evidently underrated the military qualifications of the uncivilised Cossacks, whom he seems to have regarded more with the eye of an artist than a soldier; but his remarks serve to show the opinions of the French concerning their uncouth adversaries. Their position, and the hopes by which they were severally animated at this moment, cannot be contemplated without feelings of the deepest interest. The Russians, for nearly a century past, had been accustomed to success. Alternately triumphant in the north and in the east, they now found themselves encamped in the south, elated with a blind confidence that

would have been beaten; and that, therefore, he incurred less risk by infringing them all. Even Suwarrow frequently reversed the usual modes of proceeding; choosing the most difficult routes, assailing the strongest points, and abandoning the happiest positions, for movements which other generals would not have adopted except in cases of extreme necessity."

* Disraeli, in his novel of *Coningsby*, observes, that "several of the French marshals, and the most famous—Massena for example—was a Hebrew; his real name was Manasseh." Unfortunately for the reputation of his race, Massena acquired great odium by the constant exhibition of that insatiable avarice which is attributed to the Jews as the great vice of their character.

here also their progress must be a succession of victories; an anticipation which was doubly strengthened by their religious fanaticism and their hatred of republican France. The French, on the other hand, were excited by the proud recollections of those splendid acquisitions which they had won during the war; of their grand domestic assertion of popular theories over the monarchical principle; and, above all, by the wonderful resistance they had maintained against a formidable union of powers, each of which was, singly, an antagonist more than equal to themselves in territorial strength and fiscal resources. That the course of their bold campaigns was darkened by occasional disasters, and sometimes even clouded by the darkest reverses of fortune, had no other effect than to render them more circumspect, to give them a more combined system of action, and to draw into play more vividly that energetic spirit of personal courage and national honour which, on their side, counterbalanced the ferocity and recklessness of their opponents. They possessed, besides, this signal advantage—that they were headed by a celebrated general, the companion-in-arms of Buonaparte, upon whose crest victory had frequently alighted; while the Russians were commanded by an officer who had never distinguished himself in the field, and who was known even to his own troops only by his punctuality upon parade."

These brief reflections have led us, for a few moments, from our narrative, in which we left the French and the Russians encamped on opposite sides of the clear and rapid river Limmat. Suwarrow had abandoned the plains of Piedmont, and arranged to join his countryman Korzakoff, and the Austrian general, Hotze, at Zurich. For this purpose he crossed the Alps and Mount St. Gothard, intending to dash, with his usual impetuosity, on the flanks of the enemy. This movement was anticipated by Massena, who resolved to strike a decisive blow before the intended junction could be effected.

Massena's plan was to make a false attack upon the town of Zurich, and then, by crossing further down the river, to attack Korzakoff at the same time both in front and rear. By this movement the garrison at Zurich would be cut off from its right wing down the river, while it was already separated from its left by the lake. On the 15th of September, the French crossed the river in pontoons, under cover of their masked batteries, which played with great effect upon the Russian troops, who were drawn up on the other side of the stream. The latter were driven from their position; and although they twice rallied, were at length shot or bayoneted in heaps.

A body of 15,000 French were thus established on the right bank of the river. At the same time, a feigned attack on the left created a diversion of the Russian forces on the lower Limmat, while a dashing demonstration against Zurich drew the bulk of the Russian centre to that point. The French, who had crossed the river, carried Hurg and the heights on the north-west of Zurich; and Korzakoff then discerned that he was placed in a position of imminent peril, both in rear and front. A desperate sally, which he made at the head of 5,000 men, had no effect in improving his situation. Retreat appeared imperative; yet the only road by which it could be effected was in possession of the French troops. Within the walls of Zurich the allies were thrown into the utmost confusion. As night approached, the numerous watchfires on the adjacent hills discovered to the besieged the increasing lines of the enemy drawing closer every hour around them; while the bombs, falling fast in the crowded streets, choked up with waggons and horsemen, the dead and the dying, with the cavalry trampling over the bodies of the wounded in their despairing efforts to force their way outwards, in the vain chance of making head against the enemy, whose victorious shouts were ringing in their ears—formed, altogether, a scene of horror such as was not witnessed before throughout the whole of this devastating war.

In this state of things, the French general summoned the garrison to surrender; but Korzakoff made no reply. The French, therefore, passed the night in preparing for an assault on the following morning; and the Russians in making arrangements for a last and terrible effort to effect a passage through the French lines, and gain the road to Winthenthur, the only practicable line of retreat. In the course of the night, the Russians were somewhat cheered by the arrival of two strong Austrian battalions, and of the whole right wing of the army, hitherto detained by the feigned attack of the French; but which, on learning the real state of affairs in Zurich, had, by a long circuit, evaded the

outposts of the enemy, and succeeded in reaching head-quarters.

At break of day the Russians formed into order of battle, and dashed with impetuosity against the French division stationed on the German road. A furious contest followed, in which the Russians succeeded in cutting a passage before them. They then made arrangements for a retreat, leaving only a small rear-guard to defend the ramparts until the mass of the troops should have passed out of the city. Though the French were at first compelled to retire before the dense ranks of the Russians, which advanced with mechanical regularity, yet the sharpshooters of Massena, alternately discharging and retreating, together with the showers of grapeshot poured against the solid square of the Russians by the flying artillery of their enemy (which galloped up in the intervals of the Russian fire, and then returned to reload in a safe position), committed terrible havoc. Reiterated charges of this kind at length threw the Russians into confusion, which was contributed to by the inexperience of the arrogant Korzakoff, who utterly lost his presence of mind in conflict with an army which he had affected to despise. Unaccustomed to the skilful manœuvres of the French, he soon became bewildered by the rapidity and multiplicity of their movements; and his irresolution produced first uncertainty, and then panic. Consternation spread from the front to the rear of the Russian army, which abandoned its ammunition-waggons and baggage, 100 pieces of cannon, and the military chest, containing 60,000 Dutch ducats in specie, and 300,000 florins in silver.

The battle was, in fact, decided, and the Russians were defeated; but the French rushed into the town, and the conflict was prolonged in the streets and in the approaches to the ramparts. At length, the few troops which remained in the garrison laid down their arms, but not before the ingenious and benevolent physiognomist, Lavater, was shot, while animating the soldiery and aiding the sufferers.* The Russian army might have been annihilated, but that some information which Massena possessed withheld him from pursuit. The dispirited Korzakoff therefore effected his retreat, but not without a loss of 8,000 men in killed and wounded, besides 5,000 in prisoners, and all his baggage and ammunition. It is considered that this memorable battle of Zurich saved France from invasion by the allied powers, and contributed to the subsequent dissolution of the coalition which had been formed between the Russians and the Austrians. The victory of the French was followed by another triumph. The Austrian force, encamped higher up on the Linth, was taken by surprise by Marshal Soult, and compelled to retreat beyond the Rhine, leaving Hotze (its general) and many dead on the field, 3,000 of its number prisoners in the hands of the enemy, together with the whole of its baggage, and twenty pieces of cannon.

Massena now prepared to deal with Suwarrow, who, while these misfortunes were falling upon his lieutenants, was toiling through the acclivities and gorges of the Swiss Alps, every step of his way purchased by the lives of his vainly-sacrificed soldiers. Massena had detached Lecourbe, with about 4,000 light troops, to harass and impede the advance of the Russian field-marshal. This task they performed in a remarkably efficient manner. Posted in detached parties behind jutting rocks and scattered trees, they poured down a murderous fire upon the advancing foe. The winding and precipitous paths of the St. Gothard were difficult of ascent under any circumstances; and now, when covered by platoons of musketry, the Russians believed them to be impregnable. Exhausted by privation and fatigue, they began to murmur; some refused to advance any further; while others turned and fled before the shower of bullets which was directed against them. On this occasion, Suwarrow, amazed and angry, exhibited an instance both of the wild energy which ever characterised him, and of the extraordinary influence which he exercised over the minds of his troops. Having caused a grave to be dug in the road, at the foot of the ascent, he threw himself into it, exclaiming—"Cover me with earth, and here leave your general. You are no longer my children; I am no longer your father. I have nothing more to do than to die!" The soldiers were deeply affected

* The death of Lavater is commonly attributed to a French grenadier; but it is also said that this man was not one of the enemy, and that the act was that of an assassin. It is further supposed that Lavater knew the man, but, from a Christian spirit of forgiveness, never betrayed him. Lavater lingered a long time under the effects of his wound, and did not die until the beginning of 1801.

by this dramatic scene, and, crowding round the veteran, entreated to be led up the mountain. At the word, Suwarrow put himself at their head, and impetuously dashed up the path. The small body of French slowly yielded way, and were driven across the summit of the St. Gothard. Throwing their artillery into the river Reuss, they retired down the valley of Schollonen, and caused another obstruction to the progress of the Russians by destroying the Devil's Bridge.

So impetuous was the advance of the Russians, and so unskilfully was it conducted, that when they arrived the next morning at the broken bridge, hundreds of the leading files were forced over the edge of the abyss into the Reuss, by the pressure of the rear, which continued its mechanical march, unaware of the impediment which retarded the advance of the front. The difficulty caused by the broken bridge being surmounted, the Russians at length emerged from the Alps at Altorf, only, however, to find their progress arrested by the wide expanse of the Lake of Lucerne, where neither the Austrians nor the promised transport boats (which had been seized and destroyed by the French) awaited them. Suwarrow, almost mad with passion at what he regarded as the neglect of his subordinates, was compelled to lead his troops through the difficult defile of the Shachenthal, which rendered it necessary to abandon the artillery and stores. Two days of great fatigue and suffering brought his worn and dispirited troops to the fertile valley of the Mutten. There he received intelligence of the defeat of Korzakoff and the death of Hotze. Suwarrow, burning with rage and mortification, sent a messenger to Korzakoff, informing him of the arrival of his superior, directing him to march forward, and declaring that he would hold him responsible with his head for any further retrograde movement.

Korzakoff, stung by this imperious command, and, perhaps, alarmed by the threat of the general, reorganised his broken forces, and turning almost despairingly upon the advancing French, gave them battle near Constance. The Russians were again worsted, though their cavalry behaved with great spirit; and, after being thrice broken in furious charges against a dense body of infantry, they rallied under a destructive fire of grapeshot and musketry. But for the Archduke Charles, who hastened to the assistance of Korzakoff's army, it might have been annihilated.

Suwarrow, after a terrible march, in which he lost numbers of his men, who dropped from exhaustion, or lost their footing on the slippery ridges and fell into the ravines below, found that the Austrians whom he had expected had suffered too much to be able to join him. The glory of the famous Russian general was on the wane, and he was entangled in difficulties which his wild energy was impotent to overcome. It seemed as if not merely the French, but nature itself, was in arms against him; that the silent mountains became conscious and grimly mocked his efforts. In their sublime presence an army sunk into strangely small and insignificant dimensions, and a raging general was almost as helpless as a famishing wolf.

Suwarrow now found himself in the heart of the Muttenthal, where the French were rapidly drawing their lines around him, and enclosing him within a circle from which escape seemed impossible. His troops were ragged and barefoot from much marching, disheartened by the mass of difficulties which weighed upon them, and almost without provisions. Suwarrow trusted to receive reinforcements from the emperor Paul, but none were sent. Having waited for some time in sullen inactivity, varied by fierce imprecations upon his foes, Suwarrow called a council of war, and proposed to force his way towards Schwytz, in the rear of the French position. His officers expostulated against a step which he himself felt to be dangerous even beyond rashness, and advised that he should adopt the more prudent course of retreating into the Glarus and the Grisons. The veteran at length yielded to what he felt to be a painful necessity, and, for the first time in his life, gave an order to retreat. So deeply was he wounded at this conclusion of his exploits, that he burst into tears after he had done so. His reputation for invincibility was extinguished. Yet, his resolution once taken, he acted upon it with his usual energy. Massena vainly endeavoured to draw him out of the defiles, in the hope of bringing his dispirited forces to an engagement, and of taking him prisoner. His retreat was conducted with consummate skill; keeping his enemies at bay like a lion, and compelling them to maintain a respectful distance by the fierceness of his attitude. On one occasion, when the

French assailed the rear-guard of the Russians, the latter turned upon them with such desperate fury, that they were repelled with the loss of 1,000 men killed, as many more in prisoners, and five pieces of cannon.

Suwarrow permitted his men a brief repose at Glarus, and then resumed his retreat over the rugged summits of the Alps. As he advanced the difficulties increased. The paths were choked with snow, and the men destitute of stores to sustain their strength. No covering could be obtained to shelter them from the inclemency of the wintry tempests, or trees to make fires to cheer their dreary bivouacs. Numbers perished from cold and famine; but the rest, impelled by an inexorable necessity, yet pushed on. On attaining the summit of the ridge, a prospect still more disheartening revealed itself to them. Everywhere mountains covered to their pinnacles with snow appeared to rise around them. The heavy clouds that floated over the peaks of the Tyrolese Alps, revealed by glimpses, as they rolled off at intervals, the seemingly interminable extent of these mighty mountains; and there was not a single sign of life or vegetation, not a wreath of smoke, nor a trackway visible, to afford them a direction out of this hopeless situation. During the night, most of the unfortunate soldiers had to sleep uncovered in the snow; and it was by a succession of fatigues and miseries which exceed description, that they gained the valley of the Rhine, from whence the remnant of that once fine army limped back to Russia, half-clothed, without baggage or artillery, and presenting in their wretchedness a most humiliating spectacle

Suwarrow, in the natural pride of a career that had never known defeat, had talked of conquering France, and promised to enter Paris at the head of his triumphant troops. He returned a baffled, though not conquered, fugitive. Of a fine army nothing remained but a ragged and famishing troop, and a stain had passed over the military glory of the empire. His successes in Italy could not console him for this lamentable termination of the campaign. He became morose and sullen, and accused the Austrians, and even the archduke, of treachery. Paul had given orders for the reception of the veteran general at St. Petersburg, with the intention that he should make a triumphal entry into the capital. Apartments were even prepared for him in the imperial palace. But when the capricious emperor learnt the result of the campaign in Switzerland, his complacency was succeeded by extreme irritation. By the time Suwarrow arrived at Riga, on his road to St. Petersburg, he was informed that he had fallen into disgrace. Paul attributed to him a great part of the reverses which had taken place in Switzerland, rejected his representations, and refused to give him a fresh command.

This last blow proved fatal to Suwarrow; the veteran was crushed beneath a load of humiliation too great for him to bear. He proceeded to St. Petersburg, and entered the city furtively in the dusk of evening; no longer the idol of the populace and the pride of his country, but a disgraced and unregarded man. He was supported from his carriage to his bed, which he never left again. Those whom he had recently regarded as his friends held aloof from him and such was the dread entertained of incurring the anger of the emperor, that even the Countess Zuboff, the favourite daughter of Suwarrow, towards whom he had ever shown the strongest affection, suffered an unworthy fear to withhold her from the presence of her miserable and dying father. Paul afterwards softened towards the dying veteran, and permitted the grand-dukes to visit him. He was, however, far past that point at which the smiles of princes could have acted as a restorative. His mind frequently wandered, and after lingering until the 10th of May, 1800, he died at the age of seventy, after expressing a wish that a portrait of the empress Catherine, which he had worn constantly about his person, might still rest on his bosom in the grave. The greatest blemish of his character was his utter disregard of life in the execution of his duty; while his merits may be expressed in the sentence, that he is one of the few generals who never lost a battle. His funeral was conducted with great solemnity, and 15,000 of his soldiers accompanied his body to its last resting-place.

Paul's anger was not appeased by the disgrace of Suwarrow. The contemptible monarch, with that absence of generous or enlarged feeling which characterised almost every act of his life, poured out his wrath upon the suffering troops who had so faithfully served him, and whose bravery and endurance had extorted admiration even from their foes. With an ungrateful and

insolent forgetfulness of their services, Paul endeavoured, by an imperial order, to disgrace the memory of the officers who had perished in that fatal campaign. All, too, who were missing—that is, who were prisoners in France; a list which included some of the bravest men in the service—he caused to be broken as deserters. As to the captive soldiers, he abandoned them to their fate, and refused to adopt any means of promoting an exchange, or otherwise to alleviate the misery of their situation. One consolation only remained to him in the matter, and that arose from the belief that the reverses of Russia were solely brought about by the jealousy and treachery of the Austrians.

The disappointments of the emperor Paul, in connection with this campaign, did not end with the defeats and disasters experienced by his armies in Switzerland. He had recently concluded a treaty with England, by which he agreed to send a Russian force to co-operate with the British in an attack on the French in Holland. This country was selected for attack because, of all those in possession of republican France, it lay nearest to the shores of England, and also because its means of defence were inconsiderable. It was arranged that England should furnish 13,000, and Russia 17,000, men. Besides furnishing her complement of troops, England was to pay £44,000 per month for the expenses of the Russians, and to employ her whole naval force to support the operations. On the 13th of August, Sir Ralph Abercrombie, who was entrusted with the chief command, sailed with the first division, consisting of 12,000 British troops embarked in transports, to join Lord Duncan, who was then cruising in the North Seas. The fort of the Helder was immediately abandoned by its garrison, and taken possession of by Abercrombie. The Dutch fleet also surrendered, and hoisted the Orange flag. General Brune, the French commander, with a force of 25,000 men, attacked the English, with the hope of dislodging them before the arrival of the Russians, but was repulsed with a loss of 2,000 men. Abercrombie was, nevertheless, left for a whole month in a very critical situation, but his inferior force resolutely stood its ground. In September the Russian army arrived, under General Hermann, and the remainder of the English force, accompanied by the Duke of York. From this time nothing went well; and every difficulty which befel the English appeared in some strange way to arise from the shortcomings of the Russians. In the first battle that was fought after the junction of these ill-sorted allies, the English succeeded in driving back the French, and in taking all the villages that lay before them. This partial success was, however, neutralised by the reverses of the Russians. General Hermann's troops fell, after a short time, into confusion. The French, encouraged at the sight, assailed them furiously both in front and flank, and drove them, at the point of the bayonet, behind the allied intrenchments. The Russian general was taken prisoner; 3,500 of his men were killed or wounded, and twenty-six pieces of cannon and seven standards captured.

When this news reached the Duke of York, he withdrew his men from the pursuit of the enemy, and attempted to retrieve the misfortune of his allies. It was in vain; and after a sharp struggle, he was compelled to retire within the fortified lines.

Other engagements followed, not dishonourable to our troops, but disastrous in their results, and rather disgraceful in point of generalship. Every day the prospects of the allies became more hopeless; and the approach of the autumnal rains in a country so exposed to inundations that, in ancient times, it was doubted whether the inhabitants belonged to the land or to the sea, raised up new obstacles to the allies. By the 17th of October, the Duke of York, baffled in an attempt upon Haarlem, was induced to conclude a convention, by which it was agreed that the English and Russians should be allowed to embark without molestation, on condition that 8,000 prisoners of war, French and Batavians, taken before that campaign, and then prisoners of war, should be set at liberty.

The failure of this expedition under such ignoble circumstances, especially as regarded the Russians, and the scattering of the latter by their allies over Guernsey and Jersey, the inhabitants of which continually reminded them of their reverses, excited the irritable Paul almost to frenzy. He applied the most opprobrious terms to the coalition, of which he had been the most active member, and rudely treated the English and Austrian ambassadors at his court, refusing to confer with them, and expressing a desire that they should leave St. Petersburg. He even attributed the disasters in Holland to the English, as he

had before accused the Austrians of the unfortunate results of the campaign in Switzerland. Not satisfied with treating his allies with an insulting contempt, he even tacitly withdrew from the coalition without publishing his reasons for doing so. The sudden withdrawal of his troops from Italy—where Suwarrow, shortly before his death, had proposed to attempt, with the Austrians, a desperate scheme, with the object of repairing the calamities that had befallen him—happily broke up the alliance between Austria and Russia. Paul, in fact, saw, for the first time, that he had committed an error in assisting the Austrians in Italy against the French. What he proposed to himself in this alliance was, the extinction of revolutionary and republican principles. What he actually, though, of course, unconsciously and unintentionally did, was to promote the interests of Austria in Italy, and thus disturb the balance of power on the very side on which he had interfered to correct it. Paul, therefore, when he perceived this, broke up the alliance abruptly, and, in the fury arising from a consciousness of error, extended his anger to every person in connection with it, against whom any excuse for contempt or punishment could be devised.

CHAPTER XLIV

PAUL, HAVING ABANDONED HIS ALLIES, CONCEIVES AN ADMIRATION FOR NAPOLEON; MALTA SURRENDERED TO THE ENGLISH; PAUL SEIZES THE BRITISH TRADING VESSELS IN THE RUSSIAN HARBOURS; MARITIME COALITION OF THE NORTHERN POWERS AGAINST ENGLAND; BATTLE OF COPENHAGEN; TERROR CAUSED BY THE TYRANNY OF PAUL; FORMATION OF A CONSPIRACY TO DEPOSE HIM; THE GRAND-DUKES ALEXANDER AND CONSTANTINE ARE ADMITTED TO IT; MURDER OF THE EMPEROR; ESTIMATE OF HIS CHARACTER; DISSOLUTION OF THE NORTHERN COALITION; REFLECTIONS UPON THE DESIGN OF PAUL AND NAPOLEON ON THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN INDIA.

ANOTHER change had taken place in the government of France. Napoleon, on his return from Egypt in October, 1799, had overthrown the Directory, and attained the dignity of First Consul, or chief magistrate of France. He also aimed at the reconstruction of a monarchy; and, towards the end of January, 1800, removed from the palace of the Luxembourg to that of the Tuileries, into which royal residence he made his public entrance amidst the acclamations of the multitude.

Probably the emperor Paul divined the intentions of Napoleon, and saw that the great soldier would endeavour to raise, in his own person, a new monarchical dynasty upon the ruins of the ancient royalty of France. Doubtless Paul would have preferred that the sceptre should have remained in the hands of the Bourbons, than that it should pass into those of a military adventurer. Yet, to the mind of Paul, any form of government was better than a republic; any principles preferable to those of the revolution.

No sooner had Paul violated the compact into which he had entered with Austria and with England, than a remarkable change took place in his feelings towards France. He appeared impressed with a sense of respect, if not of admiration, for Napoleon, and by no means indisposed to enter into a treaty of peace with France. This conduct was perfectly in accordance with the passionate and fickle nature of the northern autocrat. Napoleon was not slow to perceive and to profit by this change of sentiment on the part of Paul; for he was well aware of the immense importance of neutralising the hostility of Russia. An opportunity at once offered which enabled Napoleon to make a graceful advance towards conciliation. The English had refused to redeem the Russian soldiers, amounting to about six or seven thousand, who had been made prisoners in their service, and were then in captivity in France. Napoleon, therefore, set them free, without either exchange or ransom. He even went so far as to restore to them their arms and standards, and provide them with new clothing in the uniform of their respective regiments. In sending them back to their own country, he also forwarded a letter to

the Russian minister, saying, "that he was unwilling to suffer such brave soldiers as these Russians were, to remain longer away from their native land on account of the English." Such an act of courtesy necessarily led to expressions of warm acknowledgment on the part of the emperor, and to an interchange of friendly offices. Shortly afterwards the emperor addressed a letter to the illustrious Corsican, in which he wrote:—"Citizen, Chief Consul,—I do not write to you to discuss the rights of men or citizens; every country governs itself as it pleases. Whenever I see at the head of a nation a man who knows how to rule and how to fight, my heart is attracted towards him. I write to acquaint you of my dissatisfaction with England, who violates every article of the law of nations, and has no guide but her egotism and her interest. I wish to unite with you to put an end to the unjust proceedings of that government." This flattering letter led to a regular correspondence between the emperor and the chief consul; and the latter took advantage of it to nurse into being the naval convention which subsequently took place among the northern powers.

The recent allies of Paul were astonished at his caprice; but he was far too irritated against them to attach any importance to their opinions on such a point. Napoleon, now at liberty to direct his arms chiefly against the Austrians, inflicted a severe defeat upon them at the battle of Marengo (14th June, 1800); an event which wonderfully consolidated his power, and increased his influence over the minds of the people of France. The government of Naples was in imminent danger from the victorious troops of the republic; and the queen of that city went in person to St. Petersburg, and implored the intercession of the emperor with Napoleon on behalf of her little kingdom. Paul felt flattered by the application, and promised to use all his influence with the first consul for the attainment of her wishes. To give additional weight to his mediation, he sent Lowescheff, an officer of his household, to the court of the Tuileries. The envoy was received with extraordinary distinction; and, in reply to his application, Napoleon consented to spare Naples, and undertook alone to regulate the destinies of that kingdom. His first step with respect to it, was to close the ports of Naples and Sicily against English merchant vessels as well as ships of war.

While incidents like these created a good understanding between the first consul and the emperor, the breach between the latter and the English government was considerably widened. In the September of 1800, the French, who had been closely blockaded within the fortifications of Malta for two years, surrendered the island to the English, in whose possession it has since remained. Paul had caused himself to be elected grand-master of the almost extinct order of St. John, by the knights resident in Russia. He therefore put forth a claim to the sovereignty of the island, and asserted that the conquest of it by the English was an infringement of the convention of 1798; which, he said, contained a stipulation that the island should be given up to the order of St. John of Jerusalem. As no such stipulation was contained in the treaty, the demand that the island should be surrendered to Russia was refused.

Paul was furious, and at once proceeded to an act of most unwarrantable violence. He seized all the British vessels in the Russian harbours, amounting to nearly three hundred, together with their valuable cargoes. As to the crews, they were sent into the interior of Russia, and allowed only a few copecks* each a day for their support. All the English property on shore, also, the emperor put under sequestration; and a few vessels at Narva having weighed anchor and escaped, he was so incensed, that he burnt the remainder. Not only were these outrages contrary to the usages of all civilised states, but they were in direct violation of an article in an existing treaty between Russia and England; by which it was expressly stipulated that, in the event of a rupture between the two powers, no embargo should be laid on the vessels of either, but that the merchants, on both sides, should be allowed a year to take away or dispose of their goods.

This flagrant proceeding on the part of Paul, was the first outbreak of that spirit of combination against England which was resolving itself into the shape of a maritime coalition of the northern powers. In the December of 1800, a maritime convention was completed, and signed by Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, and, subsequently, by Prussia. By this, the right of search of neutral vessels, claimed and exercised by England, was declared to be an attempt

* A copeck is something less in value than an English halfpenny.

against the sovereign rights of the several powers forming the confederacy; which promised to assemble a squadron of the four Baltic powers, to protect their merchant vessels, and resist any attempt at searching them.*

The British government regarded this proceeding with jealousy and indignation. When George III. met the recently opened parliament, on the 2nd of February, 1801, he adverted, in his speech from the throne, to the unhappy course of events on the continent, and announced that a fresh storm was gathering in the north; that the court of St. Petersburg had already proceeded to commit outrages against the ships, property, and persons of his subjects; and that a convention had been concluded by that court with those of Copenhagen and Stockholm, the object of which was to renew their former engagement for re-establishing, by force of arms, a new code of maritime laws, inconsistent with the rights, and hostile to the best interests, of this country. He added, that he had taken the earliest measures to repel the aggressions of this hostile confederacy, and expressed his confidence that both houses of parliament would afford him effectual support in his firm determination to maintain to the utmost, against every attack, the naval rights and interests of his empire. Some members of the opposition recommended conciliatory measures, and even the suspension of the right of search, or a tacit assent to the principles of the armed neutrality, which the empress Catherine had first raised against us during the American war, and which the northern powers were now about to revive—hinting at the terrible consequences which might arise from the closing of the corn ports on the Baltic. Pitt expressed a regret that members of the legislature should increase the difficulties of the nation by starting doubts on the question of its right of search; observing, that it was singularly unfortunate that these gentlemen should first have began to doubt when the enemy began to arm.

Preparations were immediately made for sending the British fleet into the Baltic; and an order was issued for a general embargo on all vessels belonging to the confederation. Letters of marque were also issued; and so vigorously were they acted upon, that nearly one-half of the merchantmen of the northern powers were soon to be found in the British harbours. The English ministry perceived that our naval supremacy depended upon striking some decisive blow before the naval forces of the confederacy should be united. The Danes had distinguished themselves, ever since the beginning of the war with France, in carrying French goods and articles contraband, and had resisted or eluded the search whenever they were able to do so. The Danes, therefore, were selected as an example of the naval power of England, in the event of their refusing to accede to the terms it should dictate with respect to the northern coalition.

On the 12th of March, a fleet, consisting of eighteen sail-of-the-line and a number of frigates and smaller vessels, under the command of Admiral Sir Hyde Parker and Vice-admiral Lord Nelson, who acted in subordination to him, proceeded to the Baltic. As negotiation was preferred to war, Mr. Vansittart accompanied the squadron as plenipotentiary, with full powers to treat. He left the fleet in the Scaw, and proceeded in a frigate with a flag of truce to Copenhagen; but returned without success from his mission, which only served to stimulate the Danes, and give them time to augment their means of defence. Nelson disapproved of distant negotiation. He remarked, "The Dane should see our flag every moment he lifts up his head." Notwithstanding his representations, several days were dissipated in inactivity. On the 30th, however, the British fleet passed the Sound; and despite the batteries of Cronenberg Castle, anchored near Copenhagen. The naval battle which takes it name from that city, was fought on the 2nd of April, and declared by Nelson

* This coalition was mainly promoted by Napoleon, who, aiming at the destruction of the naval supremacy of England, contended for the maritime rights of the neutral powers of Europe, which he rested on the following principles:—1. The sea is the dominion of all nations. 2. The flag covers the merchandise. 3. A neutral ship may be visited by a belligerent vessel, to ascertain its flag and cargo, so far as to be satisfied that it carries no contraband goods. 4. Contraband goods are considered to be military stores only. 5. Neutral ships may be prevented from entering a place that is besieged, if the blockade be real, and the entrance be evidently dangerous.—On the other hand, the English government peremptorily contended—1. That materials adapted for building ships, such as timber, hemp, tar, &c., were contraband goods. 2. That although a neutral ship had a right to go from a friendly port to an enemy's port, it could not traffic between one hostile port and another. 3. That neutral ships could not sail from the enemy's colony to the mother country. 4. That neutral powers had no right to have their merchant ships convoyed by ships of war; and that, if they did so, this would not exempt them from search.

to be the most dreadful affair, and the hardest fought battle he had ever witnessed. The victory of the British was purchased with the loss of 1,200 men; that of the Danes was estimated at 1,700 or 1,800, besides about 4,000 prisoners. Six line-of-battle ships and eight praams were taken; but all, except one of the former, were burnt. This success, together with an incident we shall shortly relate, broke up the northern coalition.

We have gone rather in advance of those events which are exclusively Russian, and must take a retrospective step in our narration. The alliance between Paul and Napoleon had warmed into something approaching to friendship. The English and Austrian ambassadors were dismissed from St. Petersburg; and Count Kalitscheff went to Paris as the ambassador of Russia, and was received with distinction. "France," said Napoleon, publicly, "can ally itself only with Russia, for Russia is mistress of the Baltic and Black Seas, and she holds the keys of India in her hands; the emperor of such a country is truly a great prince. Paul is eccentric, but he has at least a will of his own."

The emperor had, indeed, gone far beyond eccentricity; and his conduct towards those around him, and to all who had the misfortune to be subject to his authority, was daily assuming a more arbitrary and irrational aspect. Changeable in his moods, shifting constantly from one mad whim to another, he remained only resolute in vindictive severity, which increased as his growing fears magnified the natural hatred which surrounded him. So variable were his humours, that he sometimes encouraged one day the very actions for which he would inflict punishment the next. At length, not only his family, but the whole empire became aware that he had lost all command over his passions; and many persons charitably attributed his extravagant behaviour to insanity. At one period he conceived the project of taking the institution of Freemasonry under his special protection, and of placing himself at its head. He even proceeded so far in this matter, as to establish a committee to examine the acts and statutes of the Freemasons, with a view to revise their organisation. He, however, soon abandoned this scheme, for the purpose of connecting himself with the ancient and romantic order of the Knights of St. John of Malta. Then, completely reversing his intentions, he prohibited all secret assemblies, and compelled the presidents of the lodges of the Masons to promise that they would not hold any meetings without his consent; in this manner, his promised protection was converted into oppression.

A state of things resembling a reign of terror prevailed at St. Petersburg, and arrests and banishments took place every day on the slightest pretences. Carts filled with prisoners constantly took the road to Siberia; and the unfortunate victims were seldom allowed time to settle their affairs, or even to provide the clothing necessary to guard against the rigours of the inclement region to which they were expelled. Not only banishment, but the fearful punishment of the knout, was decreed for the slightest faults, and sometimes inflicted where no fault whatever had been committed. No one, either man or woman, was safe for an hour; for the fury of the emperor was poured out indiscriminately on all classes and ranks of society. His hours of calmness became progressively rarer, and it is certain that he laboured under a mental irritability which narrowly bordered upon insanity. Napoleon afterwards declared, that he thought, "latterly, Paul was mad." Great probability was given to this supposition by the state papers and articles written by the despot, and published in the *St. Petersburg Gazette*. On one occasion he issued, through the medium of that journal, an invitation to the sovereigns of Europe to come to St. Petersburg and settle their disputes by a combat, with their ministers—Pitt, Thugut, Bernsdorf, and Talleyrand—as esquires. This strange whim was the result of the irritation produced in his mind by some English caricatures representing him as an idiot, which had been artfully sent him by Napoleon. Paul was, indeed, embittered against this country. Whenever despatches were presented to him from England, proposing terms of reconciliation, he contemptuously thrust them through with his penknife, and then returned them unopened.

Paul's own family were not exempt from the effects of his furious and ungovernable temper. The empress submitted patiently to all his caprices, though her place, as his wife, was supplied by the ugly and diminutive Mademoiselle Nelidof. Yet neither the empress nor her sons were able to avoid incurring the morbid suspicions of Paul. It was rumoured by persons of influence at

court, that he had said he would send the empress to Kalamagan in the government of Astracan, Alexander to the dismal fortress of Schlusselburg, and Constantine to the citadel of St. Petersburg. Whether or not Paul threatened this proceeding, it was felt by the distinguished persons alluded to, that he might at any time put it into practice, and that no carefulness to avoid offence would be a security against unmerited but severe punishment. This induced even the family of the emperor to share the growing feeling, that it was necessary to remove him from the exalted position he was so utterly unfit to fill.

It was conjectured by some persons, that the mental derangement of Paul was caused by the disappointment of an illicit passion which he entertained for the Countess Lapoukhin, a lady of the court, who wisely preferred an honourable marriage with a subject to the invidious distinction proposed to her by the emperor. The refusal of the lady threw him into such fits of rage, as were calculated to produce serious results even to himself, and rendered him dangerous to every person whose unpleasant duty it was to approach him. Many of his frantic acts were attributed to the suggestions of the Count Koutaisof, who, from his barber, had become his favourite and minister.* The latter denied the imputation, and perhaps with truth, for court favourites are always exposed to accusations of that kind. Moreover, the elevation of this man, who was a Turk by birth, had given great offence to the nobility, and assisted in promoting the discontent which had become general amongst them. The caprices of Paul, however, wounded not only their pride, but their interests. As landed proprietors, they suffered greatly by the suspension of commercial intercourse with England. This consideration also pressed heavily upon the mercantile classes, who feared to enter into any extensive speculations under a government at once so variable and insecure.

All these circumstances led to a result which it is not difficult to anticipate. A conspiracy was entered into amongst a number of officers and others, most of whom held important and confidential situations near the person of the emperor. Amongst them were Plato Zuboff, and his brothers, Valerian and Nicholas, who had all suffered loss and insult at the hands of Paul, but were then restored to favour; Generals Benningsen, Ouvaroff, and Jaschwel; and Colonels Tatarmoff and Jesselowitz. But the director and master-mind of the conspiracy was Count Pahlen, the military governor of St. Petersburg. He was an Esthonian by birth, and a man of a cold, crafty, and faithless nature. He had, to some extent, been the instrument of the severities of the emperor; but he hated a master whom he could not serve either with respect or safety to himself. The high character of Pahlen was such as to neutralise the suspicion of the emperor, should it be excited; while the suavity of his manners and the readiness of his speech were also calculated to disarm it. It is said that he had long entertained a wish to depose the despotic Paul, and to place the Grand-duke Alexander on the throne, in the hope of rising to the first place in the councils of the inexperienced monarch, or even to reign over the empire in his name. This is by no means improbable; but that which appears to have been the direct inducement for him to join the conspiracy, was his discovery that Paul intended to dismiss and disgrace him.

Count Pahlen proceeded with consummate art to provide for the success of the dangerous scheme in which he had embarked. It is presumed that the intention

* Koutaisof was a Turk of low origin, who had been originally *valet-de-chambre* to Paul, and who so far won his favour, that he rose, at last, to be his confidant and minister. Such was the power which this man obtained over the emperor, that even the nobility, who detested him, bowed before his authority. Suwarrow alone, unaccustomed to the servility of courts, did not hesitate to humiliate him by the expression of his contempt. Paul had occasion one day to communicate with Suwarrow, and sent this favourite to the veteran to convey his commands. When the name of Count Koutaisof was announced, Suwarrow exclaimed, "Koutaisof! I do not know a Russian family of that name." Koutaisof replied, "that he was a Turk, and that the favour of the emperor had elevated him to the dignity with which he was invested." "You have, without doubt," responded Suwarrow, "distinguished yourself in arms?" "I have never served in the field," answered Koutaisof. "Or in the ministry?" inquired Suwarrow. "I have not been charged with civil affairs," said Koutaisof, "I have always been placed near the person of the emperor." "Well, well," persevered the old general, "and in what capacity?" Koutaisof wished to turn the conversation, but the pitiless warrior pursued his questions, until he forced him to avow that he had been *valet-de-chambre*. Suwarrow then turned to his own servant, and said, "See, Ivan, what it is to conduct oneself well; this lord was once what thou art—behold him now decorated with a blue riband." —*Levesque.*

of those who were admitted to the secret, was to compel Paul to sign a deed of abdication, and that they had not any intention of murdering him. However that may be, Pahlen contrived to collect in St. Petersburg, and implicate in the plot, a number of persons who had sustained injuries from the emperor, and who were not likely to recoil from bloodshed. Pahlen also had the address to alienate from the favour of the doomed emperor all those courtiers whom he feared would be adverse to his design.

The masterpiece of Pahlen, however, consisted in implicating the Grand-dukes Alexander and Constantine in the conspiracy against their father. This was necessary for his safety; for if the plot failed, Pahlen's life would be sacrificed to the rage of Paul; and if it succeeded, he might yet fall a victim to the vengeance of Alexander. The latter danger would probably be removed if the future monarch shared the crime which was to place him on the throne. Pahlen, therefore, secretly excited the father against the sons, and then worked upon their fears to excite them against their father. He represented to the grand-dukes that he was labouring for their welfare, and urged that their safety and that of the empire required that the insanity of the emperor should be restrained from producing any further injury to the public interests. He spoke no word which implied that any violence was intended towards Paul, and dwelt upon the emperor's assumed intention of placing his sons in confinement. The princes both recoiled from any active participation in the conspiracy; but they felt the cogency of Pahlen's arguments, and consented that their father should be compelled to abdicate. Alexander concurred so far, that he signed the proclamation announcing his own assumption of the reins of government two hours before the consummation of the conspiracy.

When so many persons were admitted to the plot, it is not surprising that some rumours of it reached the ears of the emperor, whose miserable fears made him suspect every one who approached him to be an assassin. Sending for Pahlen, Paul acquainted him with his apprehensions, and desired him to spare no means of informing himself of all the facts of the case. The astute minister replied calmly, "Sire, I know it all; and, in order to assure myself of the guilty, I am myself a conspirator." The apparent openness of this answer pacified the emperor, and induced him to confide in the presumed integrity and vigilance of his minister. It was not long, however, before he received more explicit information, and he then suspected that Pahlen had taken a real and not a feigned part in the conspiracy. Under this impression, he wrote to Araktcheief, the former governor of St. Petersburg, then commanding some trusty troops at a distance of forty verste from the capital, desiring his immediate presence, and expressing a belief that he had been betrayed by Pahlen. The latter, aware of every movement that took place at the palace, arrested the courier, and, opening his despatches, saw that his only chance of escaping destruction, lay in carrying the design against Paul into immediate operation. The next day was accordingly fixed for its accomplishment.

The time thus necessarily adopted was a favourable one, for it was the period of the *Maslanitza*, or Russian carnival, when the whole population surrender themselves to festivity. An hour before midnight, about twenty of the conspirators presented themselves at the side door of the palace which opened on the gardens. They were at first refused admission by the sentry; but on representing to the man that they had been sent for by the emperor, who intended that night to hold a council of war, and knowing most of them to be officers of rank, he allowed them to pass. Silently ascending the staircase, they advanced cautiously to the antechamber. Then Argamakoff, the aide-de-camp in waiting, who had entered into the design, went forward alone. The Cossack on guard he deceived by saying that there was a fire in the city, and that he came to awaken the emperor. The Cossack permitted him to pass, and Argamakoff knocked at the door of the royal apartment, and announced his name. Paul was in bed; but, knowing the voice, he opened the door by means of a cord attached to it for that purpose. No sooner had he done so, than the other conspirators crowded into the antechamber. A conviction of their intended purpose flashed across the mind of the guard, who shouted, "Treason!" He had no time to give the alarm further; for the confederated officers instantly cut him down, and then rushed into the chamber of the emperor. They found the bed empty, and some exclaimed that the despot had escaped. "That is impossible," said Gene-

ral Benningsen, who feared that at this critical moment the irresolution of some of his associates might lead to their common destruction. Turning to them, he exclaimed threateningly, "No weakness, or I will put you all to death." Then, putting his hand on the bedclothes, and feeling them warm, he added, that the emperor could not be far off. Almost immediately afterwards, Paul was perceived crouching behind a screen, from which ineffectual hiding-place he was dragged by the resolute general. Just before the entrance of the conspirators, the trembling despot had seized a sword, and attempted, in his night-dress, to gain a private staircase, from which he could have effected his escape. It was too late; but now, though detected, and brought face to face with those whom he must have regarded as his intended assassins, he confronted them in a bold and manly manner. Passion and excitement gave him for the time a courage which he did not ordinarily possess. Turning on some of those present, on whom he had conferred his capricious favours, he reproached them bitterly as traitors and ingrates. Heedless of his anger, Plato Zuboff read to him the act of abdication that had been prepared, and required him to sign it instantly. Paul refused, saying, that "he was emperor, and would remain emperor;" and then burst into a torrent of invectives against Zuboff in particular. The latter coolly informed him that he was no longer emperor, and called upon him to surrender in the name of the czar Alexander. Paul, bursting with passion, struck at Zuboff; and the conspirators, dismayed by this boldness drew back and hesitated.

It was a critical moment; for the life of the despot trembled in one scale, that of the conspirators in the other. Their veneration of the imperial authority, and the habit of passive submission to it, was regaining its influence over most of them. The arrival of a few persons faithful to the czar would have struck panic into these lawless avengers of the sufferings of an empire; even the merest accident might have effectually awed the conspirators, and saved the miserable autocrat, who, with his hideous face distorted with excitement, and livid from the conflicting emotions of rage and terror, glared at them like a wild beast at bay. A distant shout, or the sound of approaching footsteps towards that fatal chamber where stood the living emperor whose moments were numbered, might have rescued him. It was not to be; there was at least, among the conspirators, one whose resolution was undaunted; and his spirit reanimated the rest. This was General Benningsen, who reminded them that, if Paul escaped, an inevitable death upon the scaffold awaited them.

This observation roused the confederates to a sense of their position, and awakened in them that resolution which commonly springs from a sense of danger. Nicholas Zuboff instantly rushed upon the emperor, and, by a single blow, broke his right arm. His example was immediately followed, and the other conspirators threw themselves upon Paul. Excited to frenzy, he fought with them furiously; but such an unequal struggle was necessarily of brief duration. Overpowered, exhausted, and covered with blood, he fell to the ground. In this position a sash was hurriedly passed round his neck, and his agony terminated by strangulation. His last words were, "And you, too, my Constantine!"* The wretched tyrant fancied that his own son was among his

* Considerable differences exist amongst the various narrations concerning the details of the death of Paul; but where all the witnesses had an interest in concealing the particulars, it can scarcely be expected that every account should coincide. One account was given by the soldier who guarded the anteroom to the bedchamber of Paul; for the man, though cut down, was not killed by the conspirators, and was afterwards taken by the empress into her protection. It is not, however, likely that this man, faint from the loss of blood, and fearing for his own life, was in a condition to be very accurately acquainted with proceedings which took place in the next apartment. All accounts, however, though differing in detail, agree as to the main facts; and we have endeavoured to attain as much correctness in the relation of these as the evidence of the best accessible authorities would enable us. It is stated by some writers, that Paul, from the moment he saw the conspirators until they broke out into violence, did not utter a single word, but fell into a sort of stupor, from whence he was awakened by Prince Tatchwill, the major-general of artillery, who, inflamed with wine, came in with several of his companions; and, finding Benningsen and seven or eight of his friends standing motionless in the room, furiously attacked the emperor, and, overturning the lamp, involved the apartment in darkness. In the struggle that followed, Benningsen, according to this authority, is said to have repeatedly urged Paul not to attempt to escape or to defend himself, as he feared his life would be the penalty; and, throughout the whole scene, Benningsen did not take any more active part. Having left the room to procure a light, he found Paul, on his return, lying on the ground strangled. The only resistance which Paul is said, by this account, to have made, was putting his hand between his neck and the sash, and ex-

murderers. It has been denied that the grand-duke was present, or even aware that the project in which he was implicated would have so tragical a termination. For the honour of human nature we trust that such was the case. It is difficult to entertain a spark of pity for the despot, whose cruelties had rendered him unfit to live, and whose violent death we regard with no more emotion than we should that of a wolf, or other beast of prey. But that his own son should have been present amongst the assassins, and assisted to extinguish that life from which he derived his own, would have been a circumstance both unnatural and appalling. The incident has been explained, and we are willing to believe truthfully so, by the statement that the bewildered emperor took one of the conspirators for the grand-duke on account of a similarity in their dress.

Thus perished Paul, on the night of the 23rd of March, 1801,* at the age of forty-seven, after a brief reign of four years and nearly five months.†

The subtle and unprincipled Count Pahlen, who had been the animating principle of the conspiracy, was not present during the murder of the emperor. With a prudent but profound and dishonourable duplicity, he had placed himself at the head of a regiment of guards, prepared either to congratulate his accomplices on their good fortune in the event of their success, or to represent himself as the deliverer of Paul should the autocrat have escaped.

While the conspirators were engaged with Paul, his eldest son, the Grand-duke Alexander, remained in a room below, expecting to receive the news of his father's arrest and deposition. Whether he anticipated, as he reasonably might have done, the dark result of the design, or had heard the noise arising from the struggle, and thus guessed that his parent had been assassinated, we are unable to say. But on the return of the conspirators, he eagerly demanded of them, whether the life of his father had been spared? On receiving a reply in the negative, he tore his hair, and, uttering passionate expressions of sorrow, refused, for a short time, to allow himself to be nominated to the succession. This emotion might have been sincere; but we must confess to a suspicion of its hollowness. The admirers or adulators of Alexander have given him the credit of being both humane and affectionate. Emperors, however, are never in want of flatterers, who are ready to argue even their weaknesses or crimes into virtues; and a profound judge of human character, who afterwards knew Alexander well, pronounced him to be both false and cunning.‡

The news of the sudden death of the emperor, whom a complaisant court physician pronounced to have died of apoplexy, soon spread through the city, and was received with acclamations and expressions of unbounded joy. So intolerable had the tyranny of Paul become, that his death was everywhere felt as a relief, and the people, army and nobles, were unanimous in their congratulations and rejoicings. To such an extent was this carried, that a stranger might have supposed some great festival to be in course of celebration. Assembling beneath the windows of the palace, the populace rent the air with shouts, mingled with the name of Alexander. These demonstrations induced him to abandon all idea of refusing to accept the title of emperor; if, indeed, he seriously entertained it. It was evident that an attempt to revenge the death of his father might have resulted in a revolution; for so great was the joy of

claiming in French, "Gentlemen, for heaven's sake, spare me! leave me time to pray to God!" which were his last words. There are many reasons for questioning the truth of this account. It is inconsistent with the violent character of Paul, who might reasonably be supposed to reproach his assassins with the favours he had bestowed upon them; and it is equally inconsistent with the part which General Benningsen took in the affair, having that night supped at General Talizin's with Pahlen and the other leaders, and undertaken, with the energy which is known to have distinguished him, the bold office of heading the party at the palace.

* Some accounts say, that Paul was murdered on the 24th of March, not the 23rd. As it was about midnight when the event took place, it has been referred by some narrators to the following day.

† Paul left ten children, all the offspring of his second wife, the Princess of Wurtemberg. Their names and the dates of their births are as follows:—Alexander, born 23rd December, 1777; Constantine, born 1779; Alexandrina, born 1783, married to Joseph, palatine of Hungary; Helena, born 1784, married to Frederic, prince of Mecklenburg-Strelitz; Maria, born 1786, married to Charles, grand duke of Saxe-Weimar; Catherine, born 1788, married first to Prince George of Holstein Oldenburg, secondly to William I., king of Wurtemberg; Olga, born 1792; Anne, born 1795, married to William II., king of Holland; Nicholas, born 1796; Michael, born 1798.

‡ The emperor Napoleon I. Indeed, even the panegyrists of Alexander admit that he was a profound dissembler

the people, that they were with difficulty restrained from hailing the regicides as the saviours of the empire. Shortly afterwards, a deputation of the nobility, the officials and the magistrates of the city, waited on Alexander, and tendered him their allegiance. At the same time, Count Pahlen, who headed the deputation, read an address, representing the indispensable necessity of a total change of policy on the part of the new emperor.

Little need be said respecting the character of Paul, which has, perhaps, been sufficiently revealed by our narrative. It is, moreover, not agreeable to dwell on a picture which is all storm and shadows. He has been said to have occasionally exhibited traits of humanity; but we are, after patient reflection, at a loss to discover them. He visited and pardoned Kosciusko for a whim, and because the patriot had been condemned to imprisonment by the empress Catherine, whose commands Paul ever loved to reverse. He also degraded poor officers by an ostentatious gift of *food!* which the management of the army ought never to have permitted them to want. This was eccentricity, not humanity; for Paul abundantly proved that he was destitute of all gentle and kindly emotions. His tyranny was intolerable, and his cruelty petty, harassing, and incessant. He did not resemble the lion who rends and slays, but the reptile which stings and poisons. He delighted to terrify his subjects, and to make them feel the weight of his authority. Sometimes a touch of grim humour was mingled with his caprice or anger. On one occasion, while engaged in private conversation with a nobleman of his court, the emperor, without any provocation, gave him a sound box on the ear, saying at the same time, "This salutation with my hand Paul," in punning allusion to one of the epistles of his namesake the apostle. The vanity of the emperor was gigantic, his arrogance unbounded. In that direction the irritability of his mind appears to have passed the bounds of disorder, and become disease. The reverence which he commanded to be observed towards him, was such as it is only becoming in men to pay to the Deity. Capricious in all things, he never adhered to any principle of policy, or to any purpose. Narrow in his intellect, he viewed every subject through the medium of personal feelings. He even considered an event or alliance as acceptable, or otherwise, according as it pleased him, and not as it affected the interests of the empire. As Napoleon observed, he had a will of his own, and a resolute one; but it must be added, that he was utterly destitute of the judgment requisite to direct it. To his capricious and petty cruelty, he added a treachery which he commonly visited upon those whom he led to believe he had regarded as friends. No one could trust him; no one could depend upon his humour even from one hour to another. His activity was remarkable, especially in mischief; and, indeed, he was employed in little else. His motives were little, and his actions mean and unkingly. His nature was a mixture of the military martinet and the inquisitorial police-officer. His oppression was of a puerile character, and might have been regarded as ridiculous, but for the serious consequences resulting from it. A furious war against round hats, lapelled waistcoats, or Russian harness, might seem, though irritating, to be absurd; but these proceedings take a very different complexion when we learn that people were punished with merciless severity, even to the extent of being exiled for life to the wilds of Siberia, for even accidentally infringing the whimsical edicts of the emperor on these points. Paul had a passion for remodelling everything; yet it may be safely said that he improved nothing. Everything he did was of a petty and pragmatical kind; the people, the army, the legislature, the press, all bitterly felt the pressure of his innovating hand. Indeed, his reforms, or rather changes, always produced more evil than that which they were occasionally intended to effect. We say occasionally, because he often commanded extensive alterations to be made in the machinery of the state, without condescending to assign any reason whatever; if, in fact, he possessed any. It was his *will*, and he expected and enforced an unquestioning obedience. In brief, if the emperor Paul is to be regarded as accountable for his actions, he must be pronounced as the worst and meanest despot of modern times; insignificant but for his despotic fury, and never even great in crime. If, on the other hand, we acquit him of his crimes against society on the plea of insanity, we must deplore that fatal form of government which is ever liable to invest a maniac with absolute and uncontrollable power over the largest empire in the world.

To these remarks of our own, we will append the following observations from the

pen of Count Ségur, the French ambassador at St. Petersburg during a portion of the latter part of the reign of the empress Catherine. The count, possessing the suavity of a courtier who had frequently seen and conversed with the autocrat, was evidently influenced by a desire to render his sketch as devoid of repulsive features as a strict regard for truth would permit. He says*—"With much wit and information, the Grand-duke Paul possessed the most restless and suspicious temper, the most changeable character. He was often affable to the extreme of familiarity; oftener harsh, despotic, and haughty. Never, perhaps, did there exist a man more uncertain, timid, or capricious; less calculated, in short, for imparting happiness to others or to himself.

"His reign bore evidence of this. The many acts of injustice which he committed, the disgrace or banishment of so many persons, are not to be ascribed to a wicked disposition (?) but to a kind of mental malady. He was the torment of all who approached him, because he was his own torment. He always fancied that the throne was encompassed with precipices. Fear disturbed his judgment: through his constant apprehension of imaginary evils, he gave rise to real ones; for, sooner or later, a monarch never fails to communicate to others the terror to which he is a prey, and the mistrust which he harbours in his heart.

"At a later period, one of my colleagues in the chamber of peers, who was at St. Petersburg during the reign of Paul, quoted to me some of his expressions, that bore the deepest stamp of his despotic character. Having allowed General Dumouriez to call frequently to see him, and the general having one day omitted to appear at the palace, the emperor asked him, the next time he presented himself, whether he had been unwell. 'No, sire,' replied Dumouriez; 'but having been invited to dine by one of the most important personages of your court, I could not excuse myself from accepting the invitation.' 'I would have you to know, sir,' rejoined the emperor, in a severe tone of voice, 'that there is not any person of importance here except the one I may be addressing, and so long as I am addressing him.' Is it possible for the pride of power and the contempt of mankind to be carried to greater lengths!

"In the early days of my arrival in Russia, this prince had shown such a warm attachment to me, that it bore the appearance of infatuation. This fancy did not last long; it turned to indifference, when he found that the empress, his mother, honoured me with marks of kindness, and admitted me into her intimacy. For a long time past he had ceased to express any wish for a renewal of my intercourse with him; but at the moment of my departure, a fresh caprice of his mind procured me a return of confidence. He conversed with me for several hours, and to the exclusion of almost every other subject, respecting his pretended causes of complaint against the empress and the Prince Potemkin, the unpleasantness of his situation, the dread in which he was held, and the melancholy fate he had to expect from a court accustomed to suffer and allow no other reign but that of women: he was intimidated by the reflection of his father's deplorable end; it was constantly in his thoughts, and was the settled idea of his mind.

"In vain I urged that his prejudices deceived him; that, so far from fearing him, his mother always left him at liberty to hold his court without any interference on her part, and even to retain near him, at a short distance from Czarskozelo, two battalions, the officers of which were of his own nominating, which he trained, armed, and clothed at will; whilst his mother, banishing all apprehension, only kept one company of her guard near her person. 'If this princess, monseigneur,' I said, 'does not call you to her councils, and gives you no share in public affairs, allow me to observe, that it would be very difficult for her to act otherwise; aware, as she is, that you find fault with her inclinations, her connections, her system of administration, and her political conduct. As to the evils which you dread by anticipation, rest assured that your fears contribute to raise them; show yourself superior to them, and they will infallibly disappear.' I did not succeed in persuading him; and, by incessantly recriminating against the ministers and all who were honoured with the confidence of the empress, he was endeavouring to prove to me, that, notwithstanding my five years' residence in Russia, I was very imperfectly acquainted with his character. 'Explain, in short,' said the prince to me on one occasion, 'why, in the European monarchies, sovereigns quietly reign and succeed each other, whilst the throne of Russia is so often stained with blood?'

* *Memoirs and Recollections.*

"'I see no difficulty, monseigneur,' I replied, 'in tracing the cause of all those catastrophes; and, no doubt, it has not escaped your observation. Everywhere else the peace of nations and the tranquillity of kings is secured by the inheritance to the throne in the male line. This is the important difference existing between the ancient Asiatic, Roman, Greek, and barbarian monarchies, and the modern ones; the progress of civilisation may, perhaps, be ascribed to this stability. Here, on the contrary, there is nothing fixed on the subject; everything is open to doubt; and the sovereign selects any successor he pleases. Hence you have a perpetual source of ambitious hopes, of intrigues and conspiracies.'

"'I acknowledge it,' he rejoined, 'but where is the remedy to be found? With us, the habit is of long standing, a sanctioned custom; and an alteration in so important a point could never be effected without danger to the innovator; for, I repeat it, the Russians prefer seeing a gown rather than an uniform upon the throne.'—'Nevertheless, I am of opinion, monseigneur,' I continued, 'that this happy revolution might be brought about at some signal epoch of a new reign, such as a solemn entry, a coronation, when the people's minds are open to confidence, to pleasure, and to hope.'

"'I can well conceive it,' he said, embracing me; 'this might be attempted; I must reflect upon it.'

"I thought no more of the subject; and he, perhaps, equally forgot it. When, however, on his ascending the throne a few years afterwards, Paul established, as a fundamental law, the hereditary succession to the throne in the male line and in the order of primogeniture, it occurred to me that our conversation might have contributed in operating this memorable change in Russian legislation."

The assassination of Paul, and the subsequent triumph of the British fleet at the battle of Copenhagen, dissolved that formidable coalition of the northern powers which was entered into to destroy the maritime supremacy of this country. Napoleon was greatly irritated at the unexpected death of Paul, and the events which so rapidly followed it. So much so, that he publicly implied, and probably himself believed, that the murder of the emperor was brought about by the influence of England. "Paul I.," said Napoleon, in announcing the event to the French people, "died on the night of the 23rd of March. The English fleet passed the Sound on the 30th. History will unveil the connection which may have existed between these events."* The French papers followed the example of the emperor, and contended that the English ministry was privy to the conspiracy; the success of which, and the murder of the emperor, was, they said (though we certainly do not see by what means), necessary to the success of the English expedition against Denmark. It is now generally admitted that these assertions were merely idle calumnies. Assuredly, a British fleet, with the illustrious Nelson on board of it, did not stand in need of Russian conspirators to enable it to procure a victory over an inferior power. Paul's death was the natural result of his tyranny; and it is only to be wondered at that his capricious despotism was borne so long as it was by a nobility to whom the assassination of an emperor was no novelty. Napoleon's acute minister, Talleyrand, endeavoured to pacify him, by observing, that "this was the customary mode of abdication in Russia."

Napoleon's regret for the death of Paul arose from the partiality which the latter had recently shown towards him, and the desire he had evinced to promote the interests of France. But the first consul was further irritated by the consequent abandonment of the northern alliance against the maritime supremacy of England, and also

* Alison observes—"In truth, there was a connection, and an intimate one, between them, though not of the kind insinuated by the first consul. The connection was that between flagrant misgovernment and Oriental revolution. In every country, how despotic soever, there is some restraint on the power of government. When oppression or tyranny has reached a certain height, a spirit of resistance is inevitably generated, which leads to convulsions; and this is the case in Oriental as in European monarchies; in the age of Nero as in that of James II. It is the highest glory of representative governments, to have given a constitutional direction to this necessary element in the social system; to have converted a casual and transitory burst of vengeance into a regular and pacific organ of improvement; to have substituted a hostile vote in the national assembly for the dagger or the bowstring; and, instead of the revolution of the seraglio, introduced the steady opposition of the British parliament. In Russia, this important element was unknown. No regular or useful check upon the authority of government existed; the will of the czar was omnipotent. Measures the most hurtful might emanate from the palace without any constitutional means of redress existing; and if the conduct of the emperor had risen to a certain degree of extravagance, no means of arresting it existed but his destruction."

of a wild scheme which he had formed in conjunction with Paul, of marching a combined French and Russian army to India, with the object of overthrowing the dominion of Britain in that vast and wealthy peninsula. We entirely concur in the opinion that the abandonment of this project was far more fortunate for France and Russia than it was for England. We believe that, in consequence of the tremendous natural obstacles to be overcome, the successful accomplishment of such a scheme is utterly impracticable. Nor do we attribute much weight to the fact, that so great a general as Napoleon thought otherwise. We think that, intoxicated by a career of brilliant successes, he had come to believe that it was almost impossible that he could fail in any enterprise to the accomplishment of which he devoted himself. His faith in the resources of France, in the spirit and military genius of the French people, and in the paramount ascendancy of "his star" or destiny, was unbounded. Yet, in his subsequent invasion of Russia, these failed him in the most tragical manner; and we regard that project as one of far less danger and difficulty than his contemplated march to India, where, if the French and Russian troops ever arrived at all, it would be to encounter, in a state of exhaustion and misery, a succession of British armies well supplied with every requisite for field service, and fresh for conflict. If the reader will refer to an atlas, and trace in the maps of Europe and Asia the proposed line of progress of the allied armies to India, we think that he will agree with us, that the enterprise would have proved fatal to all who embarked in it. Fears have even recently been entertained of Russian ambition in that direction; but it requires not the mantle of a prophet to predict, that should so wild a project ever be attempted, India would prove the grave —and one from which resurrection would be more than doubtful—of the *prestige* of Russian statesmanship and military distinction.

This was the plan which received the sanction of the great Napoleon; but which, from the gigantic—we believe insurmountable—difficulties surrounding it, has more the appearance of having been concocted by the driveller Paul:—

"A French army, 35,000 strong, with light artillery, under the command of Massena, shall be moved from France to Ulm, whence, with the consent of Austria, it shall descend the Danube to the Black Sea.

"Arrived there, a Russian fleet will transport it to Taganrog; thence it shall move to Tzaritzin on the Volga, where it will find boats to convey it to Astracan.

"There it will find a Russian army of 35,000 men, composed of 15,000 infantry, 10,000 cavalry, and 10,000 Cossacks, amply provided with artillery, and the horses necessary for its conveyance.

"The combined army shall be transported by the Caspian Sea, from Astracan to Astrabad, where magazines of all sorts shall be established for its use.

"The march from the frontiers of France to Astrabad will be made in eighty days; fifty more will be requisite to bring the army to the banks of the Indus, by the route of Herat, Felah, and Candahar."

The most remarkable feature of this strange project is, the perfect complacency with which it utterly ignores difficulties of a more gigantic and threatening character than have ever been surmounted, or even attempted, by any modern military power. The intended allied army of 70,000 men would be strangely inefficient for the accomplishment of so vast an end as that proposed; even supposing it to be practicable. It is more than probable that 70,000 men would be utterly consumed in the sickness, sufferings, and privations of this complicated progress. To supply such a force with provisions, even to Astrabad, would be a work of transcendant difficulty; but the maintenance of it from that point to the banks of the Indus, through Persia and Affghanistan, where it would constantly be assailed by fierce and hostile forces, would be scarcely short of miraculous. Should this have been overcome by any wonderfully arranged commissariat, the troops, especially the Russians, would have perished in swarms from the effects of a climate which is terribly fatal to men who have been cradled in the snows of the north. It was the climate which defeated Peter the Great when he penetrated into Persia; and a terrible sickness devastated and paralysed the army sent there by Catherine.

Even the very first steps of the French army, before it joined that of Russia, would be beset with difficulties. It was to descend the Danube, "with the consent of Austria," though it was, undoubtedly, the interest of Austria to withhold that consent. The emperor, who was an ally of England, might have withheld his consent; but supposing him to have given it, it must be remembered, that the greatest portion of the Danube runs through the dominions of the sultan. His consent, therefore, must have been obtained also: and as the invasion of India was to be conducted in defiance of Turkey, there is little doubt that, in the progress down the Danube to the Black Sea, considerable opposition would have to be encountered. During this time, it is scarcely possible that England would remain in inaction, and passively behold the preparations that were being made to wrest from her a vast territory, the loss of which, especially if taken from her by France and Russia, would have materially lowered her reputation as a first-rate European power. Presuming, as we think under the circumstances we are warranted in doing, that the Porte admitted a British fleet into the Black Sea for the purpose of intercepting that of Russia, encumbered with 70,000 troops, and heavily laden with artillery, horses, and stores—the result of such a conflict as would certainly follow, could scarcely be doubtful, even if Nelson had not been appointed to command the British men-of-war. At the time of which we are writing the spirit of England was unbounded, its resources seemingly inexhaustible, the extent of its influence almost miraculous, and its wrath terrible. Its resources, and consequently its influence, are now far greater; and if the indomitable spirit of its people seems to have deteriorated, we suspect that is because prolonged wars have not aroused in them that strong sense of nationality and military ardour which existed in times of difficulty and danger. It is scarcely a metaphor to say, that England has held her own against a world in arms; nor too much to predict, that the power of Russia, even with that of France at its back, could never wrest India from her iron grasp. If that vast and grand peninsula, extending from the luxuriant and verdant plains of Cape Comorin to the snow-clad mountains of the Himalaya and the savage wilds of Tartary, and blessed by nature with all the treasures of the roseate East, be ever lost to England, it will not be in consequence of foreign interpolation—not from the bayonets and cannon of Russia and France; but from English mismanagement, false security, and wilful misunderstanding of the native character—from an unjust interference with ancient usages, and an ungenerous and insane attempt insidiously to force upon the Hindoos and Mohammedans of that burning clime, a religion to which they entertain not only a repugnance, but a hatred. England might, though we do not believe she ever will, lose India in consequence of a succession of well-organised rebellions against her authority—rebellions provoked by her own dogmatic intolerance and want of faith towards her swarthy subjects; but we are satisfied that it can never be torn from her by any European power or confederacy.

In the above remarks we have referred only to the difficulties which, in the plan proposed by Paul and Napoleon, would beset the allied Russian and French armies in their progress to the banks of the great river Indus. Assuming the journey had been made, at this point the toils and dangers of the expedition would appear to begin again. In Scinde or the Punjaub, the invaders, if they had survived the sufferings of the progress, would have to meet the armies of Britain. Let us admit that it is even possible that they might gain a battle, yet it is certain that it would be purchased at a cost scarcely less disastrous than that of a defeat. This would be a position in which even the victories of the invaders would destroy them piecemeal. Certainly, much would depend upon the natives; if favourable to the invaders, it would be a great assistance to them; but if these races, the most warlike in all India, were ill-disposed towards the new-comers, it would probably lead eventually to the destruction of the latter. But there is little reason to suppose that the native population would regard the advance of a European army with emotions of satisfaction. The progress of great bodies of troops through the towns and villages of a country not their own, is seldom regarded otherwise than with aversion by the inhabitants. Cases of spoliation are sure to occur, more especially so with an army in the gaunt arms of famine. Provisions are purchased at any price the strongest please to pay for them; robberies ensue; and women are insulted, or worse. The inevitable result is a hostile and even vindictive population; the removal of provisions to secret places; the desertion of villages; and the murder of all stragglers from the ranks of the troops. All these things considered, we are disposed to conclude that the successful invasion of India, from the side of Russia, would be an impossibility; and it is generally admitted that it could not be assailed

by a European power in any other direction.

Even those who contend for the practicability of a Russian invasion of India, admit that the probability of achieving such a conquest must not be confounded with its likelihood. They acknowledge that it would take Russia so long a period to mature her plans, that they could not escape detection; and the interval would be employed in strengthening the frontiers of India. They add, however, that the wiser and easier course would be, to prevent the presumed invasion by securing the independence of those Asiatic nations that lie between the Russian possessions and the Indus. Other writers consider, that the advance of Russia to India would present no insuperable difficulties, if she could but obtain possession of Constantinople. We do not coincide in that opinion; and there is, moreover, so significant a meaning in that little word *if!* The Turks are by no means so powerless a people as many political writers are in the habit of representing them; and though history shows them to be unequal to sustain singly, without heavy disadvantages, a prolonged contest with Russia, yet recent events have shown that the great powers of Europe are now fairly aroused to the necessity of checking any further encroachment by Russia on the Turkish territory. The independence of the Ottoman empire is now recognised as a European necessity, nor could a balance of power be maintained without it. If Constantinople was in the possession of Russia, a vital injury would be inflicted upon the commerce of England, which would thus have a private as well as a public and general interest in preventing such a result. The interest of France in rescuing the city of the sultan from the hostile advances of Russia, is not so immediately apparent; yet that power cannot be unconcerned at any event that would disturb the balance of power. A French writer observes—'The hero of Austerlitz, at the head of France—of the empire—did not dare to abandon Constantinople to the pacific Alexander."*

A modern tourist, who has written a pleasant and useful book on the capital of Russia and its inhabitants,† observes—"There is one subject which, from time to time, is repeated in England as an alarm-bell to rouse the nation against the power of Russia, which is the apprehension of an attack from that quarter upon our Indian possessions; but I hear nothing from the most sanguine advocates of Russian aggrandisement, which would make me think that sensible men ever seriously entertained the idea of such an impracticable project. I have seen Russian officers who have lately travelled into the country which separates their farthest provinces from our Indian frontier, and all agree in their description of the dangers and difficulties attendant on such a journey, even for a private individual, much more for a numerous army. Some reasoners go farther, and pretend to wish that we should even advance our Indian outposts towards their province of Cabool, in order that we might meet amicably at that distant point, and co-operate mutually in promoting an overland communication from thence with Europe, which would ensure to them the benefits of carrying a trade through Russia, and would be of great advantage to those English who are established on that boundary of our Indian empire. I listen, however, with caution to any expression from that quarter, of a wish that we should extend our influence and power in any shape. On the other hand, if war should ever be declared between the two countries, there is hardly a doubt that the scene of action will be in the East, though not in the direction of India."

* Napoleon, in his exile, frequently referred to this subject. In O'Meara's work (*Napoleon in Exile*), he is represented as saying—"Alexander's thoughts are directed to the conquest of Turkey. We have had many discussions about it. At first, I was pleased with his proposals; because I thought it would enlighten the world to drive those brutes, the Turks, out of Europe. But when I reflected upon the consequences, and saw what a tremendous weight of power it would give to Russia, in consequence of the number of Greeks in the Turkish dominions who would naturally join the Russians, I refused to consent to it, especially as Alexander wanted to get Constantinople, which I would not allow, as it would have destroyed the equilibrium of power in Europe. I reflected that France would gain Egypt, Syria, and the islands, which would have been nothing in comparison with what Russia would have obtained. I considered that the barbarians of the North were already too powerful; and probably, in course of time, would overwhelm all Europe, as I now think they will. Austria already trembles; Russia and Prussia united, Austria falls, and England cannot prevent it. France, under the present family (*i.e.*, the Bourbons), is nothing; Austria can offer but little resistance to the Russians, who are brave and potent. Russia is the more formidable because she can never disarm: in Russia, once a soldier always a soldier—barbarians who, one may say, have no country, and to whom every country is better than the one that gave them birth." Such were the latest opinions of the great political seer.

† *A Visit to St. Petersburg in the Winter of* 1829-'30; by Thomas Raikes, Esq.



CHAPTER XLV.

ACCESSION OF ALEXANDER I.; HE INCLINES TO LIBERAL MEASURES, AND PROMISES TO GOVERN ON THE PRINCIPLES OF CATHERINE II.; ADOPTS A PACIFIC POLICY TOWARDS ENGLAND, AND ADMITS THE RIGHT OF SEARCH UNDER CERTAIN LIMITATIONS; CONSEQUENT ABANDONMENT OF THE NORTHERN COALITION; TEMPORARY PEACE BETWEEN FRANCE AND ENGLAND; REFORMS BY ALEXANDER; GEORGIA IS ANNEXED TO RUSSIA; ALEXANDER INTERFERES IN THE AFFAIRS OF GERMANY; RUPTURE OF THE PEACE OF AMIENS; ARREST AND EXECUTION OF THE DUKE D'ENGHIEN; ALEXANDER REMONSTRATES WITH NAPOLEON CONCERNING IT; NAPOLEON ASSUMES THE TITLE OF EMPEROR; THIRD COALITION AGAINST FRANCE; THE BATTLE OF AUSTERLITZ, AND DEFEAT OF THE EMPERORS FRANCIS AND ALEXANDER.

The concurrence of the guards had been secured by Pahlen and Benningsen; and on the morning following the murder of Paul—who, it was reported, had died during the night in a fit of apoplexy—Alexander Paulovitch (*i.e.*, son of Paul) was proclaimed emperor. The chief offices of state necessarily fell to the lot of the principal conspirators, and the new monarch was compelled to take counsel with those whose hands had recently been stained with his father's blood. To such an extent was this the case, that a lady of rank and wit wrote to Fouché, on the occasion of a public ceremony at which Alexander was present, soon after his accession—"The young emperor walked, preceded by the assassins of his grandfather, followed by those of his father, and surrounded by his own."

Notwithstanding this ominous epigram, indicative of a dangerous state of things in Russia, Alexander was hailed with joy by the people. He was young, being only in his twenty-fourth year, and possessed of a majestic figure, and a cast of countenance regarded as benevolent. He had been educated by the celebrated Colonel La Harpe,* who is said—though we doubt the assertion—to have imbued his mind with liberal principles; indeed, La Harpe's own principles were unsettled, and his liberalism eventually doubtful. Alexander had been married, at the early age of sixteen, to the Princess Louisa Maria Augusta of Baden; on which occasion that princess adopted the Greek form of Christianity, and took the name of Elizabeth Alexiewna.

The first acts of the reign of the new emperor were both pacific and popular. He issued a ukase, in which, after expressing his intention of governing the empire according to the maxims and plans of his august grandmother, Catherine II., he restored to the nobility all the privileges they had enjoyed in that reign; re-established the rights of municipalities; abolished secret proceedings in criminal cases; granted a general amnesty, and terminated all state prosecutions then in progress. At the same time certain benefits were conferred upon the clergy, by which their personal dignity was enhanced; and many indications were given that the recent reign of terror was to be succeeded by a mild and conciliatory sway.

* Alexander's manners were highly polished, and expressed great amiability. In a biography of him by H. E. Lloyd, many anecdotes are related illustrative of this quality. Amongst them are the following respecting his conduct to his instructor:—"His attachment to La Harpe was rather filial than that of a pupil; his greatest delight was in his society, and he would cling round his neck in the most affectionate embraces, by which frequently his clothes were covered with powder. 'See, my dear prince,' La Harpe would say, 'what a figure you have made yourself!' 'Oh! never mind it,' Alexander replied; 'no one will blame me for carrying away all I can from my dear preceptor.' One day he went to visit La Harpe, as was his custom, alone; the porter was a new servant, and did not know him; he asked his name, and was answered, Alexander. The porter then led him into the servant's hall, told him his master was at his studies, and could not be disturbed for an hour. The servant's homely meal was prepared, and the prince was invited to partake of it, which he did without affectation. When the hour was expired, the porter informed La Harpe that a young man of the name of Alexander had been waiting some time, and wanted to see him. 'Show him in.' But what was La Harpe's surprise to see his pupil! He wished to apologise; but Alexander, placing his finger on his lips, said, 'My dear tutor, do not mention it; an hour to you is worth a day to me; and, besides, I have had a hearty breakfast with your servant, which I should have lost had I been admitted when I came.' The poor porter's feelings may be better imagined than described; but Alexander, laughing, said, 'I like you the better for it; you are an honest servant, and there are a hundred roubles to convince you that I think so.'" The same author observes—"La Harpe was, in some respects, the same to Alexander that Le Fort had been to Peter the Great, a hundred years before. He brought him up, without political or religious prejudices in the wiser principles of an enlightened age."

Paul had left Russia on the verge of active hostilities with England. Sir Hyde Parker, after the destruction of the Danish fleet at Copenhagen, had gone in pursuit of a portion of the Russian fleet, which fled from the encounter, and was fortunate enough to shelter itself beneath the batteries of Cronstadt. Alexander wrote to that admiral, informing him that he had set the crews of the British ships at liberty; that he was willing to close with the amicable propositions made by the government of this country to his predecessor; and adding, that he should hold the admiral responsible for any act of hostility that might take place after this notice. At the same time, Alexander wrote, with his own hand, a letter to George III., expressing his anxiety to arrange the existing differences in a friendly manner. Besides liberating the English mariners who had been imprisoned by Paul, and conveying them to the ports from whence they had been taken, the new czar revoked the prohibition that had been laid upon the exportation of corn. This latter measure gave great satisfaction both in England and Russia. In this country it relieved the distress of the people during a period of severe scarcity; and in Russia it exchanged the accumulated stores of grain, that was in danger of rotting in warehouses, into the manufactures and gold of England.

This pacific spirit was readily met by the English government. Lord St. Helens was sent to St. Petersburg, where a treaty was speedily concluded between the two powers, which admitted and defined the right of search claimed by this country, and, consequently, abandoned the principles of the armed neutrality. By this treaty, it was provided, "That the right of searching merchant ships belonging to the subjects of one of the contracting powers, and navigating under a ship of war of the same power, shall only be exercised by ships of war of the belligerent party, and shall never extend to the fitters-out of privateers, or other vessels which do not belong to the imperial or royal fleet of their majesties, but which their subjects shall have fitted out for war; that the effects on board neutral ships shall be free, with the exception of contraband of war and of enemy's property; and it is agreed not to comprise in the number of the latter the merchandise of the produce, growth, or manufacture of the countries at war, which should have been acquired by the subjects of the neutral power, and should be transported for their account." Contraband articles, between the two powers, were defined as "cannons, mortars, fire-arms, pistols, bombs, grenades, balls, bullets, firelocks, flints, matches, sulphur, helmets, pikes, swords, sword-belts, pouches, saddles and bridles; excepting such quantity of the said articles as may be necessary for the defence of the ship and crew." By this treaty, the right of search, though admitted in principle, was placed upon a more equitable footing, and divested of its most galling features.

This treaty created great irritation in the mind of Napoleon, whom Alexander in vain endeavoured to pacify in a letter couched in the most pacific terms. The First Consul observed—"Europe beheld with astonishment this ignominious treaty signed by Russia, and which, by consequence, Denmark and Sweden were compelled to adopt. It was equivalent to an admission of the sovereignty of the seas in the British parliament, and the slavery of all other states. This treaty was such, that England could have desired nothing more; and a power of the third order would have been ashamed to have signed it." Napoleon sent general Doroc to St. Petersburg, to counterbalance English influence at that court; but, though that officer was received with marked distinction, he was unable to accomplish the object of his journey. Yet Alexander secretly assured him that he entertained a feeling of admiration for the first consul, and an anxiety to maintain friendly relations with France.

Sweden and Denmark, though not included in the convention between this country and Russia, were obliged to follow the example of that state. The embargo which had been laid on English ships and property, was raised on the 19th of May, in Russia, Sweden, and Denmark; and corresponding steps were taken on the part of the English government. Prussia, which had been unwillingly drawn into the quarrel, also took the first opportunity of escaping from its effects. "Thus," observes Alison, "was dissolved, in less than six months after it had been formed, the most formidable confederacy ever arrayed against the English maritime power. Professedly contracted in order so secure the liberty of the seas, it was really directed against the grandeur and prosperity of Great Britain; breathing only the sentiments of freedom and justice, it was, in truth, intended to

divide, among the coalesced states, the power and the ascendancy of a more fortunate rival. The rapidity with which this powerful alliance was broken up by England, towards the conclusion of a long and burdensome war, and when her people were labouring under the combined pressure of severe want and diminished employment, is one of the most remarkable features of this memorable contest; and, perhaps more than any other, characteristic of the vast ascendancy, moral as well as political, which she has acquired among the other nations of the world."

The convention between England and Russia, signed at St. Petersburg on the 17th of June, 1801, was followed, on the 1st of October, by the signature of preliminaries of peace between France and England, or, in other words, by the temporary pacification of Europe. The peace itself was concluded at Amiens on the 27th of March in the following year. Temporary as the peace was, it was yet a necessity. The two great belligerent powers had scarcely the means of carrying on an active warfare against each other. Without allies or auxiliaries on the continent, England could not hope to touch France by land; while, on the other hand, with fleets ruined or blockaded, and a navy completely disheartened, France could not expect to touch England by sea. Both nations, also, were comparatively exhausted, and needed rest; the war, like a vast fire, had, at least for a time, burnt itself out for mere want of something to consume. The French nation obtained the gratification of having the republic recognised by England: this country had fought obstinately, and in some respects brilliantly, with steel and gold, in a quarrel where it should have stood aloof as arbiter, instead of rashly mixing itself up as a principal; and by so doing, it had drained the best blood of England, and swelled the national debt from about £244,000,000 to above £520,000,000. Sheridan quaintly characterised the peace by saying, "it was such as all men were glad of, but of which no man could be proud." Napoleon privately observed—"It was but a truce; his government stood in need of fresh victories to consolidate itself; it must either be the first government in Europe, or it must fall."

As soon as Alexander had established his foreign relations upon a pacific basis, he directed his attention towards those internal reforms which Russia required. He at first showed a submission to Count Pahlen and to some other of the conspirators; but he soon found means to get rid of men whose presence must ever have reminded him of the frightful catastrophe which led him to the throne. The empress-mother, who assumed a dramatic grief at the death of the husband whom she had long known only to dread, caused a picture to be painted, representing Paul at the feet of the Virgin, imploring the vengeance of Heaven upon his assassins. Count Pahlen, alarmed at the crowds attracted by this startling exhibition, caused it to be removed. The princess, irritated against the minister, said to Alexander, "My son, you must choose between Pahlen and me." The emperor, not sorry to be furnished with an excuse for the dismissal of a person whose presence was painful to him, caused it to be intimated to Pahlen, that he must privately retire from St. Petersburg. The ambitious statesman felt that he had failed in his design to rule through the instrumentality of a youthful sovereign—that he had lost his hold on the mind of the emperor; and he therefore sought his safety by resigning all his offices and proceeding to Riga. The empress-mother herself had the ambition to lay claim, after the murder of her husband, to the vacant throne. Some altercation took place between her and her son on this subject; but she was soon prevailed upon to relinquish her pretensions. This collision did not appear to leave any unpleasant traces on the mind either of Alexander or his mother, to whom, during his life, he always continued to show respect and attachment.

Pahlen banished, Alexander shared the reins of government with some of the companions of his early days. These were Messrs. de Strogonoff, Nowosiltzoff, and the Polish prince, Czartoryski, and a more mature friend, M. de Kotschubey. The imperial clique entertained notions which, with something of truth and liberality, were characterised by more of extravagance. Paul I., and even the illustrious Catherine, they considered as barbarous and unenlightened sovereigns. The partition of Poland they regarded as an outrage; the war against the French revolution as the result of blind prejudices. Russia was, for the future, to undertake a totally different mission; she was to protect the weak—to curb the strong—to oblige France and England to confine themselves within the limits

of justice—to force both of them to respect, in their struggle, the interests of nations. "Happy pretensions," remarks the French historian Thiers, "noble ideas, *if they had been serious*; if they had not resembled those liberal impulses of the French *noblesse*, brought up in the school of Voltaire and Rousseau, talking of humanity and liberty, till the day when the French revolution came to require them to conform their acts with their theories. Then those titled philosophers became the emigrants of Coblentz."

Alexander, influenced by the doubtful liberalism which he was soon to discard, and, under the influence of his young advisers, having restored to the nobility the prerogatives which had been wrested from them by Paul, then extended the right of possessing landed property to all the subjects of the empire. The measure appeared to indicate a desire to abolish the vassalage of the peasants; but in that direction the emperor never proceeded any farther, but appeared rather to recede from such principles year after year, than to make any advances towards carrying them into effect. The natural warmth of youth, and perhaps the influence of his early training by La Harpe, induced him to regard all questions affecting popular rights with more liberality, at this period, than he ever afterwards displayed. By nature, Alexander was a mild yet artful despot; and it was but for a brief space that education, and other influences, placed him in the light of an admirer of progressive and liberal principles. He had no real confidence in a career founded on such tenets, and soon learned to fear their results. It would, indeed, be difficult for an irresponsible autocrat to become a reformer in the interests of the people. The emperor soon acquired the notion that the Russians were not prepared for liberty, and he based this assumption upon the facts of their frequent revolutions against despotism, and the vices which slavery had engendered amongst them. He did not reflect that slaves are never prepared for liberty; that it is necessary to take off their chains before they can be made to understand and appreciate those rights which belong to the condition of freemen. He found the people serfs, and such he left them.

Alexander also set an example of judicious economy in his own household; he abolished some useless offices, and encouraged the establishment of canals, roads, and bridges. This was to improve the country; but we do not find that he did much towards improving the people. We do not lay any great weight on the fact of his abandoning the idea of the emancipation of the serfs, because the system, with all its evils, has some counteracting benefits; and even many Englishmen have contended, that the lot of the Russian serf is happier than that of the British peasant. The first, when past labour, is maintained by those of his own class, and passes the evening of his life in as much comfort as he has known during any other period of it: if the last outlives his ability to earn his bread, he has no alternative but the union workhouse; and a life hitherto passed in independence, is closed in the serfdom of pauperism. In these remarks we pass no censure upon the English system; it is the result of a stern necessity. The circumstances are widely different in the British and Russian empires. In this country, the limited extent of its territory, and the wealth of a considerable portion of its inhabitants, make the price of land exorbitantly high: in Russia, these circumstances are reversed, and land is readily parted with for an almost nominal consideration. To such an extent is this the case, that if the serfs of the Northern empire possessed the personal independence of British agricultural labourers, and had their property as effectually secured to them, all the sober and industrious among them would become small landed proprietors in their old age. Surrounded by their circumstances, the English labourers of one generation would, in the next, become farmers, cultivating their own land. But the serf has but little interest in his labour, the result of a considerable portion of which goes to enrich his lord. Nor has he any strong inducement to accumulate property; for he is always liable to be despoiled of it. It will be seen, therefore, that it is manifestly incorrect to conclude that serfdom is scarcely an evil because the Russian serf is, under certain circumstances, better off than the British peasant. To establish this argument, it should be shown, that the slave-peasant of Russia is as well off in his age as the free peasant of Britain would be under the same circumstances. In each case the conditions must be equal, or the analogy is deficient, and the result attempted to be drawn from it inaccurate.

Some writers infer, that the emperor Alexander grew wiser as he grew older, and that the abandonment of a subject involving the dearest interests of the millions of his empire, was the natural result of this increased worldly wisdom. We cannot recognise any connection whatever between this assumed cause and the result, and discard it as altogether illogical. It would be more correct to say, that Alexander grew in selfishness and a distaste for experimental and difficult reforms as he advanced in life, rather than that he grew wiser. We question if selfishness is wisdom, even in the lowest conceivable worldly sense; it looks too much to immediate results, and is seldom capable of taking a comprehensive view of any subject. Alexander, doubtless, soon saw, that to give liberty to the serfs, would be to create a great number of small owners of land, who would become sturdy and independent as they attained a knowledge of their own strength and importance in the state. It would be, in fact, to create a PEOPLE; and an independent people might dethrone a despot who seriously abused his power. Alexander does not appear to have recognised the fact, that a throne based upon the affections of a well-treated and independent people, would be far more secure and durable than one erected upon the bayonets of a fickle army, and the servile tenets of a superstitious, ignorant, and materialistic priesthood. Revolutions in Russia are conducted by the nobles, or those about the person of the sovereign; and the people have usually regarded the murder of a czar with indifference. To them it merely brought a change of masters, the difference in whose rule did not extend so low in the empire as to affect their interests. But a free people become attached to the sovereign under whom they enjoy their freedom, and this attachment is his safeguard against a discontented and turbulent nobility. Peter the Great found it so; and when his subjects had learned rightly to understand him, he was, in effect, the most absolute monarch that ever swayed the sceptre of the North. But the selfishness which Alexander acquired, or rather gave a freer rein to, as he grew easy in his imperial robes, prevented him from seeing, or at least trusting to, those distant results to which we have alluded, arising from the emancipation of the millions whom he ruled. To him the commonalty of Russia were—to use the language of a benevolent and accomplished English judge, who graced the judicial seat with the elegancies of poetry—

> ——— "The common herd,
> The vassals of our ancient house, the mass
> Of bones and muscles framed to till the soil
> A few brief years, then rot unnamed beneath it;
> Or, deck'd for slaughter, at their master's call
> To smite and to be smitten, and lie crush'd
> In heaps to swell his glory or his shame."*

Such Alexander found the serfs of Russia, and such his prudent wisdom left them. That it would have been dangerous in a young monarch to have at once emancipated them, we readily conceive; but the danger would chiefly have arisen from the irritation of his nobility, who would thus have been deprived of a source of revenue which they acquired by accident, and ought never to have possessed.†

Yet Alexander might have attempted, and we believe accomplished, this emancipation in the height of his power, when his nobles dared not have made head against him. It might have been preceded by many preparatory measures, and effected so gradually, that the presumed loss to his nobility would have been but lightly felt. That they would eventually have experienced any loss at all, we are by no means convinced; for their uncultivated estates would soon have acquired a marketable value, and found purchasers or tenants in a newly-created class of society. Russia, at the same time, would be placed in a position from which she would make rapid advances in wealth, power, and population; and, in fact, become in reality the greatest of European powers. But Alexander was too prudent to attempt a change which would have made his memory cherished by his people, admired by Europe, and honoured by the world. As he grew more secure in power, he became more and more indifferent to the giant social problem of the empire; and the dread of serf outbreak, and a sanguinary serf retaliation on their oppressors, haunts, to this hour, the higher circles of Russia, and creates apprehensions which, though seldom spoken of, are deeply felt. If those brutalised and contemned millions should ever rise in wrath, and with mad impatience proceed to retaliate for

* Talfourd's *Ion*.

† See *ante*, p. 85, how serfdom accidentally arose from an edict of Boris Godunof, forbidding the peasantry to remove from the estates on which they were born.

ages of oppression, awful indeed would be the result. The revolting scenes which must inevitably take place in such a Jacquerie, we trust it may never be the lot of any future historian to describe.

Let us return from this brief digression. The sickly nature of Alexander's liberalism was evidenced by his conduct with respect to the press. This had been, in effect, annihilated by the unequivocal tyranny of his father. The new emperor, though seeking for confidence and popularity, only modified the rigour of that censorship which had paralysed the press, and arrested the young but expanding literature of the empire. A freer importation of books, also, was allowed; but this concession was so vigilantly watched by the Russian police, that it scarcely produced any perceptible influence.

In the early part of his reign, Alexander proved himself an energetic ruler; and he laboured with almost as much diligence in public affairs as his illustrious grandmother, Catherine, had done. Among the benefits which, soon after his accession, he conferred upon the empire, were a reduction of the taxes, and a remission of the odious conscription for the army, which was as hateful to the peasant as it was injurious to the interests of his owner. Schools were instituted for general education; but they were subjected to the rigorous control of the government; and we may not unfairly assume that little more was taught than a slight knowledge of the religious tenets considered vital by the Greek church, and the doctrine of the duty of passive obedience to the emperor and all constituted authorities. Yet much importance was attached to education of the kind the emperor thought fit to permit; and a new branch of administration—that of public instruction—was created.

Perhaps the most important of the reforms which distinguished the first year of the reign of Alexander, was the abolition of the secret department, which, under another name, carried on the despotic and mysterious measures which, in former times, had been performed by the dreaded chancery of the secret Inquisition. This court—irresponsible for the conduct of its proceedings, the motives of its members, or the iniquity of its decisions—had inflicted an incalculable amount of misery upon the country. Any person who provoked the vengeance of a superior, was in danger of being cited before this terrible tribunal, which not unfrequently condemned him to perpetual imprisonment, or even caused him to be secretly executed. No less than twenty-six persons of rank, at St. Petersburg, had disappeared in this manner within a few months of the death of Paul; and it is probable that the horror and indignation excited by these events, aided considerably in bringing about the murder of the despot. Other improvements were effected by the emperor Alexander in the administration of public affairs: a permanent council was established to examine, previously to publication, all ordinances that were to be issued on the affairs of the empire; and every minister was held responsible for the proceedings of his department, and compelled to render an annual account of them to the senate.

Before the close of 1801, Alexander showed that he was as eager as his predecessors had been to extend the dominions of the empire in the direction of the East. In the autumn of that year the emperor issued a manifesto proclaiming the annexation of Georgia to the Russian empire; that country having previously been under the nominal protection of Persia and Turkey. With habitual insincerity, he assigned humanity, and not ambition, as his motive. The people of Georgia, though personally brave, had suffered severely from the attacks of the Lesghians and the Tartars; to which was added the calamity of dissensions amongst themselves. During the reign of Paul, Georgia had been occupied by Russian troops sent there ostensibly for the purpose of assisting the inhabitants against their enemies. The aid they rendered was not sufficient to expel the latter, but yet enough to show that the country would be safe if under the dominion of the Russian sceptre. When Alexander came to the throne, he turned his attention to the affairs of Georgia, with the avowed object of ascertaining if she could subsist, with her former government, under the protection of Russia. His preformed conclusion was soon expressed in a declaration, that the best way to terminate the troubles of Georgia would be, to unite it at once to the Russian dominions. An imperial ukase was accordingly issued to that effect, and the Russian eagle was planted on a portion of the romantic soil of the Caucasus.

Alexander also, during this period, showed a disposition to extend the influence of Russia in another direction, by entering into a

negotiation with France respecting the compensation, for the entire or partial loss of their dominions, to be granted to certain of the minor powers of Germany, with which country he was connected, both through his mother and through his father, who was born head of the house of Holstein-Gottorp. It was in the course of these negotiations that he had his first interview with the prevaricating Frederic William III., king of Prussia—an interview which is understood to have laid the foundation of an intimate friendship between the two sovereigns, and to have established a concurrence of views which powerfully influenced the future policy of each. Alexander, though secretly dissatisfied with the unimportant part which Napoleon allowed him to play in these transactions, yet contented himself with a show of outward respect, and a precedent which went far to establish the right of Russia to interfere in the affairs of Germany.

The tranquillity which Russia now enjoyed, gave Alexander full scope for the improvement of the empire, and the extension of its commerce and manufactures. He encouraged the English system of agriculture, and allotted a tract of land to be cultivated in that manner. The brief repose of Europe from the fierce wars which had so devastated a great portion of it, gave an impetus to commerce; and the ports both of the Baltic and the Euxine were visited by immense numbers of ships, and exhibited a great degree of prosperity. The trade with China also shared the general improvement; and a herring-fishery was established on the White Sea, under the immediate protection of the emperor. A voyage round the world was also projected, with the object of endeavouring to establish the commerce of the Russian American Company with Eastern Asia, and also for the purpose of opening a more extensive intercourse with Japan and China. Several German professors accompanied the expedition, with the view of making discoveries in geography and natural history. It also carried an ambassador accredited to Japan; but the government of that nation refused to receive him.

Even at this early period of his reign, Alexander showed that he was bent on rigidly maintaining everything that the Russian government regarded as its right. Sweden had, in a most trifling matter, infringed the frontier of Finland; and a dispute accordingly arose between the courts of Stockholm and St. Petersburg, which would have led to a war, had not hostilities been averted by the concession of the Swedish monarch. The military preparations of Russia were very extensive, and the emperor took advantage of the opportunity thus afforded him by reorganising the fleet and the army, and strengthening his means of defence or aggression. Alexander, however, had another motive in thus augmenting the military force of the empire. He had become jealous of the colossal and devouring power of Napoleon, who had not acted with good faith towards him in the settlement of the affairs of the minor princes of Germany.

Alexander was doubtless encouraged in the hostile feelings towards France, which the conduct of the first consul had excited in him, by the rupture of the brief peace between that country and England. The annexation, in 1802, of Piedmont to the French republic, irritated both England and Russia, as Alexander had personally interested himself for the king of Sardinia. On the other hand, Napoleon took offence at the refusal of England to deliver up Malta, on the plea that a Neapolitan garrison would have been but a poor security against a hostile visitation of the French.* Lord Whitworth, the English ambassador, had a long and stormy conference on this subject with Napoleon at the Tuileries. The English minister having represented to him that the state of things which the treaty of Amiens had contemplated was completely altered by his enormous accession of power in Italy, he peremptorily rejected the claim of England to interfere in his arrangements concerning other states, and insisted on Malta being delivered up to some neutral power. Turning to Count Markoff, the Russian ambassador, and to the Chevalier Azara, who were standing at a little distance, Napoleon said to them—"The English wish for war; but if they be the first to draw the sword, I shall be the last to sheathe it. They have no regard for treaties. We must henceforth cover them with shame." Shortly afterwards he resumed his conversation with Lord Whitworth, by observing—"For what reason are

* By the peace of Amiens, England had undertaken to restore Malta to the knights of St. John; that it should be a free port, garrisoned by the troops of a neutral power, and that neither this country nor France should have any representative in the order.

those armaments? against whom are these measures of precaution? I have not a single ship of the line in the ports of France; but if you will arm, I shall arm likewise; if you go to war, I shall go to war also. You may, perhaps, be able to destroy France, but never to intimidate her." "We do not desire," responded Lord Whitworth, "either the one or the other; we wish to live in a good understanding with her." "It is necessary, then," continued Napoleon with much excitement, "to pay regard to treaties; those who pay no regard to treaties will be responsible for it to all Europe." The hostile feelings of the two governments did not admit of longer repression; and England again declared war against France, on the 18th of May, 1803.

Though irritated against France, Alexander, who, at the commencement of his reign, had assumed to himself the character of pacificator amongst the European powers, did not as yet feel called upon to enter into hostilities against the republic. He desired rather to terminate the quarrel which had so long distracted Europe; and the Russian chancellor observed, "that if the war were to be prolonged between France and England, Russia would be compelled finally to take part in it." A hollow peace yet prevailed; but trifling and undignified disputes took place between Napoleon and the Russian ambassador Markoff, who actually assumed the extraordinary position of a foreign minister intriguing at Paris in favour of the Bourbons. This induced Napoleon openly to insult him, to order the arrest of his secretary, and, in a fit of temper, to defy the Russian government. Alexander, feeling that his ambassador had acted in a manner inconsistent with his station, gratified the first consul by recalling him; but at the same time conferred upon him a special decoration as a mark of his continued favour.

Such was the state of affairs when, in 1804, Napoleon, irritated by conspiracies to assassinate him, ordered the illegal arrest and judicial murder of the young Bourbon prince, the Duke d'Enghien. On the renewal of the war, the English government took the French emigrants again into its pay, and they were directed to go to the German side of the Rhine, to act when required. The duke, unfortunately for himself, was regarded as their head. Meantime, the conspiracy of Georges and Pichegru was discovered at Paris. It has never been proved that the duke was privy to that conspiracy; but it appears that he was led to expect an insurrectionary movement in France in favour of the Bourbons, of which he intended to avail himself, by entering that country at the head of the emigrants. Napoleon, alarmed at the conspiracy, and at the avowed intention of Georges to assassinate him, seems to have persuaded himself that the duke was connected with the Paris conspirators, and that the whole was a plan directed by the Bourbons in England, and by the English government; and he determined upon getting rid of his enemies by summary means. He accordingly dispatched a party of *gendarmes*, who crossed the Rhine, entered without ceremony the neutral territory of Baden, surrounded the *château* of Ettenheim, and, on the 15th of March, seized the person of the duke. The arrest was immediately followed by a trial before a secret court, and the duke was found guilty of all the charges preferred against him, though the worst of them was never proved. They were, that he had borne arms against the French republic; that he had offered his services to the English government; that he was at the head of a party of emigrants assembled near the frontiers of France, and had treasonable correspondence with the neighbouring departments; and, lastly, that he was an accomplice in the conspiracy formed at Paris against the life of the first consul. The last accusation he indignantly denied, but admitted the others. Sentence of death was pronounced, and carried into execution with a rapidity which was regarded as both harsh and indecent. The trial took place on the 20th; and that very night, or rather before daybreak the following morning, he was roused from sleep, led into the ditch of the castle of Vincennes, where he was confined, and shot by torchlight. The body was instantly buried, without any funeral ceremony, in a grave which had just previously been dug on the spot. A great sensation was produced by this act, and much indignation expressed; but we think the apology which Napoleon afterwards made at St. Helena concerning it, not without weight. It was, that he believed that the duke was implicated in the conspiracy against his life, and that he was obliged to strike terror among the royalists, and put an end to their plots, by showing that he was not a man to be trifled with. Still it must be admitted, that the

arrest was in violation of the law of nations, and that the trial was an informal one.

The fate of the Duke d'Enghien excited interest and commiseration throughout Europe. He was young, and reputed to be brave, amiable, and one of the most promising of the Bourbon princes. The sovereigns of Europe were especially touched and offended; but the emperor Alexander made the greatest exhibition of his feeling. The sufferer was of royal blood, and Alexander felt indignant that one of such rank should have been shot like a common offender; his emotion was elicited less for the man than for the distinguished position he occupied. The autocrat at once addressed a remonstrance to the French minister, representing the alarm that conduct so unjustifiable was calculated to spread throughout Europe, and concluding with a hope that the first consul would see the necessity of putting an end to such a state of things. Not satisfied with an interference which Napoleon must have regarded as dictatorial, if not uncalled for, Alexander also addressed a note to the diet at Ratisbon, calling upon the princes of the empire to demand satisfaction for the violation of the neutrality of Germany. He also went into mourning for the unfortunate Bourbon, and commanded the court at St. Petersburg, and all his ministers at foreign courts, to do the same. Napoleon was necessarily irritated at these proceedings, and a sharp correspondence took place between the French and Russian ministers. As might have been expected, the first consul repudiated altogether the right of Alexander to interfere in the concerns of France; and, after alluding to the influence which its enemies were allowed to exercise at St. Petersburg, sarcastically desired the emperor to act openly, if it was his intention to form a new coalition. Recriminations followed, and it became highly probable that hostilities might ensue between the two nations; for affairs were in that condition, that any further disagreement would almost inevitably lead to an open rupture.

Further offence soon followed. On the 18th of May, 1804, Napoleon assumed the title of emperor, and was solemnly crowned as such in the ancient cathedral of Notre-Dame, by Pope Pius VII., on the 2nd of December following. Prior to the ceremony, Alexander made a strong remonstrance against the assumption of the imperial sceptre on the part of the great soldier, and afterwards refused to acknowledge the new sovereign. The ambassadors of the two monarchs were respectively recalled. The despotic king of Sweden followed Alexander in his refusal to acknowledge the imperial title assumed by Napoleon. Prussia coldly acquiesced, and Austria assented to the startling proceeding of the new military emperor. Alexander therefore felt himself placed in a position which demanded circumspection, unless he felt inclined to enter on a war with France without any ally but England. This difficulty was increased by the aggressive attitude which Alexander had assumed towards Turkey; an attitude justifying the insinuation of France, that the northern autocrat had adopted one course of policy in Europe, and another in Asia. It is certain that his movements in the latter direction were inconsistent with his professions in the former; that while he was endeavouring to restore the old divisions of the European kingdoms, he was laying snares for the extension of his territory in the east, and the subversion of the states of Turkey and Persia.

Though Alexander acted with caution, he prepared to take advantage of any favourable opportunity that might offer for acting against France, and curbing the ambition of its newly-made emperor. Great activity prevailed in all the arsenals of Russia; recruits for the navy were raised throughout the provinces; the since famous Sebastopol, on the Black Sea, was declared the first naval seaport, and merchant vessels were excluded from the harbour. The military force, also, was augmented to half a million of men, and large bodies of troops were assembled on the western frontiers. At the same time, an attempt was made to remove the distaste of the Russians for a new war, by declarations that the commerce of the empire was in a highly prosperous condition, and by the reduction of duties in all the ports of the Euxine. Yet, as if fearing any expression of popular opinion, the censorship of the press was rendered still more rigorous—a measure which some hollow common-places about liberty and the "advancement of real knowledge," failed to render the less odious.

The emperor Napoleon, finding that his assumption of imperial state was received by the other powers of Europe with less opposition than he had anticipated, converted the Italian republics into a kingdom, and on the 26th of May, 1805, caused himself to

be crowned with extraordinary pomp, in the cathedral of Milan, as king of Italy. Napoleon seized the iron crown of the old Lombard kings, and, placing it on his brow, exclaimed, "God has given it to me; woe to him who shall attempt to lay hands on it." He appointed his step-son, Eugene Beauharnais, to be his viceroy of the kingdom of Italy, and on the 7th of June opened in person the session of the Italian legislative body. The republic of Genoa was, in the same month, united to the French empire, at the request of its doge and people. The Italian republic of Lucca also was transformed into a principality, and given to one of Napoleon's family, to be held as a fief of the newly-created empire, to the government of which the whole of Savoy, Piedmont, and Genoa was now subjected. With one exception—that of San Marino—the Italian republics were extinguished.

Austria remonstrated in vain against the never-ending encroachments of Napoleon in Italy; and the views of that power underwent a change in consequence of his usurpations in that direction. The representations of Russia alike remained unheeded. A treaty had already been entered into between Russia and England, which, after stating that the situation of Europe demanded a speedy remedy, bound the contracting parties to consult respecting the means of redress, without waiting for further encroachments on the part of the French government. This led to a conclusion that the most effectual course would be to form a league of the states of Europe, and to collect a force which, independently of the succours furnished by England, should amount to 500,000 men, in order either to persuade or compel, according to circumstances, the French government to the re-establishment of peace, and the restoration of the balance of power. The objects to be attained were—1. The revival of the independence of Switzerland and Holland. 2. The compulsion of the French government to withdraw its troops from the north of Germany. 3. The obtaining the restoration of Piedmont to the king of Sardinia. 4. To obtain the future security of Naples, and compel Napoleon to evacuate Italy. England agreed to contribute forces by sea and land, and also such subsidies as might be deemed requisite. It was further agreed that, in the event of the formation of the league, peace should not be made with France without the consent of all the powers who should become parties to it. Yet actual hostilities were not to be entered upon until the attempt to obtain the objects of the proposed alliance by negotiation should have proved a failure.

The engulphment of Italy by the ambition of Napoleon, induced Austria to become a member of the proposed league; and, in the summer of 1805, a new coalition against France was formed between England, Russia, Austria, and Sweden. Prussia was urged to join it; but the wily Frederic William hesitated, increased his armies, and remained neutral. His aid seemed to promise victory to the side to which he should attach himself, and a large party in Prussia were anxious to draw the sword against Napoleon. But Frederic William still professed a friendship for the warlike emperor, and he assembled a strong army on the frontiers of Austria, to which the French troops had been advanced by rapid marches; but whom that army was to oppose was a secret. When Alexander demanded a free passage through Silesia for a Russian army, he met with a refusal. On repeating his demand in an imperious tone, the king of Prussia answered, that his generals had received orders to treat any Russian who set his foot on the Prussian soil as an enemy. There was little doubt that Frederic William would either remain neutral, or wait till one of the belligerent parties should have been weakened by defeats, and then join the victor, and take his share in the spoliation either of Austria or France.

Napoleon afforded the powers arrayed against him little opportunity for aggressive movements, and but scanty time for further preparations. He resolved at once to concentrate his whole military force, for the purpose of destroying the combination against him before the Russian troops had passed their own frontier. Austria was the first in the field, and she marched an army, confided to the command of the incapable General Mack, into the electorate of Bavaria. Napoleon led the army which he had formed at Boulogne for the invasion of England, towards the Rhine; and other troops from Holland, Hanover, and the interior of France were marched to the same quarter. Regardless of the neutrality of Prussia, he not only marched his troops through Anspach and Bareuth, but even occupied those districts —a bold step, which gave him incalculable advantages over the enemy in point of time, as the Russians were obliged to reach the

theatre of the contest by circuitous routes. Napoleon then opened one of those dazzling campaigns which, for the rapidity of the movements and the great talent displayed in them, have never been surpassed in the annals of history. During the month of October he almost annihilated the Austrian army by a succession of victories. Several divisions laid down their arms to the French. General Mack threw himself into Ulm, where he allowed himself to be surrounded; and then surrendered, on the 17th of October, without fighting, with more than 20,000 men, and all his staff, artillery, and stores. Napoleon dismissed no less than eighteen Austrian generals on their parole, and sent a waggon loaded with imperial standards to Paris. The other Austrian divisions scattered about were unable to make any effectual resistance; and the victorious French army marched on Vienna, and entered that capital in triumph!

Alexander was startled, and hurried to Berlin to exert his personal influence on the Prussian monarch, and induce him to join the coalition against Napoleon. The war party in Prussia was roused into great activity by the recent violation of the Prussian territory by the French army, and Frederic William, sharing in that feeling, or carried away by the tide of circumstances, not only consented to an interview with Alexander, but concluded a secret convention with him, by which he bound himself to join the coalition, unless Napoleon withdrew from Germany before the 15th of December. The Russian emperor attracted much popularity at Berlin by the gracefulness and suavity of his manner, and he paid so much attention to all the relations of the great Frederic, that a sort of fascination existed in his favour. A curious scene also took place at Potsdam during Alexander's visit. In company with the king and queen, he visited at midnight, by torchlight, the vault in which lay the coffin of Frederic the Great. They knelt before it, and kissed the coffin. Alexander then grasped the hand of his brother sovereign, and solemnly pledged himself that nothing should ever break their friendship. He then hastened, by way of Leipzig and Weimar, to Dresden, from whence he proceeded to Olmutz; and there, on the 18th of November, joined the emperor Francis of Austria. A Russian army that had previously arrived to assist the Austrians, had suffered a disastrous defeat; a second one arrived on the same day as the emperor did, and the allied army amounted to about 80,000 men. That of the French is usually estimated at about 75,000; but it was composed of troops flushed with victory, and immeasurably superior to their antagonists in skill, ardour, and discipline.

Napoleon, on hearing that the emperor Alexander had joined the army, sent General Savary (afterwards Duke of Rivigo) to him with a complimentary letter, in which he expressed an earnest desire to cultivate the friendship of the czar. The real object, however, of Savary was to make himself acquainted, during the three days which his visit lasted, with the leading characters of the emperor's camp, and the opinions that prevailed amongst them. Alexander received this messenger with great courtesy. The interview which took place between them is thus described by Savary himself:— "When I arrived at the Russian headquarters, I found the officers and staff declaiming against the ambition of the French government, and full of confidence in the success of their arms. The emperor received me in the most gracious manner, and made a sign for his attendants to retire. I could not avoid a feeling of timidity and awe when I found myself alone with that monarch. Nature had done much for him; it would be difficult to find a model so perfect and gracious; he was then twenty-six years of age. He spoke French in its native purity, without the slightest tinge of foreign accent, and made use on all occasions of our most classical expressions. As there was not the least affectation in his manner, it was easy to see that this was the result of a finished education. The emperor said, when I put the letter into his hand, 'I am grateful for this step on your master's side; it is with regret that I have taken up arms against him, and I seize with pleasure the first opportunity of testifying that feeling towards him. He has long been the object of my admiration; I have no wish to be his enemy, any more than that of France. He should recollect that, in the time of the late emperor Paul, though then only grand-duke, when France was overwhelmed by disasters, and met with nothing but obloquy from the other cabinets, I contributed much, by directing the Russian cabinet to take the lead, to induce the other powers of Europe to recognise the new order of things in your country. If now I entertain different sentiments, it is because France has adopted different principles, which have given the

European powers just cause of disquietude for their independence. I have been called on by them to concur in establishing an order of things which may tranquillise all parties; and it is to accomplish that purpose that I have come hither. You have been admirably served by fortune, it must be admitted; but I will never desert an ally in distress, or separate my cause from that of the emperor of Germany. He is in a critical situation, but one not beyond the reach of remedy. I lead brave soldiers; and if your master drives me to it, I will command them to do their duty. You are already great and powerful, and by your uniformity of language, feelings, and laws, as well as physical situation, must always be formidable to your neighbours. What need have you of continual aggrandisement? Since the peace of Lunéville, you have acquired first Genoa, and then Italy, which you have subjected to a government which places it entirely at your disposal.'"

At the close of the conversation, the emperor presented General Savary with a reply to Napoleon's letter, addressed, "To the chief of the French government;" observing at the same time, "Here is my answer; the address does not express the title he has of late assumed. I attach no importance to such trifles." Savary found the Russian generals eager for the contest, and inflated with a vain-glorious sense of their own prowess and military skill. This impression Napoleon desired to strengthen, and thus induce the impetuosity of the Russians to lead them into a snare which he had laid for them. He therefore sent Savary again to the camp of the enemy, to propose an interview between the French and Russian emperors. Alexander declined the interview; but sent Prince Dolgoruki to propose conditions to Napoleon. The Russian was received at the outposts of the French camp by the emperor, when the latter, having just finished the inspection of his advanced posts, had nothing about him to strike a vulgar mind. Dolgoruki behaved with an arrogance which showed the delusion of his countrymen, and terminated the negotiation. The emperor dismissed him with the observation, that they would settle elsewhere than in diplomatic conferences the quarrel which divided the policy of the two empires. Napoleon, however, appears to have respected the military character of the Russians. He told his soldiers that they were going to meet a new enemy, "who had been brought from the ends of the world by the gold of England." Then, in allusion to the high character borne by the Russian infantry, he added—"This contest is of much importance to the honour of the French infantry. The question must be now finally settled, whether the French infantry be the first or the second in Europe." The Russians, deceived by the artifice of Napoleon, were eager for battle. "He is falling back," said the staff of officers who surrounded Alexander; "he is in full retreat; we must rush upon him and overwhelm him."

Notwithstanding this enthusiasm, the allies advanced but slowly; and Napoleon remained during the whole of two days on horseback, at the advanced posts, watching their movements. After surveying the heights of Pratzen, he said to his generals, "If I wished to prevent the enemy from passing, it is here that I should station myself; but that would only lead to an ordinary battle, and I desire decisive success. If, on the other hand, I draw back my right towards Brünn, and the Russians pass these heights, they are irretrievably ruined." Acting upon this principle, he drew back the French right, as if it was fearful of encountering the enemy. On the morning of the 1st of December, Napoleon beheld the columns of the enemy moving across his position, and saw that it was evident the resolution to turn the right flank of his army had been decidedly taken. Then, with the prophetic anticipation of military genius, he exclaimed, "To-morrow, before nightfall, that army is my own."

The Russian power was commanded by Generals Kutusoff and Buxhovden, and the reserve was under the orders of the Grand-duke Constantine. The Austrians were led by Prince John of Lichtenstein. Their allied forces amounted to about 80,000 men, of whom 15,000 were cavalry. Napoleon was on horseback by four o'clock in the morning of the day of battle—the 2nd of December. His soldiers were buried in sleep, unconscious of the dangers they were about to undergo, or of the triumph they were to achieve. A bright winter's sun at length revealed the position of the enemy; and he saw his expectations concerning their movements confirmed. Having given directions to his marshals for the attack, he rode through the foremost ranks of the army, and exclaimed, "Soldiers! the enemy has imprudently exposed himself to your

blows; we shall finish the war with a clap of thunder."

The left wing of the Russian army at first assailed the French with such violence, that the latter were driven back; and before Marshal Davoust could arrive on the spot to succour them, the right wing of the French army appeared completely turned. When he did so, he attacked the Russians while disordered by success, and not only arrested their advance, but took from them six pieces of cannon. The Russians, however, returned in greater force; and the conflict was maintained on both sides with much bloodshed and obstinacy.

While this furious combat was proceeding on the right of the French army, Marshal Soult had attacked the position on which depended the issue of the battle. At a signal given by Napoleon, the powerful corps of Soult was suddenly thrown on the Russian centre while it was in open columns of march, just beginning to ascend the slopes of the Pratzen. Kutusoff then saw his danger, and did everything that was possible to repair the error which had been committed. The emperors Alexander and Francis were both with the centre column. Prince Czartoryski, who stood between them, remarked to the former the nimble and decided step with which the French were ascending the plateau, without returning the fire of the Russians. At this sight, Alexander is said to have lost all the confidence he had until then possessed, and to have conceived a sinister presentiment which never left him during the engagement. Before the hasty preparations of the allies could be complete, the first line of Soult had ascended the heights, and attacked the Russian front with so much impetuosity, that its first line was at once broken and driven back upon the second; and after two hours of desperate fighting, the heights of Pratzen were carried, six battalions were cut to pieces, and the French were pursuing the Russians and Austrians, who were hurled in confusion down the declivities of that plateau.

At the same time, a desperate and almost separate battle was fought between the French left and the right of the allies. The French, under Lannes and Murat, in this direction also surprised the combined forces in their line of march. The Russian right were astonished at finding themselves suddenly assailed by French columns emerging, in battle array, out of the mist. The surprise was so complete, that the reserve, under the Grand-duke Constantine, was one of the first divisions to find itself engaged. Though surprised, the Russians were undaunted, and, under cover of the fire of their artillery, which was rapidly brought forward, their columns wheeled into line. A fierce conflict followed, in which the splendid Russian cavalry—the Hulans of the guard—charged that of the French, and, having broken it, dashed through the first line of the French, and swept through the openings between the second. There they were in their turn charged by Murat, and driven back in such disorder, that, what with the sabres of the cavalry of the latter, and the flanking fire of the infantry through which they were driven, nearly half their number were left dead or wounded on the ground.

The struggle was resumed in the centre, where the Russian imperial guard, led by the Grand-duke Constantine, charged the French in flank, and broke them by the force of the shock. Napoleon sent General Rapp with the cavalry of the guard to their relief. The Russians were then hurled back with the loss of their artillery. They rallied, and on being reinforced by the regiment of the chevalier guards (a corps in which all the privates were gentlemen), returned to the charge. Both imperial guards met in full career; the shock was terrible; and the most desperate cavalry action that had taken place during the war ensued, and lasted for above five minutes. The French horse were driven back, and the Russians pursued them with loud shouts and in some disorder. While doing so, they were assailed in flank by a powerful reserve of the French army, composed of the very flower of the guards, mounted on spirited chargers. A furious contest ensued betwixt them and Constantine's chevalier guards. The resolution and vigour of the combatants were equal; squadron to squadron, man to man, they fought with invincible firmness, and soon the ground was strewed with the dead and the dying. The Russians were at length compelled to yield to the enthusiastic valour of the French. The cavalry and infantry of their guard gave way; and, after losing their artillery and standards, were driven back in confusion almost to the walls of Austerlitz.

The allied armies no longer fought for victory, but for existence. Napoleon brought forward his reserves, and rapidly followed

up his success. The allied centre had been driven back above a mile from the field of battle, and the left wing was exposed to the most imminent danger. Assailed on all sides, the remnant of the Russian and Austrian army was at length overwhelmed. Great numbers sought to save themselves by crossing, with their artillery and cavalry, the frozen lake of Satschan. The ice, weakened by the warmth of a fine day, gave way in some places beneath the weight of the men, horses, and cannon; and in those spots the retreating Russians were engulphed beneath it. Napoleon, perceiving this, ordered a battery of the guard to fire on those parts of the ice which still held firm. The execution of this command was followed by a frightful yell which arose from nearly 2,000 drowning men, who sunk and perished beneath the shattered ice. One unfortunate column of the Russians yet remained upon the field, and, under General Doctorow, behaved in the most courageous manner, and endeavoured to cut a path for its retreat. A last and severe combat ensued; and part succeeded in escaping, but the rest were sabred by Murat's dragoons. The disorder was frightful; the rout complete. The sovereigns of Russia and Prussia fled from the field on which the victorious French were shouting "*Vive l'Empereur!*" Alexander was deeply dejected. Francis, more tranquil, bore the disaster with great composure. He had at least one consolation; the Russians could no longer assert that the cowardice of the Austrians constituted all the glory of Napoleon. The two princes retreated precipitately over the plains of Moravia, amidst profound darkness, separated from their households, and liable to be insulted through the barbarity of their own soldiers.

The battle of Austerlitz, or of the "three emperors," as the French term it, is regarded as the most brilliant of all the victories of Napoleon, and the one in which he most exhibited his astounding military genius. He had re-established his superiority in Europe, and inflicted a terrible blow upon his enemies. The loss of the allies amounted to no less than 30,000 men in killed, wounded, and prisoners. The victors also retained, as trophies, 180 pieces of cannon, 400 caissons, and 45 standards. The loss of the French, in killed and wounded, has been differently estimated at from 7,000 to 12,000.

The day after the battle, the emperor Francis dispatched Prince John of Lichtenstein to demand an interview with Napoleon. "You want a suspension of arms," said the latter to him; "but before I grant you an armistice, you must break with the Russians. They must retire; we will treat separately, I will afterwards make a separate peace with the emperor Alexander, or, if not, I will beat him again. As for the house of Austria, I must have guarantees that she will not again take up arms against me. It was not I that began this war. But, first of all, no more Russians! no more of your levies *en masse* in Hungary and Bohemia!" The French emperor then consented to an interview with the Austrian monarch, which took place the following day in the open air, near a mill, within three leagues of Austerlitz. The two emperors embraced when they met, and Francis addressed his conqueror as "Sir, my brother." It is said that he meanly threw the whole blame of the war upon the English; adding, that they were a set of selfish traffickers, who would set the continent on fire in order to secure to themselves the commerce of the world. The conference lasted upwards of an hour, and terminated with an agreement upon conditions dictated by Napoleon. "Take my advice," said the latter to Francis, "do not mix up your cause with that of the emperor Alexander. Russia, alone, can now only wage a *fancy war* in Europe. Vanquished, she retires to her deserts, and you—you pay with your provinces the costs of the war." By the conditions to which the humbled Francis submitted, the French were to keep possession of all their conquests in Moravia and Hungary, Upper and Lower Austria, the Tyrol, Venice, Carinthia, Styria, Carniola, Goritz, Istria, Bohemia, and the circle of Montabar. The Russians were to be compelled to evacuate the Austrian states within fifteen days; nor was any foreign army whatever to be admitted into the latter—a condition which doubtless referred to the Prussians. Napoleon perfectly understood the duplicity of the king of Prussia; and when he was congratulated, after the battle, upon his victory, observed with a sneer, that the Prussian compliments had been intended for others, but that fortune had transferred them to him.

When the terms agreed to between the emperors of France and Austria were communicated to Alexander by General Savary, the humbled autocrat observed—"Your master has shown himself very great. I

acknowledge all the power of his genius; and, as for myself, I shall retire, since my ally is satisfied." He then ordered a retreat, and, on the 6th of December, was on his way back to St. Petersburg. Some French writers assert, that Alexander and the Russian army was surrounded, and that they owed their escape to the magnanimity of Napoleon. By others, the Russian autocrat is described as saving himself and army by an exercise of duplicity. They say that he deceived General Davoust, who followed closely on his rear, by sending word to him that an armistice was concluded—a statement from which it would be supposed that he was included in it; such not being the fact, the armistice existing only between the French and the Austrians. It is probable that Napoleon did not greatly desire to intercept the retreat of the humiliated Russians, and thus renew the struggle. He was aware that his own position in the heart of Moravia, far from the frontiers of France and from his reinforcements, after the winter had set in, would have become a critical one had he chosen to prolong the war. Besides, he had done enough for one campaign, in which Austria had been laid prostrate for a time, and Russia had suffered severely both in her resources and her reputation; while the power and military glory of France had been increased to an extent not readily to be estimated.

It is true that Austria might possibly have been dismembered by Napoleon; but policy dictated its preservation. The acute Talleyrand, the day after the battle, urged on the conqueror the necessity of treating Austria with moderation, and even generosity. That power, observed the minister, had been considerably diminished during the last two centuries, and ought, therefore, to be much less an object of jealousy than formerly. A new power had arisen which should take its place in this respect; that was Russia; and against this latter, Austria, so far from being a danger, was a useful barrier. Austria, a vast aggregation of nations foreign to each other—as Austrians, Slavonians, Hungarians, Bohemians, Italians—might easily fall to pieces, if the bond, already feeble, that held together the heterogeneous elements of which it was composed, were to be further weakened; and its wrecks would have more tendency to attach themselves to Russia than to France. They ought, therefore, he contended, to desist from inflicting blows upon Austria, and even to indemnify her for the losses she was about to sustain. The indemnification that Talleyrand proposed was, to confer the provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia upon Austria; which, he said, would be worth more than Italy itself; that they would console Austria for her losses—alienate her from Russia; render her, in regard to the latter, the bulwark of the Ottoman empire, as she was already that of Europe. These provinces, he added, after embroiling her with Russia, would embroil her with England, and thus compel her to become the ally of France.

When Napoleon returned to Paris, he was received with the wildest enthusiasm, which was much enhanced by the rapidity with which he had concluded the brilliant campaign from which he had just returned. The municipality voted a monument to the emperor and to the army. The cannon which had been captured from the enemy, to the number of 500 pieces, was melted down and converted into a triumphal column, surrounded by a statue, in bronze, of the victor who had triumphed over such powerful combinations against France. In an exposition which Napoleon caused to be drawn up, of the state of the empire, the advantages which France had derived from the successive coalitions which had been formed against it, were thus alluded to:—"The first coalition, concluded by the treaty of Campo Formio, gave the republic the frontier of the line, and the states which now form the kingdom of Italy; the second invested it with Piedmont; the third united to its federal system Venice and Naples. Let England be now convinced of its impotence, and not attempt a fourth coalition, even if subsequent events should render such a measure practicable. The house of Naples has irrevocably lost its dominions; Russia owes the escape of its army solely to the capitulation which our generosity awarded; the Italian peninsula, as a whole, forms a part of the great empire; the emperor has guaranteed, as chief supreme, the sovereigns and constitutions which compose its several parts."

CHAPTER XLVI.

A RUSSIAN MINISTER SIGNS A TREATY OF PEACE WITH FRANCE, BUT ALEXANDER REFUSES TO RATIFY IT; PRUSSIA DECLARES WAR AGAINST FRANCE; PROSTRATION OF PRUSSIA BY NAPOLEON; THE RUSSIAN ARMY ADVANCES TO THE VISTULA; NAPOLEON TALKS OF THE RECONSTITUTION OF POLAND; HE ENTERS WARSAW; THE RUSSIANS RETREAT BEFORE HIM; BATTLES OF PULTUSK AND OF EYLAU; NAPOLEON RETIRES TO THE VISTULA, AND PROPOSES PEACE TO PRUSSIA; NAPOLEON TAKES DANTZIC; BATTLE OF HEILSBURG; MURDEROUS DEFEAT OF THE RUSSIANS AT THE GREAT BATTLE OF FRIEDLAND; ALEXANDER DESIRES PEACE; HIS ADVANCES ARE READILY MET BY NAPOLEON; ARMISTICE, AND AMICABLE INTERCOURSE BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND RUSSIAN OFFICERS; INTERVIEW OF THE TWO EMPERORS ON THE NIEMEN; TREATY OF TILSIT; BASE CONDUCT OF ALEXANDER TOWARDS THE KING OF PRUSSIA; SECRET ARTICLES OF THE TREATY BY WHICH NAPOLEON AND ALEXANDER AGREE TO DIVIDE THE DOMINION OF THE WORLD BETWEEN THEM; REMARKS ON THE ALLIANCE OF THE TWO EMPERORS.

PEACE between Austria and France was signed at Presburg, in Hungary, on the 26th of December, 1805. Austria gave up the Venetian provinces and Dalmatia to the kingdom of Italy; Tyrol to the elector of Bavaria, and other districts; besides a tribute to France of 100,000,000 of francs. Thus a war which was to have checked the preponderance of Napoleon in Italy, left that country entirely at his disposal, and established his influence over a great part of Germany, where, having raised the electors of Bavaria and Wurtemberg to the rank of kings, he placed himself at the head of all the smaller states, which he formed into a league, under his protection, with the title of the CONFEDERATION OF THE RHINE. The old German empire was thus dissolved; and Francis, renouncing his title of emperor of Germany, assumed, in lieu of it, that of emperor of Austria.

Alexander was no party to the peace of Presburg; and, according to the terms of the coalition, he had no right to enter on a peace with France without consulting and obtaining the consent of England. The latter country acted strictly up to these conditions; and Mr. Fox, then prime minister, refused to entertain overtures of peace from France, unless they were acceded to by Russia. "Do you wish us to treat," said he to Talleyrand, "conjointly with Russia? We answer—Yes. Do you wish us to enter into a separate treaty independent of that power?—No!" Scruples of this kind were not entertained by Alexander, and M. D'Oubril, the Russian plenipotentiary at Paris, signed a treaty of peace with France, on behalf of Russia, on the 20th of July, 1806. This treaty Alexander afterwards refused to ratify, on the pretence that his minister had exceeded the instructions given to him. D'Oubril was accordingly disgraced; but the deception practised by Alexander was too transparent to escape ultimate detection. Some months had been occupied in the negotiations between the two courts; and during this period, arrangements were being made for a fourth coalition against France. The negotiations which led to the signature of the treaty, had been carried on for the purpose of gaining the requisite time for this proceeding.

The Prussian minister congratulated Napoleon on his victory at Austerlitz, though he had recently made a secret treaty with Alexander to take up arms, under certain conditions, against the French emperor. The latter was aware of this perfidy; and when Count Haugwitz, the Prussian envoy, said to him, after the battle, "Thank God, you have conquered," observed sarcastically, "If I had lost, he would have said the same to the emperors of Austria and Russia." Still Napoleon considered it advisable to bribe Prussia into a continuance of neutrality; and Frederic William received the electorate of Hanover as the reward of his duplicity. George III. was elector of Hanover; and at the period of receiving this gift, Prussia enjoyed the full confidence of England, whose rights in that province were thus ceded away by an enemy and accepted by an ally. Prussia adopted the treaty conferring on her this dangerous gift, but resolved to defer the completion of it until a general peace should be agreed to, and the consent of the king of England obtained. This insidious condition was indignantly rejected by Napoleon, and a second convention was concluded at Paris, on the 15th of February, 1806, by which Frederic William declared that he received Hanover as a lawful conquest of Napoleon!

England retaliated by a declaration of war against Prussia; and in a few months several hundred Prussian vessels were seized by the English cruisers. Sweden,

the ally of England, also threatened to invade Prussia. In the meantime, Napoleon, who hated Prussia and despised her treacherous monarch, altered his tone towards the latter. The *Moniteur* began to talk of Prussia as a secondary power, which assumed a tone which its extent and position did not warrant. This was one cause of offence to the weak Frederic William. Another was, that in some fruitless negotiations for peace which Napoleon carried on with England, he had offered to restore Hanover to that power. A third was, that the confederation of the Rhine extended round a great part of the Prussian frontiers, and created a feeling of jealousy and uneasiness on the part of the Prussian king. The foundation of the Rhenish Confederation, which, as Napoleon openly said, would be as useful to him against Prussia as against Austria, was only notified by him to the Prussian cabinet after it was completely established; though such an union of most of the members of the German empire would not have been proposed to any of them without previously consulting Prussia, if Frederic William had been regarded by Napoleon with the respect due to the head of one of the great European kingdoms. On the 1st of October, 1806, the Prussian minister at Paris presented a note to M. Talleyrand, in which, after remarking, "that the king, his master, saw around his territories none but French soldiers or vassals of France, ready to march at her beck," a demand was made that the French troops should evacuate the German territory. Napoleon, in a defiant tone, replied, that "to provoke the enmity of France was as senseless a course as to pretend to withstand the waves of the ocean." These circumstances had induced the king of Prussia to accede to the proposal of the emperor Alexander, who promised to assist him with a powerful army if he would declare war against France.

England suspended her hostile intentions against Prussia, that she might act against France without embarrassment; and Frederic William presented an *ultimatum* to Napoleon, and, on its rejection, issued a manifesto, which was equivalent to a declaration of war. Thus Prussia was, by the inexorable tide of events, drawn, in spite of the evasions of its king, into active hostilities against France, and an alliance with Russia against that power.

The Prussian army was composed of troops who, down to the very drummers, thought themselves equal to the soldiers with whom Frederic the Great had, for seven years, resisted nearly the whole of Europe. It was also increased by the numerous and well-disciplined contingents of the elector and dukes of Saxony, the elector of Hesse-Cassel, the Duke of Brunswick, and several other princes, who had concluded an offensive and defensive alliance with the king of Prussia. But Frederic William was no match for the antagonist whose wrath he had provoked, and he had taken a step which he was bitterly to repent. Napoleon crossed the Rhine with an immense army, and soon attacked the Prussians. Marshal Davoust arrested Frederic William, and the division under his command, at the village of Auerstadt, in Upper Saxony. A severe and sanguinary battle followed on the 14th of October, in which the Prussian monarch sustained a severe defeat, and was compelled to retreat. On the same day the other division of the Prussian army, commanded by the Duke of Brunswick, was encountered by the French under Napoleon on the fatal field of Jena, where, after a long and violently-contested struggle, the Prussians were driven in disorder from the field. Their loss, in the two battles, is estimated at about 20,000 men in killed, wounded, and prisoners. The results were most disastrous. Most of the Prussian divisions were surrounded and obliged to lay down their arms. Almost all their strong fortresses—Magdeburg, Spandau, Kustrin, Stettin, Hameln—surrendered without firing a shot. The work of the Great Frederic's whole life crumbled to pieces in a few weeks. About a fortnight after the double victory of the French, Napoleon entered Berlin in triumph, and from that capital he issued his well-known decree against British commerce.* Frede-

* By it the British islands were to be considered as in a state of blockade by all the continent. All correspondence or trade with England was forbidden under most severe penalties. All articles of English manufacture, or produce of the British colonies, were considered contraband. Property of every kind belonging to British subjects, wherever found, was declared lawful prize. All letters to and from England were to be detained and opened at the post-office. This decree eventually exercised a powerful influence on the interests of Russia and the conduct of the emperor Alexander. It was even one of the remote causes of the ruin of Napoleon himself. M. Thiers (*Consulate and the Empire*) observes—"The effect of this decree on the opinions of Europe was immense. Some regarded it as a revolting excess of despotism;

ric William had fled a fugitive to Königsberg, and Prussia lay prostrate at the feet of its conqueror. So rapid were all their proceedings, that Napoleon, in an address to his army, observed—"Our entrance into Potsdam and Berlin has preceded the fame of our victories." He added—"We have made 60,000 prisoners, taken 65 standards (among which are the colours of the king of Prussia's guards), 600 pieces of cannon, and three fortresses; among the prisoners there are twenty generals. But notwithstanding all this, more than half our troops regret not having fired a single musket."

This terrible calamity fell upon Prussia before the emperor Alexander had time to reach the theatre of war. He had been actively employed in repairing the losses which his army had sustained in the campaign of Austerlitz. Thirty fresh squadrons and fifty-one battalions had been added to its amount; all the chasms occasioned by the casualties of war supplied, and the new French organisation into divisions universally adopted. An attempt was also made, in a proclamation which excited the merited ridicule and condemnation of a great part of Europe, to give a religious character to the war, and to excite the debased superstitions of the Russian soldiers against their foe. "Buonaparte," said this arrogant, and in some respects blasphemous, proclamation, which was nevertheless read in all the Russian churches—"after having, by open force or secret intrigue, extended his power over the countries which he oppresses, menaces Russia, which Heaven protects. It is for you to prevent the destroyer of peace, of the faith, and of the happiness of mankind, from seducing the orthodox Christians. He has trampled under foot every principle of truth; in Egypt he preached the Koran of Mohammed; in France manifested his contempt for the religion of Jesus Christ by convoking Jewish synagogues. Do you love your fellow-creatures? Fly the persecutor of Christians. Do you desire to be saved? Oppose an invincible barrier to his advances. He has dared to the combat God and Russia: *prove that you are the defenders of the Most High,* and of your country. Chase far from your frontiers that monster; punish his barbarity to so many innocent persons, whose blood cries aloud to Heaven for vengeance. God will hear the prayer of the faithful; he will shield you with his power; he will cover you with his grace. Your exploits will be celebrated by the church and by your country; immortal crowns or abodes of eternal felicity await you."

Alexander and his troops had scarcely reached the frontiers of Germany, when they received information of the defeat of the Prussians at Auerstadt and at Jena. Surprised and alarmed, Alexander immediately retreated across the Vistula. The Russian troops consisted of a body of 50,000 men, under General Benningsen; a second force, of the same power, under General Buxhovden; and a reserve was organised under the Swedish general Essen; while bodies of Cossacks preceded the regular troops. Part of General Michelson's troops were ascending the Dniester, and hastening to Poland. Such were the then disposable forces of the great Russian empire, which showed, for the second time, that its resources were not equal to its pretensions. Joined to the Prussians, and while awaiting the reserve of General Essen, the Russians could not bring to the Vistula a force reaching 120,000 men. This would have been very insufficient to resist the progress of Napoleon, if the climate had not been a powerful auxiliary to the soldiers of the North. By the climate we mean, not merely the cold, but the soil; the difficulty of marching and subsisting in the immense plains of Poland, alternately muddy and sandy, and where the woods exceed in extent the part under cultivation.

Both Alexander and the miserable Frederic William flattered themselves, that if a single success crowned their efforts, Austria would violate the neutrality to which she had so recently pledged herself, and declare in their favour; but Austria was yet suffering too severely from the chastisement she had received, to suffer her to act so perfidious a part for the present. Napoleon seems to have been aware of this; for he was full of confidence. "Your majesty," he wrote to the king of Prussia, "has sent me word that you have thrown yourself into

others as a stroke of profound policy; all as an extraordinary act, proportioned to the conflict of giants maintained by England and France against each other, the one daring to seize the dominion of the sea, hitherto the common route of nations, and to interdict all commerce to her enemies; the other aiming at the entire occupation of the continent by force of arms, to reply to the closing of the sea by the closing of the land. Unheard-of spectacle, without example in the past and probably in the future, exhibited at this moment by the unchained passions of the two greatest nations of the earth!"



NAPOLEON I.

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the arms of Russia. Time will show whether you have chosen the better and more efficacious part. You have taken up the dice-box to play; the dice will decide."

Napoleon, to increase the perplexity of the northern autocrat, talked of the reconstitution of Poland as a kingdom—a measure he never intended to effect. Yet, willing to augment his own strength and to weaken his enemy by turning to account the well-known disaffection of the Poles towards their Russian rulers, he introduced the following questions in one of his proclamations:—"The love which the Poles entertain for their country, and the sentiment of nationality, is not only preserved entire in the heart of the people, but it has become more profound from misfortune. Their first passion—the universal wish—is to become again a nation. The rich issue from their *châteaus* to demand, with loud cries, the re-establishment of the nation, and to offer their children, their fortune, their influence, in the cause. That spectacle is truly touching. Already they have everywhere resumed their ancient costumes, their ancient customs. Shall the Polish throne be re-established? Shall the 'great nation' secure for it respect and independence? Shall she recall it to life from the grave? God only, who directs all human affairs, can solve this great mystery." These observations, without binding the emperor to the performance of any act in favour of the Poles, yet won for him the attachment of that people, and threatened Alexander with an insurrection in the Polish dominions. "I love the Poles," said Napoleon to General Rapp, after receiving a deputation from that nation; "their ardour pleases me. I could wish to render them an independent people, but it is no easy undertaking. Too many nations are interested in their spoils—Austria, Russia, Prussia. If the match is once lighted, there is no saying where it would stop. My first duty is towards France; and it is no part of it to sacrifice its interests to Poland; that would lead us too far. We must leave its destinies in the hands of the supreme disposer of all things—to Time. It will possibly teach us, hereafter, what course we ought to pursue."

Napoleon was so successful in this movement, that the Russian government, in alarm, sent General Benningsen to Warsaw to quell the rising storm, and overawe the disaffection evinced by the people. Napoleon at once saw the difficulties in which he would involve the Russian general by attacking him when surrounded by an infuriated population, ready on the first favourable opportunity to join the invader. The emperor, therefore, led his army into Poland, where the people received him with enthusiasm, while great numbers organised themselves into a military force with amazing rapidity, and followed his standard.

The van of the French army, under Murat, moved forward to attack Benningsen in his quarters at Warsaw. After several unsuccessful *rencontres* on the part of the latter, he effected his retreat from Warsaw, which the French commander entered triumphantly on the 28th of November. Benningsen had taken up a position behind the Vistula, but the impetuous Murat soon compelled him to make another retrograde movement, and to shelter himself behind the stream of the Bug. From this spot he felt it prudent to shift his quarters still further rearward, placing between himself and the pursuing French general the river Ukra, where the Russian generalissimo, Field-marshal Kaminskoi, with three other divisions of the autocrat's army, had arrived and pitched their tents. Napoleon in person reached the Ukra on the 23rd of December, and made the passage of that river. Kaminskoi then ordered the whole of his army to fall back, and take up a position on the line of the river Niemen, in Lithuania. General Benningsen suffered severely, being closely followed by the enemy, who harassed him by hanging on his rear, and made a great number of prisoners, besides capturing upwards of thirty pieces of cannon, in the various skirmishes which occurred, on passing the Vistula and elsewhere, between the pursuers and the pursued. Benningsen at length ventured to make a stand at Pultusk, notwithstanding the imperative orders of the commander-in-chief, Kaminskoi, to retreat at all hazards. At this place a long-contested and murderous battle took place on the 26th of December. The slaughter on each side was enormous, and both French and Russians claimed the victory. Some accounts represent the latter as having lost 12,000 men in killed, wounded, and prisoners; while they deny that their loss exceeded 5,000, and represent that of the French as amounting to upwards of 10,000. The French, on their side, contended that their loss did not exceed 7,000. So conflicting are the accounts, that it is difficult to say to which side the advantage attached;

but it is probable that both parties suffered very severely, and that neither could claim a victory in the usual acceptation of that word. The French, however, remained masters of the ground on which they had fought, and from whence they retired the next day into winter quarters in the city of Warsaw.

Alexander was too anxious for his own safety and the preservation of the military glory of his empire, to allow his troops to remain idle, notwithstanding the inclemency of the season, and the almost impracticable state of the roads. He superseded Kaminskoi as commander-in-chief, that general's mind having given way under the difficulties of his position, and appointed Benningsen in his place; and the French were continually harassed by the Russians, in their winter quarters. The emperor also endeavoured to relieve his ally the king of Prussia, who was still shut up in Königsberg, together with such troops as he had been able to collect around him, where they were already suffering from want of provisions. To accomplish the latter object Alexander proceeded to Mohringen—a Russian town, fifty-six miles south-south-west from Königsberg. Here he was opposed by a French army under Marshal Bernadotte; for the activity of the Russians had compelled Napoleon in some measure to alter his plan with respect to remaining in winter quarters. A sharp engagement followed on the 25th of January, 1807. At first victory seemed to incline to the Russians; but the French afterwards precipitated themselves with such fury upon their opponents, that the Russian forces were completely flanked and driven from the field. Still the French obtained no decisive advantage, and were not in a condition to claim a victory.

By the end of January, surprised at the tenacity with which the Russians kept the field, Napoleon broke up his quarters, and, concentrating his forces, resumed the offensive. He designed to get to the rear of the Russian camp, and thus to cut off the enemy's communication with his resources. General Benningsen became aware of this design by means of an intercepted despatch, and countermarched with a skill which entirely frustrated the tactics of his opponent, who was, consequently, under the necessity of executing a long series of manœuvres, which, at that dreary season, involved the extremity of hardship.

Even the Russian troops, accustomed as they were to the rigours of a northern climate, suffered severely from the lengthened marches they were compelled to make at that inclement period, the miseries of which were enhanced by the pangs of hunger. In fact, the Russian army was in want of almost everything except weapons and ammunition. The Poles were all hostile; the Russian treasury was exhausted; and the commander-in-chief unable to cope in the market, which was monopolised by Jews, with the golden pieces of the French. The half-starved Russians had no resource but to prowl about and dig in the earth for the corn and provisions the Polish peasantry concealed. This labour, added to their military duties, left them scarcely any time for repose; and when these unfortunate men lay down to sleep, they had no bed but the snow, no shelter but the sky, no covering but rags. Under such painful circumstances, they felt it was better to fight than to starve; better to die quickly on the bayonets and beneath the grapeshot of the French, than to perish slowly from starvation. They therefore became clamorous for action, and loudly demanded to be led to battle, instead of traversing to and fro on the almost impassable roads.

Benningsen, consequently, resolved to make a stand at the town of Eylau, about twenty-four miles south-east of Königsberg, where he encamped with his whole army, consisting of about 90,000 men. The day before the battle Napoleon attacked the town, or rather village, which was several times taken and retaken with horrible carnage; but towards evening it remained in the hands of the French. The French emperor, who commanded in person, spent the whole night in making the requisite preparations for the approaching struggle. It commenced at dawn on the following day, the 8th of February. The Russians were the assailants, and began by opening a cannonade upon the village. Napoleon responded by ordering a cannonade against an eminence in possession of the Russians, which commanded the entrance to the plain, and was essential to the offensive operations of his army. As the opposing forces were within half gun-shot of each other, nearly every shot took effect, and the slaughter that ensued was terrific. During these operations a sudden and dense fall of snow, accompanied by a mist that continued for half-an-hour, involved both armies in comparative darkness. This had nearly



proved fatal to the French; for some of their columns, inclining too much to the left, became completely separated from each other. This error was retrieved by the masterly manœuvres of the cavalry under Murat, and the impetuosity with which Davoust, falling upon the rear of the Russians, dislodged them from the eminence they had so obstinately retained. During fourteen hours the battle raged with unabated fury, and the chances of victory continually changed sides. The French made repeated and furious attacks on the Russian infantry, which stood like walls of brass, and never yielded to these terrible onslaughts. The battle lasted until ten o'clock at night, when the Russians retired to the position they occupied in the morning. Half-starved and half-naked as they were, they had displayed a heroism on the field which astonished their enemies. Some Prussian columns, under General Lestocq, also behaved with great intrepidity. Again both Russians and French claimed the victory, which it is difficult to assign to either. Napoleon had received the severest check he had experienced since the commencement of his military career; and if it is conceded that he gained a victory, it was one whose results were equivalent, in all but the name, to a defeat.

During this battle the emperor Napoleon himself narrowly escaped death or captivity. On one occasion the French were swept before a charge of Russian cavalry and Cossacks. The fugitives rushed into Eylau, where Napoleon had stationed himself in the churchyard, on its eastern side. A snow-storm had veiled the advance of the Russians; and clearing away, it now showed their light troops almost at the edge of the town. The serried masses of the old guard stood firm in and around the cemetery; while the branches of the trees above their heads were constantly rent, or falling from the enemy's cannon-balls. Presently a Russian division, following the fugitive French, entered Eylau by the eastern street, and charged, with loud hurrahs, to the foot of the mount, where the emperor was placed with a battery of the imperial guard and his personal escort of a hundred men. Napoleon's presence of mind did not forsake him, and he ordered his little body-guard to form line, in order to check the enemy's advance, and dispatched orders to the old guard to attack the column on one flank, while a brigade of Murat's horse charged it on the other. The Russians, ignorant of the inestimable prize almost within their grasp, were arrested by the firm attitude of the little band of heroes who formed Napoleon's last resource; and before they could re-form their ranks for a regular conflict, the enemy was upon them on either flank, and almost the whole division was cut to pieces on the spot. "I was never so much struck with anything in my life," said General Bertrand on a subsequent occasion, "as by the emperor at Eylau, at the moment when, alone with some officers of his staff, he was almost trodden under foot by a column of four or five thousand Russians. The emperor was on foot, and Berthier gave orders instantly for the horses to be brought forward; the emperor gave him a reproachful look; and instead, ordered a battalion of his guard, which was at a little distance, to advance. He himself kept his ground as the Russians approached, repeating frequently the words—'What boldness! what boldness!' At the sight of the grenadiers of his guard, the Russians made a dead pause; the emperor did not stir, but all around him trembled."

The loss on both sides had been terrific, and it is affirmed that about 50,000 killed and wounded were left upon the field; of these, at least half were French. The latter remained for eight days at Eylau, engaged in the burial of their dead. The trophies of victory were nearly equally balanced. The Russians had to boast of the unusual spectacle of twelve eagles taken from their antagonists; while the French had captured sixteen of the Russian guns and fourteen standards. "Never," observes Alison, "was spectacle so dreadful as that field presented on the following morning. Above 50,000 men lay, in the space of two leagues, weltering in blood. The wounds were, for the most part, of the severest kind, from the extraordinary quantity of cannon-balls which had been discharged during the action, and the close proximity of the contending masses to the deadly batteries, which spread grape at half musket-shot through their ranks. Though stretched on the cold snow, and exposed to the severity of an Arctic winter, the sufferers were burning with thirst, and piteous cries were heard on all sides for water, or assistance to extricate the wounded men from beneath the heaps of slain or load of horses, by which they were crushed. Six thousand of these noble animals encumbered the field, or, maddened

with pain, were shrieking aloud amidst the stifled groans of the wounded. Broken gun-carriages, dismounted cannon, fragments of blown-up caissons, scattered balls, lay in wild confusion amidst casques, cuirasses, and burning hamlets, casting a livid light over a field of snow. Subdued by loss of blood, tamed by cold, exhausted by hunger, the foemen lay side by side amidst the general wreck. The Cossack was to be seen beside the Italian; the gay vine-dresser, from the banks of the Garonne, lay athwart the stern peasant from the plains of the Ukraine. The extremity of suffering had extinguished alike the fiercest and the most generous passions. According to his usual custom, Napoleon, in the afternoon, rode over this dreadful field, accompanied by his generals and staff, while the still burning piles of Serpalten and Sausgarten sent volumes of black smoke over the scene of death. But the men exhibited none of their wonted enthusiasm; no cries of '*Vive l'Empereur!*' were heard; the bloody surface echoed only with the cries of suffering or the groans of woe. 'The spectacle,' said Napoleon in his bulletin, 'was fitted to inspire princes with the love of peace and a horror of war!'"

The confidence of Napoleon was shaken by the result of the battle of Eylau, and he made overtures of peace to General Benningsen, who sternly replied, "that his master had sent him to fight, and not to negotiate." At midnight the latter held a council of war by a bivouac fire, at which it was deemed expedient to retreat upon Königsberg. The march was commenced almost immediately, though some of the troops did not move until the next morning, when they traversed the field in front of the French, who did not attempt to intercept them. Napoleon withdrew again to the line of the Vistula; and a few days after the battle, he sent General Bertrand with a courteous message to the king of Prussia, who was then at Memel, and offered to restore to that monarch a very large portion of his dominions, on condition that he should consent to a separate peace. Frederic William had been so severely punished for duplicity, that, bitterly remembering the lesson, he acted on this occasion in an honourable manner, and replied that, circumstanced as he was, it was impossible for him to enter into any treaty in which the emperor of Russia did not participate. Napoleon wished to be able to deal with Russia singly, who, in the former campaign, had been assisted by the Austrians, and in this by the troops of Prussia and the *promises* of England. The subsidies of this country had previously been advanced with a niggardly hand, and were in this emergency denied altogether. Alexander applied to his ally, the British government, to negotiate for him a loan of £6,000,000 sterling, and make an immediate advance on account. The security offered is said not to have been a bad one, but it was deemed insufficient, and the English ministry declined the transaction. This gave great offence to Alexander, and seriously crippled his exertions against France. From this time he seems to have doubted both the sincerity and generosity of England, and to have begun to consider how he should get out of the coalition with the least possible loss, and derive benefit and aggrandisement from a treaty with Napoleon. Subsequently the English ministry remitted the sum of £500,000 to the court of St. Petersburg; but this subsidy was far from being sufficient for the exigencies of the case, especially as they declined the assistance of a British auxiliary force.

As the Prussian king declined Napoleon's overtures for a separate peace, the latter resolved to punish him by seizing upon Dantzic, and on the few fortresses which yet remained in the hands of the Prussians. Dantzic, though defended with great skill and the most undaunted courage, was forced to yield to the superior tactics of the besiegers, and surrendered on the 7th of May, 1807. The attempts of the Russians to raise the siege only drew further suffering and failures upon themselves; detachments from their army experiencing severe defeats at Braunsburg and Peterswalde. They were also beaten back at other points, and a number of rafts, which had occupied them six weeks to construct, on the Bug, were burnt by the French in two hours.

When Dantzic had fallen, the beleaguring troops, amounting to 25,000 men, rejoined the main army of France; and this, together with new levies, enabled Napoleon to resume offensive operations against General Benningsen, at the head of 180,000 men; while the latter, notwithstanding every exertion to increase his force, could scarcely raise his army to its original number of 90,000. This is to be accounted for by the fact, that it has always been extremely difficult in Russia to raise levies

with promptitude, in consequence of the vast extent of territory over which the troops are scattered, the want of means of transport on so large a scale, and the danger which is incurred by moving masses of soldiers out of those remote territories, which, acquired by fraud or violence, can only be maintained by the constant presence of a military force. In addition to these general causes, recent wars had pressed hard upon the serviceable classes of the population, and left but scanty resources to draw upon. As for the allies of Russia, Prussia already had almost exhausted her strength in her own defence; Sweden was unable to render substantial assistance; and applications for troops were made to England with even less success than had attended that for monetary assistance. The fact was, that England, threatened with an invasion of its own shores by Napoleon, had enough to do at home, and felt that she had contributed sufficiently to the assistance of the continental powers. Moreover, she did not care to assist Alexander to rescue the king of Prussia from a fate which she felt he deserved. She had set aside her own cause of quarrel; yet, though she did not strike, she would not benefit the treacherous power which, while in alliance with her, had accepted Hanover from the hands of the French emperor.

Notwithstanding the enormous preparations of Napoleon for war, he was desirous of peace. The levies which he had made in France had almost exhausted that country, and general murmurs prevailed amongst the people: it was, indeed, physically impossible that France could for many years stand such terrible drains upon the flower of her population. Many expedients were resorted to for stimulating the martial enthusiasm of the people, and numerous military *fêtes* were given to dazzle the imagination of the multitude. Yet the popular ardour languished; painful blanks had been occasioned in thousands of families; the flower of the population of France was perishing in its continuous battles; and a sense of desolation fell upon the minds of the people. Napoleon knew these things; and, conscious of the military difficulties he had to encounter, especially with so powerful and obstinate a foe as Russia, he was, doubtless, sincerely desirous of terminating hostilities. To this Alexander, disgusted with the indifference of England, and alarmed at the power of the adversary with whom he found himself engaged, was by no means averse. After the fall of Dantzic, Napoleon made that city his head-quarters, and negotiations were secretly carried on between him and the Russian emperor. The nature of them did not transpire; but it appears the emperors were unable to come to terms, and that the negotiations were broken off.

The French soldiers constructed comfortable huts, in which they spent the winter; and all the admirable arrangements of the camp of Boulogne were again put in force amidst the severity of a Polish winter. The huts were arranged in streets, which resembled, in regularity and cleanliness, those of a city. The minds of the soldiers were diverted by constant exercises, warlike games, and reviews; while the agricultural riches of Old Prussia kept them amply supplied with provisions. The Russian army was not so fortunately situated, and was far from being fed and sheltered so well as the French. It was situated around Heilsburg, where a formidable intrenched camp had been constructed. The only contest of any moment which took place while the army occupied this position, was on the 3rd of March, at Guttstadt, which was attacked and carried by Marshal Ney, together with the magazines which it contained. The French, however, having imprudently advanced into the plain beyond that town, several regiments were surrounded by the Cossacks, pierced through, and broken; so that both parties were glad to resume their quarters without having much reason to boast of any considerable advantage. General Benningsen, notwithstanding the disparity of his forces, which had been reinforced to the number of 120,000, was the first to recommence hostilities. The emperor Alexander had arrived at the head-quarters of his army on the 28th of March, and had resided since that time at Bartenstein, a little in the rear of the cantonments of the soldiers. On the 5th of June, the Russians commenced an attack on a strong French division under the command of Marshal Ney. The French lines were attacked at three different points; and although the Russians suffered severely, yet the French were compelled to fall back upon Ackendorf. The following day the Russians renewed the attack, with a serious loss to themselves, and but a slight one to the foe. Still Napoleon deemed it expe-

dient to leave his camp at Finkinstein, join Marshal Ney at the village of Deppen, to which he had retreated, and take the command of the army in person. A sharp engagement then took place on the 8th of June, in which both sides suffered severely. The French now assumed the offensive, seized several of the enemy's camps, and attacked, on the 10th, a division of the Russian forces, consisting of about 17,000 cavalry and several lines of infantry, who, however, repeatedly repulsed them. Yet Benningsen was compelled eventually to give way; but, rallying his troops, he halted at Heilsburg, a Prussian town in the province of Ermeland, seated on the current of the Alle. Here the Russians occupied a very strong position, and the main army lay surrounded by fortifications. Another sanguinary engagement ensued, and the Russians maintained their ground for a whole day, in the face of an enemy far superior to themselves, both with respect to numbers and discipline. The carnage was dreadful; the French suffered severely; but the Russian army was ultimately driven from its position, and compelled to continue its retreat, which it did in so precipitate a manner, as to excite some suspicions that the emperor Alexander was no longer in earnest in the contest, and had allowed his troops to be beaten in consequence of some secret understanding to that effect between himself and the emperor Napoleon.

Early on the morning of the 12th, the French entered Heilsburg in triumph, and took possession of the provisions, magazines, and munitions which the Russians had abandoned. On the afternoon of the same day, Napoleon fixed his head-quarters at Eylau, which had been the scene of so terrible a battle in the preceding February. A great change had taken place in this region since the French had last encamped on its broad fields. Instead of a dreary waste of ice and snow, over which the fires of their melancholy bivouac gleamed with a lurid light that gave increased horrors to the scene, the reviving summer had spread an exquisite picture of fertility But the clustering woods, the tranquil pastures, and orderly villages that animated the scene, were destined to be despoiled by the crushing footsteps of legions, who, spreading ruin on their track, looked upon such sights with admiration only as they presented the means for sustentation and a favourable ground for military operations.

The Russians retreated across the Alle and thus placed that stream between themselves and their pursuers. They then took up their position opposite the town of Friedland. In the meantime Napoleon dispatched a division of the army, under Marshal Soult, to manœuvre before Königsberg, where the Russian magazines were placed, while he himself marched with the grand army upon Friedland to attack the Russians. General Benningsen and his army occupied a highly advantageous position; a fact which was instantly perceived by Napoleon. He therefore left no stratagem unattempted to induce his opponent to recross the river to its western bank, where he possessed decided advantages for the disposition of his troops, and where the Russians, in the event of defeat, would be under the necessity of defiling through the town and over the narrow bridge, which would render retreat almost impracticable. To deceive the enemy, he allowed only a small part of his force to be seen; and General Benningsen supposed that the French troops he beheld consisted chiefly of a division which had suffered severely at Heilsberg. Under these circumstances, he entertained a hope that, by a sudden attack, it might be destroyed before the main body of Napoleon's forces could advance to its relief. He therefore ordered one corps to cross the bridge; and finding no serious opposition, he gradually transported the whole of his army over the river, by means of the bridge and three pontoons. The Russian general was completely outwitted; and no sooner had he accomplished this movement, than he discovered his mistake. Heavy columns of French began to emerge from a thick wood in which they had been concealed; their cannon was rapidly advanced into position, and Benningsen found himself unexpectedly in the presence of the great bulk of the grand army. Retreat was impossible; and no alternative remained but to encounter the enemy at a manifest disadvantage. The broken and wooded country which the French occupied, greatly facilitated their operations; while the Russians were so limited in space, and so exposed by their situation, that they had nothing to rely upon but their indomitable courage.

The advanced body of the French, who were under the command of Marshal Lannes, received the approaching Russians with a sharp fire of musketry, mingled with discharges of cannon, and retired skirmish-

ing. It was the 14th of June. "The anniversary of Marengo," observed Napoleon; "it is a lucky day for us." As it would yet take some time to collect all the French troops, some of his lieutenants were of opinion that they ought to defer fighting a decisive battle until the morrow. "No, no," replied the emperor, "one does not catch an enemy twice in such a scrape."

The Russian army had a superior enemy in front, and a deep river, traversed only by four bridges, in its rear. The object of Napoleon was to drive the Russians into the Alle; he therefore directed his attention towards occupying the town of Friedland, and seizing the bridges by which the Russians could effect a retreat. For this dangerous task he selected the corps of Marshal Ney. The emperor, grasping his arm, and pointing to Friedland, the bridges, and the Russians crowded together in front, observed—"Yonder is the goal; march to it without looking about you; break into that thick mass, whatever it costs you; enter Friedland, take the bridges, and give yourself no concern about what may happen on your right, on your left, or in your rear. The army and I shall be there to attend to that." Proud of his commission, Ney departed with so much ardour to execute it, that Napoleon, struck with his martial attitude, exclaimed, "That man is a lion!"

The general engagement between the two armies did not commence until five in the afternoon, and Benningsen entertained the hope that the approach of night would give him the means of retrieving his error by enabling him to regain the right bank of the river. In this he was mistaken; for at that hour the signal for Ney's attack was given by the discharge of twenty pieces of cannon from the French centre. Ney and his corps then marched resolutely direct upon Friedland. On they came (said an elegant writer) with the fury of a tempest, driving before them, like foam before the waves, the Russian chasseurs of the guard, and several regiments of cavalry and Cossacks who were placed in advance, and had endeavoured to check their progress. Some Russian regiments broke and fled towards the river, into which great numbers of the men were precipitated and drowned. But the advancing French were terribly exposed to the enemy's artillery, which played upon them with fearful effect. They had to sustain not only the fire of the batteries before them, but also the fire of those on the right bank of the Alle, which it was impossible to take, as they were separated from them by the deep bed of the river. Whole files of the French were swept away; and the fire became so severe, that the very bravest of the troops could no longer endure it. At this point the cavalry of the Russian imperial guard charged Ney's column with such impetuosity, that several battalions were thrown into disorder, and driven to the rear, where they stood in groups around their officers. Victory appeared to favour the Russians, who, in their turn, became the assailants. But the Russian guards were not supported, and they were soon encountered by General Dupont, who had hastened to the relief of Ney. The Russian cavalry had scattered in pursuit of the French infantry, and in this state it was fiercely charged in flank by Dupont, and driven back to the edge of the town. The presence of this reinforcement restored the confidence of Ney's soldiers. The latter formed anew, and resumed their march forward. It was necessary to counteract the formidable artillery of the Russians; and Napoleon, therefore, ordered General Victor to collect all the guns of his division, and to range them in mass in front of Ney's troops. This order was executed by the skilful and intrepid General Senarmont, who commanded that artillery. Taking it some hundred paces ahead of the infantry, he daringly placed himself in front of the Russians, and opened upon them a fire, which, from the number of pieces employed and the accuracy of aim with which they were directed, produced terrible effects on the enemy. Directing one of his batteries against the right bank, he soon silenced those erected by the Russians on that side of the river. Then, pushing forward his line of artillery, he gradually approached to within grapeshot range, and firing upon the deep masses crowded together as they fell back into the elbow of the Alle, he made terrible havoc among them. The French infantry continued their advance under cover of the artillery, and the Russians made a despairing effort to extricate themselves from the crowded mass into which they were being driven. Their imperial guard marched, with bayonets fixed, upon Dupont's division, who, in turn, charged them with the bayonet, and hurled them back in confusion. The French then assaulted the town of Friedland, pursued the Russians through the streets, and drove

them upon the bridges of the Alle, which Senarmont's artillery, from without, enfiladed with its shot. The fugitive Russians, in their confusion, themselves actually set fire to the bridges, and thus cut off their own means of retreat. Some of the principal buildings of the town also took fire, and Ney and Dupont met in the burning streets, and congratulated one another on the success of the task which had been assigned to them.*

The centre and right wing of the Russian army still kept its ground, though subjected to an incessant cannonade which told with terrible effect upon them, on account of the dense masses into which the limited extent of the ground compelled them to form. They had, however, fought with some prospect of success, or at least with undaunted spirit, until the flames arising from Friedland and the bridges, and the vast clouds of smoke which darkened the atmosphere, revealed the sad truth that their retreat was cut off, and filled all hearts with despair. At this point, Napoleon, anxious to take advantage of the brief remainder of the day, carried forward his whole line. Though thus pressed, General Gortschakoff dispatched a column of infantry to the gates of the town, in the hope of retaking it. These at first drove back the soldiers of Ney and Dupont, but were then themselves repulsed. A new combat raged within the unfortunate town, and the possession of it was disputed by the light of the flames by which it was being consumed. The French finally remained masters, and the Russians were driven back into the confined plain from which there was no escape but through the waters of the Alle.

The main body of the Russians, subjected to the onslaught of the masses which Napoleon directed against it, still fought with a wild and despairing bravery. It is difficult to do justice to the obstinate and unyielding courage which influenced these inflexible soldiers. Though raked by the French artillery, which played upon them from half cannon-shot distance, and subjected to a rolling and destructive fire from the French infantry, they were driven back slowly and without disorder. Then, sooner than surrender, they crossed the river by fords which, earlier in the day, had been pointed out to them by some peasants. Across these did Benningsen convey the greater part of his artillery; and by them immense numbers of the Russians effected their escape; though great numbers of these unhappy men were washed away and drowned—a fate which their savage and determined energy led them to submit to rather than be made prisoners.

The battle was not concluded until past ten at night; but on this occasion, though the Russians had sustained their defeat with honour, yet the French had an unequivocal victory. The loss of the Russians has been variously estimated at between 17,000 and 25,000 in killed, drowned, wounded, and prisoners. Most of the latter were wounded; not more than 500 of them being unhurt. The French say that they captured eighty pieces of cannon; but other authorities deny that more than a fourth part of that number fell into their hands. The French had lost about 10,000 men in killed and wounded, and two eagles were taken from them. Napoleon slept on the field of battle, surrounded by his soldiers, who, though they had nothing to eat but the bread they brought in their knapsacks, shouted enthusiastically *"Vive l'Empereur!"* Not more than half of Napoleon's cavalry was upon the field; and this circumstance favoured the escape of the Russian army. The night was clear; and, descending the banks of the Alle, the great body of the Russians crossed that river at the bridge of Allenburg. So rapid was their march that, on the following day, they were at Wehlau, on the other side of the Pregel. Though they had nobly sustained their courage in the hour of battle, yet such was the confusion into which they had fallen, and the apprehensions they entertained lest their rear-guard should be attacked, that a general panic took place in consequence of the accidental discharge of a few muskets; and horse, foot, and artillery rushed towards the bridge, trampling each other under foot, and, breaking into the town, spread there the wildest disorder. It is generally admitted, that had Napoleon followed up his success with his usual energy,

* "Napoleon, placed in the centre of the divisions which he kept in reserve, had never ceased to watch this grand sight. While he was contemplating it attentively, a ball passed at the height of the bayonets, and a soldier, from an instinctive movement, stooped his head. 'If that ball were destined for you,' said Napoleon, smiling, 'though you were to burrow a hundred feet under ground, it would be sure to find you there.' Thus he wished to give currency to that useful belief, that Fate strikes the brave and the coward without distinction, and that the coward who seeks a hiding-place disgraces himself to no purpose."—Thiers: *Consulate and the Empire.*

the Russian host must have been annihilated. When, on the following day, the French started in pursuit of their enemy, and arrived at the Pregel, they found that all the bridges had been broken down by the retreating Russians.

We mentioned that, before the battle, Napoleon had dispatched Marshal Soult with a body of French troops to the city of Königsberg. It was vigorously defended by the Prussian and Russian troops within, until they learned the result of the battle of Friedland. It was then no longer tenable; therefore, Generals Lestocq and Kamenskoi abandoned it, leaving the immense stores, as well as the sick and the wounded, to the French, to whom the place was immediately afterwards surrendered. Amongst the stores were found quantities of corn and wine; and (so say the French) 100,000 muskets, sent by England, and still on board the vessels which had brought them. Sir Robert Wilson, who was with the Russian army, denies this statement, and affirms it to be "a falsehood of the most extravagant character." England, he says, had sent arms and ammunition, but they did not arrive until they were too late to be of any service.

Lestocq and Kamenskoi, with the allied forces which they led from Königsberg, succeeded in joining the main Russian army on the 18th of June, which crossed the river Niemen by the town of Tilsit, and, after burning the bridge, encamped beyond it.

The emperor Alexander was dispirited, and felt that he was no longer able to continue the war without hazarding the entire ruin of his empire. Disgust at the conduct of England had a considerable share in making him resolve upon seeking a peace with France. His army also cried out loudly for peace; as, though not dissatisfied with its own conduct, it regarded itself as incapable of coping successfully with the superior forces of Napoleon. Russian officers asked, for whom the war was carried on? Was it for the Prussians, who could not defend their own country? or for the English, who, after so frequently announcing succours, sent none, and thought only of conquering colonies? They added, that it was through the paltry ambition of England that brave men were set together by the ears: they had no reason for hate, or even jealousy, as France and Russia had no cause to envy each other. The humiliated king of Prussia suggested to his imperial ally the necessity of making proposals of peace to Napoleon, and expressed a hope that his friend, who alone had insisted on the prolongation of the war, would defend him in the negotiations better than in the field of battle.

On the 18th, General Benningsen, at the command of Alexander, transmitted to Napoleon a letter, deploring the miseries occasioned by the war, and desiring an armistice as a means of putting an end to them. This letter Napoleon received very favourably, for he was fully aware of the difficulties of his position at such a distance from his capital, from which he had been absent nearly a year. Moreover, he could not depend on the uneasy neutrality of Austria, or the continued indifference of England. Napoleon also fancied he could detect, on the part of Alexander, a disposition which might induce Russia to become his ally against England. He therefore returned an amicable answer, saying, that after so many efforts, fatigues, and victories, he desired nothing but a safe and honourable peace, and that he was ready to consent to an armistice as a means of bringing it about. At the same period, on the 22nd of June, he issued to his victorious soldiers the following proclamation:—Soldiers! on the 5th of June we were attacked in our cantonments by the Russian army. The enemy had mistaken the cause of our inactivity. He perceived, too late, that our repose was that of the lion: he repents of having disturbed it. In the battles of Guttstadt and Heilsburg, and in that ever-memorable one of Friedland—in a campaign of ten days in short, we have taken 120 pieces of cannon, seven colours; killed, wounded, or made prisoners 60,000 Russians; taken from the enemy's army all its magazines, its hospitals, its ambulances, the fortress of Königsberg, the 300 vessels which were in that port, laden with all kinds of military stores; 160,000 muskets which England was sending to arm our enemies. From the banks of the Vistula we have come, with the speed of the eagle, to those of the Niemen. You celebrated at Austerlitz the anniversary of the coronation; this year, you have worthily celebrated that of the battle of Marengo, which put an end to the war of the second coalition. Frenchmen, you have been worthy of yourselves and of me. You will return to France covered with laurels, and after obtaining a glorious peace, which carries with it the guarantee of its duration. It is high time for our country to live in quiet, screened from the malignant influence of

England. My bounties shall prove to you my gratitude, and the full extent of the love that I feel for you."

A friendly intercourse was soon established between the officers and men of the French and Russian armies; the former being encamped on the left bank of the Niemen; those of the latter about a mile distant from the right bank. They had too vivid an experience of each other's valour not to be inspired with sentiments of mutual respect. Alexander also dispatched Prince Labanoff to the French camp, to desire a personal interview with Napoleon. The Russian noble expressed the strong desire felt by his master to put an end to the war, his excessive disgust for the English alliance, and his extreme impatience to see the great man of the age, and to come to a frank and cordial explanation with him. Napoleon, who was dexterous in the use of an adroit and delicate flattery, replied, that he desired nothing better than to meet the young sovereign of whom he had heard so much, and whose understanding, grace, and fascinating qualities were so highly extolled. He therefore appointed the following day, the 25th, for the interview.

The meeting of the two emperors took place on a large raft moored in the middle of the Niemen, equidistant from, and within sight of, both banks of the river. On the raft a wooden pavilion was erected, surmounted by the eagles of France and Russia, and decorated with as much magnificence as time and circumstances would permit. This was for the reception of the emperors alone; and, at a little distance, another raft, with a building of less sumptuous construction, was stationed for their respective suites. Each bank of the river was covered with the imperial guard of the two monarchs, drawn up in single lines. At one o'clock the thunder of artillery made known that the emperors had entered their respective boats to proceed to the raft. Alexander was accompanied by the Grand-duke Constantine, General Benningsen, Prince Labanoff, General Ouvaroff, and Count Lieven; Napoleon by Murat, then Grand-duke of Berg; Marshals Berthier, Bessières, and Duroc; and Caulaincourt, the grand-equerry. The boat of Napoleon cleared the distance first; and the emperor, stepping on the raft, passed over and received Alexander on the opposite side. The monarchs instantly embraced each other, amidst the shouts of the soldiers, many of whom, especially the simple Russians, seeing this act of courtesy between their masters, at once imagined that peace was concluded.

"Why are we at war?" mutually inquired the emperors. In fact, Napoleon was contending with Russia chiefly as an ally of England; and Russia though naturally uneasy about the domination of France, was serving the interests of England much more than her own, in persevering in the struggle with such animosity. Alexander then revealed how deeply he had been wounded by the conduct and parsimony of the British government. "I hate the English," said he, "as much as you do; and am ready to second you in whatever you take in hand against them." "In that case" answered Napoleon, "everything can be easily settled, and peace is already made." The interview lasted two hours; but it is necessarily very difficult to ascertain precisely what passed between the two potentates during that period. Many conversations have been invented and imposed upon Europe as authentic history; but they obtained but a passing credit, and need not be referred to here. M. Thiers had peculiar means of ascertaining the substance of this important conversation: we shall therefore quote his generalisation of it.* "Napoleon, seeking to discover what were the sentiments of the speaker which he ought to flatter, soon perceived that two were then predominant. In the first place, deep spleen against allies—burdensome like Prussia, or selfish like England; and in the next, a very sensitive and deeply-mortified pride. He took pains, therefore, to prove to Alexander, that he had been duped by his allies; that, moreover, he had conducted himself with nobleness and courage. He strove to persuade him that Russia was wrong to persist in patronising ungrateful and jealous neighbours like the Germans, or in serving the interests of greedy traders like the English. He attributed this mistake to generous sentiments carried to excess—to misconceptions to which ministers, incompetent or bribed, had given rise. He extolled the bravery of the Russian soldiers, and told the emperor Alexander that, if they were to unite the two armies which had fought so valiantly against one another at Austerlitz, at Eylau, at Friedland, but which in those battles had both behaved like real giants fighting blindfold, *they might divide the world between them, for its own peace and welfare.* He then insinuated, but

* *Consulate and the Empire.*

very cautiously, that, by waging war with France, Russia was spending her strength without any possible compensation; whereas, if she would unite with France in subjecting the west and east, on land and on sea, she would gain as much glory, and certainly more profit. Without explaining himself further, he seemed to take it upon him to make the fortune of his young antagonist much more satisfactorily than they who had led him into a career in which he had hitherto met with nothing but defeats. Alexander, it is true, was under engagements to Prussia; and it was requisite that his honour should get out of that situation unstained. The emperor, therefore, gave him to understand that he would restore to him so much of the Prussian states as would be required to release him honourably from his engagements to his allies, after which the Russian cabinet would be at liberty to follow a new policy—the only true, the only profitable policy, resembling in all respects that of the great Catherine.

"This conversation, which had touched upon all questions without investigating them thoroughly, had deeply moved Alexander. Napoleon had opened to him new prospects, which is always a pleasing thing to a fickle, and especially to a discontented, mind. Besides, more than once, Alexander, amidst his defeats, feeling keenly the inconveniences of that furious war into which he had been led against France, and the advantages of a system of union with her, had said to himself something like what Napoleon had just been saying to him, but not with that clearness, that force, and above all, that seduction of a conqueror who presents himself to the conquered with hands full of presents, with mouth full of caressing words. Alexander was fascinated; Napoleon clearly perceived it, and promised himself soon to render the seduction complete.

"After flattering the monarch, he resolved to flatter the man. 'You and I,' said he, 'shall understand each other better, if we treat directly, than by employing our ministers, who frequently deceive or misunderstand us, and we shall advance business more in an hour than our negotiators in several days. Between you and me,' he added, 'there must be no third person.' It was impossible to flatter Alexander in a more sensible manner, than by attributing to him a superiority over those around him, similar to that which Napoleon had a right to attribute to himself over all his servants. In consequence, Napoleon proposed to him to leave the hamlet where he was living, and establish himself in the little town of Tilsit, which should be neutralised to receive him, and where they might treat of business themselves, in person, at any hour. This proposal was eagerly accepted; and it was agreed that M. de Labanoff should go that day to Tilsit to make the necessary arrangements. They had still to talk of that unfortunate king of Prussia, who was at Alexander's head-quarters, awaiting what should be done with him and his kingdom. Alexander offered to bring him to that same raft on the Niemen to introduce him to Napoleon, who should address a few soothing words to him. It was necessary, in fact, that Alexander, before he passed from one system of politics to another, should, if he meant not to dishonour himself, have saved some portion of the crown of his ally. Napoleon, who had already taken his determination upon this point, and who was well aware that he must grant certain concessions to save the honour of Alexander, consented to receive the king of Prussia on the following day. The two sovereigns then left the pavilion, and, passing from serious affairs to testimonies of courtesy, complimented the persons of their respective suites. Napoleon treated the Grand-duke Constantine and General Benningsen in a flattering manner. Alexander congratulated Murat and Berthier on being the worthy lieutenants of the greatest captain of modern times. Parting with fresh demonstrations of friendship, the two emperors again embarked, amidst the applause of the numerous spectators assembled on the banks of the Niemen."

In accordance with the proposal of Napoleon, Alexander and his suite took up their abode in the town of Tilsit. Every possible attention was paid to the czar. The furniture in his rooms was all sent from the French head-quarters; and a sumptuous train of cooks and other attendants was in readiness to make him forget the luxuries of St. Petersburg. Not having his household with him, it was settled that he should take all his meals with the emperor Napoleon. They passed the evening together, and conversed for a long time in a confidential manner, with a familiarity at once dignified and graceful. On the next day, Alexander brought the humiliated king of Prussia into the presence of Napoleon.

The latter treated Frederic William with coldness, and the Prussian was reserved, stiff, and melancholy. The interview was short; and at its conclusion, it was decided that the latter should come also to Tilsit to reside with his ally Alexander. On the 27th, the two emperors reviewed the French imperial guard. These old soldiers, successively of the Revolution, the Republic, and the Empire, showed themselves with pride to the sovereign whom they had defeated. They did not display the lofty stature, the regular and measured march of the soldiers of the north; but they exhibited that freedom of movement, that assurance of attitude, and that intelligence of look, which accounted for their victories and their superiority over all the armies of Europe. Alexander complimented them highly. They responded with repeated shouts of "*Vive Alexandre! Vive Napoleon!*" Napoleon also was much struck with the military aspect of the Russian guard. The docility with which the men submitted to their orders, impressed him as being particularly admirable. "My soldiers," he remarked, "are as brave as it is possible to be, but they are too much addicted to reasoning on their position. If they had the impassible firmness and docility of the Russians, the world would be too small for their exploits. The French soldiers are too much attached to their country to play the part of the Macedonians."

The ascendancy which the French emperor acquired over the mind of his late antagonist, was, especially when the subtle character of the latter is considered, a remarkable triumph of intellect. Alexander eagerly embraced the general views of Napoleon, and never left him without expressing his unbounded admiration. "What a great man!" he said incessantly to those who approached him; "what a genius—what extensive views—what a captain—what a statesman! Had I but known him sooner, how many faults he might have spared me! What great things we might have accomplished together!" As might be supposed, the miserable Frederic William was excluded from all this familiarity and confidence. Napoleon treated him with deserved neglect, while he showered the most delicate attentions upon Alexander. A superb dressing-case of gold, used by Napoleon, having appeared to please him, was instantly offered and accepted.

The two armies shared the familiarity of the emperors. The Russians did not regard themselves as vanquished; and, notwithstanding their misfortunes, even felt much of the exultation of victory. Proud, it has been observed, of having so long arrested the progress of the conqueror of the world, glorying even in the amount of their losses and the chasms in their ranks, which told the desperate strife in which they had been engaged, they mingled with their recent enemies with feelings unlacerated by the humiliations of defeat. Great cordiality, therefore, soon prevailed, and hospitalities were frequently exchanged. The officers of the two imperial guards, and especially Prince Murat and the Grand-duke Constantine, were remarkably cordial and complimentary to each other. "On one of these occasions, to such a length did the effusions of mutual respect and regard proceed, that the officers of the two guards, amidst the fumes of wine, and the enthusiasm of the moment, mutually exchanged their uniforms; French hearts beat under the decorations won amidst the snows of Eylau, and Russian bosoms warmed beneath the orders bestowed on the field of Austerlitz. Last and most singular effect of civilised life and military discipline, to strengthen at once the fierceness of national passions, and the bonds by which they are to be restrained, and join in fraternal brotherhood, one day, those hands which, on another, had been dyed by mutual slaughter, or lifted up in relentless hostility against each other."*

The conferences between the two emperors extended over a period of twenty days; and after a fortnight spent in conference, the treaty of Tilsit was formally signed and made public. The treaty between France and Russia was signed on the 7th of July; and a separate one between France and Prussia on the 9th. Alexander, in the November of 1806, had written to Frederic William—"I will do my utmost to prevent the Prussian dominions from losing even a village." Even during the time spent at Tilsit, the czar had represented to his brother monarch, that his intimacy with Napoleon would be the means of obtaining larger restitutions in favour of Prussia. Yet this imperial actor, who used a pretended benevolence as an instrument to deceive his people and his friends, shutting out a recollection of the oath he had sworn at midnight over the tomb of Frederic the Great,

* Alison's *History of Europe.*

not only consented that Prussia should be deprived of about half its territory and population by France, but actually, to the astonishment of the world, himself took possession of Bialystock, one of its ill-gained Polish provinces.*

Alexander would probably have assisted Frederic William if the effort had cost him nothing; but for a useless ally, he would not cross the decisions of Napoleon. Prussia was stripped of all those provinces which, prior to the first partition in 1772, had formed part of the kingdom of Poland. These were to be erected into a separate principality, to be called the Grand Duchy of Warsaw; and, except Bialystock, to be bestowed on the king of Saxony; to whom, also, was granted a right to a free military road across the Prussian states, to connect his German with his Polish dominions. For the rest, Prussia was so dismembered and curtailed, that its population was reduced from nine millions and a-half of inhabitants to five millions; and its revenue from 120 millions of francs to sixty-nine millions. At one blow, it was cast down from the rank of one of the great monarchies of Europe, to that of a third power; even the territory that was left to it was completely exhausted. Such a sudden downfall taught Frederic William that he had laboured under a fatal mistake; that his glory was that of his ancestors, and his power a phantom. Dantzic was declared an independent city, under the protection of the kings of Prussia and Saxony; which, in effect, rendered it a frontier town of France. Prussia and Russia recognised the confederation of the Rhine; and a new kingdom, to be called the kingdom of Westphalia, was erected in favour of Jerome Buonaparte, the emperor's brother; composed of the provinces ceded by Prussia on the left bank of the Elbe. Napoleon's other brothers, Joseph and Louis, were also recognised as kings of Naples and Holland. France and Russia guaranteed the integrity of each other's dominions, and mutually restored all prisoners. Russia undertook to mediate with England for a peace with France; and France with Turkey, for a peace with Russia;† and each power undertook, in case its mediation was refused, to make common cause with the other. Russia engaged to assist France against England with all its forces, both by sea and land, if the latter refused her mediation; or, "if having accepted it, peace was not concluded by the 1st of November, on terms stipulating that the flags of every power should enjoy a perfect and entire equality on every sea, and that all the conquests made of French possessions since 1805, should be restored; in that case, also, Russia shall demand a categorical answer by the 1st of December, and the Russian ambassador shall receive a conditional order to quit London." Then, in the event of the English government not making a satisfactory answer to the Russian requisitions, "France and Russia shall jointly summon the three courts of Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Lisbon, to close their harbours against English vessels, recall their ambassadors from London, and *declare war* against Great Britain." The king of Prussia also consented to close all his harbours to the ships and commerce of England, and to permit the fortresses left him to remain in the hands of France, as a security for the payment of the war contributions to be levied on the unfortunate inhabitants.

Another and a *secret* treaty was entered into at Tilsit by the two emperors; and in this an attempt was made to carry out the idea of Napoleon, and divide the civilised world between them. This topic was the one discussed in the long conversations which had taken place between the two monarchs. Fortunately, there was one point on which harmony did not exist between them. This was the probable partition of the Turkish empire in the event of its dissolution—an event then speedily expected by the generality of politicians. In the discussion of the emperors on the subject, it was arranged that Russia was to have the banks of the Danube as far as the Balkan

* Alison, who endeavours, with a perverse ingenuity, to represent Alexander as both a great and good man, thus mildly refers to this treachery on the part of the czar:—"The province of Bialystock, containing 200,000 souls, was ceded to Russia, which thus participated, in the hour of misfortune, in a share, *small indeed*, but still a share, of the spoils of its ally." Surely Sir Archibald must perceive, that it was not the amount of this political theft that made Europe cry out shame on Alexander, but the peculiar circumstances of duplicity and treachery with which it was associated. The wavering king of Prussia had been lured into the war by the czar, who, after promising that he would exert himself to the utmost in his favour to prevent his losing even a village, then concludes by robbing him of a *province!*

† The particulars of the war which Russia had been carrying on against Turkey, will be narrated in the next chapter.

mountains; Napoleon the maritime provinces, such as Albania and the Morea; while Bosnia, Servia, and the inland provinces were allotted to Austria. The sultan was to be permitted to retain the country south of the Balkans; that is, Constantinople, Asia Minor, and Egypt. Alexander objected to an arrangement by which Constantinople was to be left in the possession of the barbarians of Asia, and suggested a different partition, by which Russia was to have that city, universally regarded as the real capital of the East; while France seized the islands of the Archipelago, Candia, Syria, and Egypt. To this Napoleon would not consent: to give up Constantinople, and thus let Russia make the most brilliant acquisition it was possible to imagine, would not suit his views. He could permit the torrent of Russian ambition to dash itself against the foot of the Balkans; but he would not permit it to pass those tutelary mountains. He would not suffer the most striking achievement of modern times to be accomplished by any one but himself. He was too jealous of the greatness of France, and too desirous of alone filling the imagination of mankind, to consent to such an encroachment on his own glory. One day the two emperors, on returning from a long ride, shut themselves up in the writing cabinet, where numerous maps were spread out. Napoleon, apparently continuing a conversation briskly begun with Alexander, desired M. de Meneval to bring him the map of Turkey; then, unfolding it, he resumed the conversation, and suddenly clapping his finger on Constantinople, exclaimed several times, regardless of being heard by his secretary, in whom he had absolute confidence—"Constantinople! Constantinople! never! 'tis the empire of the world!" Alexander, however, was mollified by the concession of Finland; as, if he was able to obtain this extensive territory, the acquisition would add a lustre to his reign. "You will take Finland," said Napoleon to him, "as a compensation for the expenses of the war. The king of Sweden, it is true, is your brother-in-law and your ally; but that is only an additional reason why he should conform to your policy: if he does not, let him take the consequences of his ill-will. Sweden may be a relation, an ally of the moment; but, geographically, she is your enemy. St. Petersburg is too near the frontiers of Finland. It will not do to let your fair Russian beauties again hear from their palaces the cannon of the Swedes."

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"Napoleon was guided by his genius; in politics, by his passions." He desired, by the aid of Russia, to conquer England; satisfied of his power of eventually overthrowing the government of the northern empire, if its too active ambition interfered with his own projects. As to Alexander, he was lured forward, fascinated, and awed by the commanding genius of his late antagonist; and influenced also by the ambitious and dishonest desire of extending his sceptre over Finland and the greater part, if not the whole, of European Turkey. Still he felt much uneasiness at the strange alliance he had made, the projects to the execution of which he had bound himself, and the yet hidden results to which they might lead. "Sire," said one of his counsellors to him at Tilsit, "I take the liberty of reminding you of the fate of your father, as the consequence of the French alliance." "Oh God!" replied Alexander, "I know it; I see it; but how can I withstand the destiny which directs me."

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE TURKISH CABINET CONGRATULATE NAPOLEON, AND CONSENT TO RECEIVE AN AMBASSADOR FROM FRANCE; GENERAL SEBASTIANI APPOINTED; HE PERSUADES THE PORTE TO DISPLACE THE HOSPODARS OF MOLDAVIA AND WALLACHIA, NOTWITHSTANDING A TREATY WITH RUSSIA BINDING THE SULTAN NOT TO DO SO WITHOUT THE CONSENT OF THAT POWER; EXPOSTULATION OF RUSSIA AND ENGLAND, AND RESTORATION OF THE HOSPODARS; A RUSSIAN ARMY ENTERS MOLDAVIA; TURKEY DECLARES WAR AGAINST RUSSIA; THE RUSSIAN TROOPS TAKE POSSESSION OF WALLACHIA ALSO; ALEXANDER, PRESSED BY THE ARMS OF FRANCE, APPLIES TO ENGLAND FOR ASSISTANCE AGAINST THE TURKS; AN ENGLISH FLEET THREATENS CONSTANTINOPLE, BUT IS COMPELLED TO RETIRE, AND THE PORTE DECLARES WAR AGAINST ENGLAND; NAVAL DEFEAT OF THE TURKS BY THE RUSSIANS; AN ARMISTICE IS ARRANGED AT TILSIT BETWEEN ALEXANDER AND THE SULTAN; TREACHERY OF NAPOLEON TOWARDS TURKEY; WAR WITH PERSIA.

WHILE Russia was vainly employed in attempting to overthrow the power of Napoleon, she was also carrying on a contest with Persia and with Turkey. In comparison with the great events in which Russia was engaged in the west of Europe, these wars sink into comparative insignificance, and a narrative of them appears to lack the vital interest attaching to the former. Yet they are links in the great chain of historical sequence; and the war with Turkey by no means an unimportant one.

By a convention between Russia and Turkey, in 1802, it was arranged, that the hospodars of Moldavia and Wallachia, when once appointed by the Porte, should remain in office for seven years, and should not, on any account, be removed from their governments before the expiration of that term, without the concurrence of the Russian minister at Constantinople. That such a stipulation was derogatory from the sovereignty claimed and exercised for ages by the sultan in these provinces, cannot be denied. But the terms of the convention were clear and precise; and when concluded and ratified, any contravention of its articles by one of the contracting parties, without the consent of the other, could not but be regarded as a breach of treaty, affording to the other party a just ground of complaint, and, on refusal of redress, a justifiable cause of war. The convention might have been originally improvident on the part of the Turks, as being incompatible with the dignity, and inconsistent with the interests, of their empire; but when concluded, they were bound to abide by it, and had no right to abrogate or set it aside without the consent of Russia.

Such was the state of affairs when the Ottoman government, alarmed at the progress of the French power, deemed it prudent to send a special embassy to Paris, to congratulate Napoleon on his assumption of the imperial dignity; and, contrary to its former determination, consented to receive an ambassador from France. General Sebastiani, a military officer, whose subtle mind had been nurtured in a cloister and matured in a camp, was selected by Napoleon to proceed to Constantinople in that capacity. As the emperor was aware that

war was impending between Russia and France, he directed Sebastiani to do all in his power to persuade Turkey to break her alliance with Russia and England, to produce hostilities between her and her northern neighbour, and to induce her to revert to her ancient connection with France.

On the arrival of General Sebastiani at Constantinople, he laid before the divan the treaty between France and Russia, recently signed at Paris by M. D'Oubril; and contending that an article of that treaty, which guaranteed, in general terms, the integrity and independence of the Turkish empire, amounted to a virtual repeal of the convention concerning the hospodars, succeeded in persuading the Porte to recall them, and appoint others in their places, without consulting the Russian ambassador, or regarding his formal protest against the measure. Having carried this point against the Russians, while it was still uncertain whether D'Oubril's treaty would be ratified by the court of St. Petersburg, the French ambassador, as soon as he understood that the ratification of that treaty had been withheld, presented a note to the Ottoman government, in which he demanded that the passage of the Bosphorus should be shut against all Russian ships of war, as well as against every other vessel of that nation bringing troops, ammunition, or provisions; though he knew, that by treaty between Russia and the Porte, that passage was open to the vessels of the former without limitation. Yet Sebastiani not only assured the Turks of the friendship and protection of his master in case of their compliance, but threatened them with a declaration of war on the part of the French emperor if they did not accede to his demands.

The Porte, instead of resenting these insolent proposals, evinced a disposition to comply with them. It, however, first communicated them to the English and Russian ambassadors at Constantinople, to obtain their advice in so critical an aspect of affairs. Both of them remonstrated in the strongest manner against the conduct of the Porte. M. Italinski, the Russian ambassador, threatened instantly to leave Constantinople, unless the dismissed hospodars were reinstated in their dignities. The English ambassador also peremptorily announced to the divan, that if the demands of Russia were not instantly acceded to, a British fleet would enter the Dardanelles and lay the capital in ashes. Sensible of his weakness, and of the exposed position of Constantinople, the sultan complied with the demands of the allied powers, and caused the hospodars to be reinstated in their governments. At the same time, Selim secretly informed the French ambassador that he had only yielded to the storm until he was in a condition to brave it, and that both his policy and inclination united him with the emperor Napoleon.

The cause of war between Russia and Turkey appeared now to be removed, when, on the 23rd of November, 1806, a Russian army, amounting to 50,000 men, under the command of General Nicholson, entered Moldavia, drove the Turks before them, and took possession of Chotzim, Bender, and Jassy. It is asserted, that the orders for this proceeding were given before the submission of the sultan, and that the latter was not known at St. Petersburg until it was too late to prevent the invasion of his dominions. There is no reason to believe this statement; as the Russians continued their occupation, notwithstanding the restoration of the hospodars. We accept the explanation of the conduct of the Russians, given by M. Thiers, who observes—"That invincible attraction which draws them to Constantinople, had silenced in them all the considerations of prudence. It was, in truth, an egregious blunder, when they had the French army upon their hands, and scarcely 200,000 men to oppose to it, to employ 50,000 of that number against the Turks. But amidst the convulsions of this age, the idea of seizing any occasion to take what they pleased, was then the predominant idea of all governments. The Russians, therefore, said to themselves, that the time was perhaps come for them to take possession of Moldavia and Wallachia."

When information of the invasion of Moldavia reached Constantinople, that city was filled with indignation and surprise. A cry for war was loud and universal, especially among the ulemahs and the Janissaries, whose religious fanaticism, and general hatred of Europeans, were stung into fury by the perfidy of the Russians; the objects alike of their superstitious dread and their deeply-rooted aversion. The Russian ambassador narrowly escaped the fury of the mob, and also of being immured in the fortress of the Seven Towers; but the sultan permitted him to leave Constantinople in

the English frigate *Canopus*. The following day, December 30th, 1806, the Porte published a formal declaration of war against Russia; and great preparations were made, both by sea and land, to carry it out with vigour.

In the meantime, the Russians having completed the conquest of Moldavia, entered Wallachia; and, after defeating a body of Turkish troops, took possession, without resistance, of Bucharest, the capital of that province, from whence they sent detachments in all directions. At the close of the year they were masters of the three provinces of Bessarabia, Moldavia, and Wallachia, and threatened to cross the Danube and assist the Servians, then in revolt against the Porte. The very rapidity of these successes, however, perplexed the emperor Alexander and his ministers. Russia was in serious danger from the arms of France on the banks of the Vistula. There it was, in fact, that the fate of Turkey was to be decided; for had the Russians triumphed over the French, it is more than probable that the Ottoman empire in Europe would have been seized upon by the czar. Alexander, anxious to draw off the Turks, whom he had prematurely aroused, applied to England to permit a naval force, then cruising in the Ægean Sea, to make a demonstration against Constantinople, with the object of intimidating the Porte into an abandonment of hostilities with Russia, and the acceptance of terms of peace. The English ministry consented; and Sir Thomas Duckworth was sent, with a fleet of seven ships of the line, besides frigates and bomb-ships, to force the passage of the Dardanelles, and, if certain terms should not be acceded to by the Porte, to bombard Constantinople.

When Mr. Arbuthnot, the English ambassador at Constantinople, learned that Sir John Duckworth had arrived off Tenedos, he delivered the English *ultimatum* to the divan; which was, the immediate dismissal of the French ambassador, the accession of Turkey to the alliance of Russia and England, and the opening of the Dardanelles to the vessels of Russia. These demands were peremptorily refused, and Mr. Arbuthnot considered it prudent to withdraw from Constantinople, and take refuge in the *Endymion* frigate, then lying off Seraglio Point. The Porte resented the insulting interference of England by immediately declaring war against it.

The British fleet, therefore, passed the Dardanelles on the morning of the 19th of February, 1807. The batteries had been suffered to fall into a state of comparative decay: the Turks were taken by surprise, and little resistance was made, with the exception of a tremendous cannonade from the batteries of the castles of Europe and Asia. After a time this was silenced by the rapid and well-directed fire of the British vessels, and a small Turkish squadron burnt or dispersed. Great alarm prevailed at Constantinople when the English squadron anchored at no great distance from the city. The divan at first resolved on submission; but in consequence of the spirited representations of General Sebastiani, the French ambassador, they resolved to gain time by negotiation, and prepare for a vigorous defence. The English admiral allowed himself to be deceived into suffering time to be consumed in the exchange of notes and diplomatic communications, during which almost the entire population of Constantinople laboured day and night at the fortifications, under the able direction of Sebastiani, and assisted by a body of French engineers. At the expiration of a week, more than a thousand pieces of cannon were mounted on the batteries, the naval arsenal was furnished with immense resources, the defences of the harbour were strengthened, and the whole line of coast presented a formidable aspect. A hundred gun-boats were drawn across the mouth of the Golden Horn; while twelve Turkish line-of-battle ships, and nine frigates, lay in the canal with their sails bent, and ready for action. Great quantities of fire-ships were prepared to act against the fleet of the invaders; red-hot shot was kept constantly heated, in case of the approach of the British ships; and 200,000 men, destined to march against the Russians, were said to be in the city and suburbs, prepared to repel the English if they were enabled to effect a landing.

When the English admiral had suffered a week to elapse, Constantinople and the neighbouring coasts were so efficiently armed, that the contemplated attack upon it became entirely hopeless. Some doubts were even entertained, in consequence of the prevalence of an adverse wind, whether the English fleet would be able to retire and repass the Dardanelles at all; in which case, capture or total destruction were the only alternatives open to it. Sir John Duckworth, therefore, renounced the perilous enterprise which had been so rashly and unjustly undertaken; and on the 1st of March the British fleet repassed the straits of the Dardanelles in a very crest-fallen condition, and through a succession of firing from the batteries on either side. Such was the calibre of the Turkish guns, that balls or blocks of marble, of immense weight and size, were fired at our ships, which they threatened to sink with a single blow. One of these projectiles, weighing 800 pounds, cut the mainmast of the *Windsor* man-of-war in two, and it was not without much trouble and difficulty that the ship was saved. Another gigantic ball penetrated the poop of the *Standard*, and killed or wounded sixty men. At length the British fleet cleared the straits, and regained their old station at Tenedos, after having sustained a loss of 250 men.—Thus terminated this much-talked-of expedition to the Hellespont and the Bosphorus. It had broken the spell by which, for many ages, the passage of the Dardanelles had been guarded: still, the result of the whole was little more than a brilliant bravado, followed by a series of blunders terminating in disgrace. Some efforts were made, in the House of Commons, towards calling Sir John Duckworth to account; but he was protected by the ministry, and the affair passed off without investigation.

This unfortunate demonstration against Constantinople produced an effect exactly the reverse of what was intended. It co-operated with the address of Sebastiani, to bring the Turkish government, for a time, wholly under the influence of France, and eventually, under that influence, to make peace with Russia when Russia had declared herself against England.

The English fleet was joined at Tenedos by a Russian squadron of ten sail-of-the-line and a number of frigates, under the command of Admiral Siniavin. The allied naval forces, after taking possession of Lemnos and Tenedos, for the service of their fleets, established a blockade of the entrance to the straits; but the English fleet soon departed for Egypt, and left the blockade to be maintained by the Russians. As a similar manœuvre was adopted at the mouth of the Bosphorus, by a Russian squadron which came down from the Black Sea, Constantinople was cut off from some of its usual and most productive sources of supplies, and in a short time a great dearth of provisions was experienced. Seid Ali, the Turkish grand-admiral, was therefore dispatched with a fleet to disperse the Russians and break up the blockade. Though the Turks had a far inferior force to that opposed to them, yet they gave battle to the Russians on the 1st of July, 1807, near the isle of Tenedos. The contest was prolonged for seven hours, and carried on with great obstinacy on both sides. Four of the Turkish ships were carried by the wind out of the line of battle, and the unskilful crews were unable, or unwilling, to bring them again under fire. Seid Ali, who at one period of the action was surrounded by five Russian vessels, fought his ship with admirable bravery and skill; and, though wounded in the action, made his way through them. But the contest, after the accidental separation of the four ships, was altogether unequal. Four ships of the line were taken; three others were burned, and the rest driven for shelter under the cannon of the Dardanelles: above 1,000 Turks also perished during the battle—a great number in comparison with what usually takes place in engagements at sea. Intoxicated by this victory, the Russians became very overbearing in their attitude at sea towards the Turks. The land campaign on the banks of the Danube, though not productive of any decisive results, was yet in some degree favourable to the Russians, who held their position in the principalities. On the Asiatic frontiers of the two empires the Russians were more successful; and during the month of June, the seraskier of Erzeroum suffered a total defeat at the hands of General Gudovitch. This victory was the more important from the fact, that it prevented the Persians from making a bold diversion in favour of the Turks. The latter were somewhat relieved from the pressure of these hostile proceedings by the treaty of Tilsit, which led to an armistice between Russia and the Porte. This was concluded at Slobosia on the 24th of August, and was to continue until the 3rd of April in the following year. As the base of the truce, it was agreed that the Russian troops should retire from Moldavia and Wallachia, but that these provinces should not be occupied by the troops of the sultan until ratifications were exchanged of a definitive treaty of peace between Russia and the Ottoman Porte, which was to be concluded, under the mediation of the emperor Napoleon, on terms honourable to both empires.

Before the conclusion of the treaty of

Tilsit a revolution had taken place at Constantinople, and been followed by the dethronement of Sultan Selim and the succession of Mustapha IV. Napoleon basely pretended that this circumstance released him from the engagements he had made to the Turkish government, under the pretext that they had been made with Selim personally, and not with his successor. Therefore, though he had made repeated promises of assistance and friendship to the Ottoman government, which he declared to be the faithful ally of France, yet he entered into an engagement with Alexander for the ruin and partition of the Turkish empire. The policy of Napoleon, in this respect, was as erroneous as it was dishonest. After the peace of Tilsit, Alexander was enabled to pursue his aggressive measures with regard to Turkey; but Napoleon, engrossed with his ambitious scheme with regard to the Spanish peninsula, was unable to appropriate his share of the calculated spoils of the Ottoman empire. He therefore repented of the ready consent he had given to the aggressive movements of Russia in that direction, and became desirous of throwing every obstacle in the way of their further prosecution.

Napoleon preferred seeing Alexander waste his strength on the banks of the Danube. No sooner, therefore, was he engaged in his projects with respect to Spain, than he wrote to the Russian autocrat, saying that the armistice on the Danube had been concluded without his authority; that it did not meet his approval, and that the Russian troops might remain in the principalities; but that, as to the final partition of the Ottoman empire, that was so grave a question, that it required mature consideration. This was not the only incident adverse to the interests of Napoleon, arising from his treachery towards the Turks at Tilsit. Though the latter gladly availed themselves of the French mediation with Russia, it was in the belief that they were to obtain through it the evacuation of Moldavia and Wallachia. When they found that this was not the case, they scorned a peace under such circumstances, and expressed their resolution to continue the contest. "In what worse situation," said they, "could we be if the French, instead of being victorious, had been beaten in Poland? Is this the emperor's care for his allies, whom he has drawn into the conflict, to leave their richest provinces in the hands of their enemies?" Some rumours of the nature of the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit soon afterwards reached the Turks, and, finding that they had been betrayed by Napoleon, they resolved on fighting out their quarrel with Russia alone, and declining any further intervention on the part of the French.

Simultaneously with the aggressive war on Turkey, Alexander was engaged in another unprincipled war on the shores of the Caspian, in making acquisitions at the expense of his feeble neighbours the Persians. Unable to contend successfully against her vast military power, and hopeless of assistance or relief from England (whose good offices for the restoration of peace with Russia they had vainly solicited during the last administration of Pitt), they, in 1806, sent an embassy to Paris to request the aid of the emperor Napoleon. That wonderful man, whose ambition was boundless, and whose views were still turned towards the East, had already dispatched a member of the French senate on a secret mission to Persia, to promote his schemes and advance his interests in that quarter. He did not, however, lend assistance to the Persians in the struggle with Russia, and was, probably, too much occupied with his affairs in Europe to be able to do so.

It is scarcely possible, and certainly unnecessary, to give an accurate account of the predatory warfare which followed between the troops of Persia and Russia. Though the Russians were generally successful, in consequence of their superior discipline and experience, yet they were unable to compel the warlike tribes and their chiefs to bow to the Russian sceptre. The war was not terminated until 1813. The principal events of it were—the defeat of the Persians at Etchmiazin, by Prince Zitzianoff, in the year 1804; the conquest of the province of Shirvan, by the same commander, in 1806; and the taking of Derbent by the Russians, and the defeat of the Persians by Paulucci, at Alkolwalaki, in 1810.

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THE

HISTORY OF RUSSIA

FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE EMPIRE

TO THE

WAR WITH TURKEY IN 1877-'78.

BY

H. TYRRELL,

AND

HENRY A. HAUKEIL,

Late Press Correspondent in the East.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS.

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HISTORY OF THE
RUSSIAN EMPIRE.

CHAPTER I.

DISCONTENT OF THE RUSSIAN NOBLES AND MERCHANTS AT THE FRENCH ALLIANCE, AND CONSEQUENT SUPPRESSION OF TRADE WITH ENGLAND; TREATMENT OF GENERAL SAVARY AT ST. PETERSBURG; ALEXANDER OFFERS HIS MEDIATION TO THE ENGLISH MINISTRY; IN REPLY, IT DESIRES A COMMUNICATION OF THE SECRET ARTICLES OF THE TREATY OF TILSIT; BOMBARDMENT OF COPENHAGEN, AND SEIZURE OF THE DANISH FLEET BY THE ENGLISH; ALEXANDER DECLARES WAR AGAINST ENGLAND; ALSO AGAINST SWEDEN, AND POURS HIS TROOPS INTO FINLAND; FINLAND CEDED TO RUSSIA; A RUSSIAN FLEET AT LISBON SURRENDERS TO THE ENGLISH; NAPOLEON INVITES ALEXANDER TO A PERSONAL INTERVIEW; OBJECTIONS OF THE RUSSIAN PARTY AND OF THE EMPRESS-MOTHER; MEETING OF THE TWO EMPERORS AT ERFURTH.

Russia had extricated herself from the war with France comparatively unscathed, and with her military renown untarnished. Though repulsed and defeated by the French, she had sustained reverses with a heroism that proclaimed the valour of her soldiers, who had only failed before the troops of the most military people in the world, led by its most gifted general. Alexander, therefore, was received, on his return to St. Petersburg, with public acclamations; but much discontent and sullenness prevailed in private, especially among the nobility and the merchants of the capital. The French alliance was unpopular; for the power of France had shown that the pretensions of Russia were greater than her means to support them, and the nobles and merchants were enriched by their trade with England, which the arrangements Alexander had acceded to were to repress. The balance of trade with that country was wholly in favour of Russia; yet the differences existing with it threatened to result in war, which must necessarily be accompanied with immense losses. The nobles of Russia were aware, that whatever advantages the czar might derive from the treaty into which he had just entered with France, that he had purchased them by acceding to Napoleon's "continental system," and the consequent closing of the ports of the empire to the ships of Great Britain. "Assuredly," observed a continental writer, "Alexander bought the peace of Tilsit at a price much more heavy than would have been paid by a disastrous campaign. Nothing could be more menacing and serious to Russia than a rupture with England. That manufacturing country is the chief market for her raw materials. The Russian proprietors, kept continually poor by their habits of pomp and ostentation, are always eager to sell, and cannot at best find sufficient market for their produce; accordingly, the two countries are necessary the one to the other The commerce established by the ordinance of nature is advantageous to England, but it is indispensable to the Russians; and the czar should have had very weighty reasons for putting a stop to it."

Napoleon, desirous of retaining the influence he had obtained over Alexander, sent General Savary to St. Petersburg, as the ambassador of France, with directions to apply all the resources of his mind to cultivate and give stability to the alliance concluded at Tilsit. On arriving at the Russian capital, Savary was received with extreme coldness by the court, with the exception of the emperor and two or three families composing his intimate society. The execution of the Duke d'Enghien, which was performed under the immediate direction of Savary, contributed to this result; the chief cause of which, however, was the remembrance of recent hostilities and defeats, and the aversion to the French alliance. Alexander endeavoured to persuade every one, that in the termination of the recent war by a reconciliation with France, events had taken the most favourable turn possible: that his late ministers, in embroiling him with that power, had led him into a fatal track, from which he had extricated himself with equal good fortune and skill: that he had committed but one error—that of having believed in the valour of the Prussian army, and in the integrity of England. But these illusions, he said, were now dispelled; and by the union of the two great armies of Europe—those of France and Russia—the peace and greatness of both empires would follow. Peace, if England would at length desist from its maritime pretensions; and greatness, if she did not oblige Europe to lead with her a

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life of torment and sacrifices; in which case every one must take care of himself and his own interests, and that it was time for Russia to think of her's. Having arrived at this point of his explanations, Alexander —not daring to reveal all the hopes which Napoleon had permitted him to conceive, nor, above all, to avow the occult treaty which they had promised themselves to keep profoundly secret—assumed an air of mystery, but of satisfaction; leaving all to be guessed that he durst not venture to tell, though strongly tempted to do so. Thus, speaking of Turkey, he said openly that he was about to sign an armistice with her, but should take care not to evacuate the provinces of the Danube, where his troops would remain for a long time; and that no difficulty would be raised at Paris on the subject of this prolonged occupation. Alexander was warmly seconded by M. de Romanzoff, who, besides being acquainted with everything, had served the empress Catherine, and inherited her oriental ambition. The minister, like the monarch, repeated that his listeners must have patience, and that they would soon have a satisfactory explanation to give of the change of politics effected at Tilsit.

But the words of the emperor fell on incredulous and unwilling ears. He could not induce his nobility to extend their hospitality to the French ambassador, or treat him otherwise than with a cutting coldness. The example of Alexander, who lavished every attention upon General Savary, and invited him frequently to his table, prevailed to open some of the great houses in St. Petersburg to him. Still he was excluded by most of the distinguished families; for Alexander, though master of power, was, nevertheless, not master of high society; which was ruled by a loyalty and code of its own. The emperor having anticipated his possession of the sceptre by a tragic catastrophe, strove to compensate his mother (who had descended before her time to the station of dowager), by leaving to her the exterior of supreme power. This princess, who mingled a stiff conventional virtue with a selfish nature and a haughty manner, consoled herself for her apparent loss with Paul of half of the empire, by the ostentatious display of imperial splendour. The court assembled at her residence, and not at Alexander's. His life was generally devoid of state. Entertaining a dislike to the empress his wife (who was a cold and grave beauty), he hastened, after his repasts, to leave the palace, to employ himself in business with the statesmen who were his confidants, or to devote his hours to pleasure in the society of a Russian lady to whom he was much attached. As to the courtiers, or those who had favours to obtain, they thronged around the empress-mother as if she were the sole author of the acts of the imperial power. Even Alexander made his appearance there with the assiduity of a submissive son who had not yet inherited the paternal sceptre. Though the empress-mother would neither use or permit any language calculated to displease her son, she took no pains to disguise her evident aversion to the French. General Savary she had treated with rudeness, actually turning her back upon him before the assembled court. The French ambassador received the insult without emotion; but he adroitly hinted to the son, that he was not unobservant of the slights put upon him by the empress-dowager. Alexander was annoyed, and apprehensive lest, under his affected respect for his mother, a foreigner might not recognise the real master of the empire. Grasping the general's hand, he said—"There is no sovereign here but myself; I respect my mother, but everybody shall obey, be assured of it. At all events, whoever needs it, shall be reminded of the nature and the extent of my authority." Savary was satisfied with having brought the emperor to such a confidential communication by piquing the imperial pride. The result appeared in some show of cordiality on the part of the empress-mother. "Let us wait," said Alexander frequently to the ambassador, "and see what England will do. Let us know what course she will pursue; I will then break out: and when I have declared myself, nobody shall resist."

The result of the peace of Tilsit in England was to produce despondency, and to remove the hope that the war with France could be brought to a satisfactory conclusion. According to his agreement with Napoleon, Alexander, on his arrival at St. Petersburg, had addressed a note to the British cabinet, expressing a wish for the restoration of a general peace, and offering his mediation to bring about a state of amity between France and England. Mr. Canning answered—that England was perfectly willing to treat, on equitable terms, for so desirable an object; but she required

a frank communication of the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit, as a pledge of the pacific intentions of the emperor Alexander. This demand was eluded; and, in reply, Baron Budberg entered into a statement of grievances said to have been sustained by Russia at the hands of this country.

The king of Sweden was the only continental sovereign who refused to submit to the domination of Napoleon. Before the conclusion of peace between France and Russia, Gustavus IV. denounced the armistice existing between them. Napoleon instantly dispatched 30,000 men, under Marshal Brune, to Sweden; and the Swedish forces, numbering but 15,000, were compelled to take refuge within the fortifications of Stralsund. For a short time they were supported by 10,000 English troops; but these were soon withdrawn, to assist in an expedition against Copenhagen, to which we shall presently refer; and the Swedes were left to their fate. Finding the fall of the city certain, Gustavus, at the earnest request of the citizens, abandoned it with his troops, after the latter had destroyed their magazines, spiked their cannon, smashed their carriages, and thrown them into the ditches. Stralsund itself, on the 20th of August, with 400 pieces of cannon and immense military magazines, fell into the hands of the French. After some further struggles the Swedes submitted; a convention was concluded, and the French troops withdrawn.

All the precautions of Napoleon and Alexander had been unable to preserve in secrecy their private treaty of Tilsit. By means of bribery the English government obtained a knowledge of the fact, that the fleets of Denmark and Portugal were to be placed at the disposal of France, and, consequently, to be employed against this country. Denmark was in an unfortunate position, for she dared not resist the demands of France, sanctioned by the power of Russia; and to consent to them was to place herself in a dangerous attitude of hostility towards England. The ministry of this country were aware, that if Napoleon could carry out his projects, they would be subjected to an attack from the combined navies of Europe. They therefore resolved to anticipate the efforts of the enemy. A powerful naval force, consisting of twenty-seven sail-of-the-line and numerous other vessels, having on board a body of 20,000 troops, was hurriedly prepared and sent to the Danish coast, where it arrived on th 3rd of August, 1807. Immediately, a demand was made that the Danish fleet should be deposited with the British government in pledge, and under an obligation of restitution, until the conclusion of a general peace. This demand was indignantly refused. The English troops were therefore disembarked, and the city of Copenhagen invested. So rapid and unexpected had been the proceedings of the English, that the Danes were quite unprepared to resist the formidable forces by sea and land which threatened them. Still they persevered in their rejection of the offers of the invaders,* and the unfortunate city was bombarded for three days and nights, during which period 1,800 houses were destroyed by fire, and 1,500 of the inhabitants perished. The Danes then hung out a flag of truce; but the English would not agree to any terms except on the *unconditional* surrender of the fleet, together with all the artillery and naval stores which the place contained. The Danes were compelled to accept these severe terms, and the invading fleet and army returned to England, bringing with them the prize they had captured, consisting of eighteen ships of the line, fifteen frigates, six brigs, and twenty-five gun-boats!

An extraordinary sensation was produced throughout Europe by this apparently wanton outrage against a neutral nation, without any previous declaration of war, or known ground of hostility. This feeling was shared by the English people, who, not understanding the motive of the government, were astonished at its conduct. Napoleon was incensed, and assumed to be deeply affected by the catastrophe, while Alexander characterised the proceeding as "a piratical expedition," and condemned it as an uncalled-for violation of the law of nations. The English cabinet, desirous of justifying itself with the principal courts of Europe, sent Lord Pembroke to Vienna, and General Wilson to St. Petersburg, for that purpose. The English ambassador also stated that his cabinet had received information of the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit, and the intended co-operation of the Danish fleet in a descent on the

* The crown prince is said to have exclaimed—"You offer your alliance; but we know what it is worth! Your allies, who have been vainly expecting your succours for a whole year, have taught us what is the value of English friendship."

British shores, and called upon the Russian minister to disprove the assertion by an unreserved communication of these hidden stipulations. The demand was refused, and Alexander signified his intention to General Savary immediately to declare war against England, if the emperor Napoleon insisted on it.* "Tell your master," said the emperor, "that as soon as my means are prepared, I will crush Sweden; but, as for the English, I am ready to declare myself immediately."

If Alexander was already playing false with France (which we doubt), he must have been the most abandoned of hypocrites. His language to Savary expressed the most ardent attachment to the French emperor. "I shall be told," said he to that general, "that Napoleon is insatiable; that he wants all for himself, nothing for others; that he is equally crafty and violent; that he promises me much, but will give me nothing; that he spares me just now, but when he has got out of me all that he wishes, he will fall upon me in my turn; and that, separated from my allies, whom I shall have suffered to be destroyed, I must make up my mind to endure the same fate. I believe it not. I have seen Napoleon; I flatter myself that I have inspired him with a portion of the sentiments with which he has inspired me; and I am certain that he is sincere. On the first doubt, on the first unpleasant impression, let him write to me, or send me word, and all shall be explained. For my part, I promise him entire frankness, and I expect the like from him. Oh that I could see him, as at Tilsit, every day, every hour!—what talent for conversation!—what an understanding!—what a genius!—what a gainer I should be by living frequently near him!—how many things he has taught me in a few days! I am doing all I can to render mutual confidence as complete as possible, but I do not exercise that ascendancy here which Napoleon has attained at Paris. This country, you perceive, has been surprised at the rather too abrupt change which has taken place. It is apprehensive of the injuries which the English can inflict on its commerce; it is angry at your victories. These are interests which must be gratified; sentiments which must be soothed. Send French merchants hither; buy our naval stores and our productions; we, in return, will buy your Paris commodities; the re-establishment of commerce will put an end to all the anxieties which the upper classes entertain on account of their revenues. Assist me, above all, to do something for the just ambition of Russia." The latter remark referred to the emperor's designs on Turkey, and especially on Constantinople. This last Napoleon avoided expressing an opinion on to Alexander, whom he desired to be content with the acquisition of Finland. Compliments and presents passed between the two potentates, and Napoleon sent word to the emperor, that the minister Dècres was about to purchase twenty million worth of naval stores in the ports of Russia; and, in answer to an application to that effect, that the French navy would receive all the Russian cadets who should be sent to it for instruction, and that 50,000 muskets, after the best model, were at the disposal of the imperial government.

The influence of Napoleon over Alexander induced the latter to make the bombardment of Copenhagen, and the seizure of the Danish fleet, a pretext for breaking off all relations with England, and proclaiming anew the principles of the

* The great power of dissimulation possessed and constantly exercised by Alexander, has perplexed many writers, and makes it sometimes difficult to ascertain what were his real sentiments. From the following passage in Sir Walter Scott's *Life of Napoleon*, presumed to be founded on official information, it is made to appear that the cabinet of St. Petersburg, though obliged to yield to circumstances, was secretly gratified at the vigorous and decisive blow struck at the Danish fleet:—"An English officer of literary celebrity was employed by Alexander, or those who were supposed to share his most secret councils, to convey to the British ministry the emperor's expression of the secret satisfaction which his imperial majesty felt at the skill and dexterity which Britain had displayed in anticipating and preventing the purposes of France by her attack upon Copenhagen. Her ministers were invited to communicate freely with the czar, as with a prince who, though obliged to yield to circumstances, was, nevertheless, as much as ever attached to the cause of European independence." The first communications the British ministers made in accordance with this invitation, however, were received with such coldness, as to show that either the agent had overstepped his instructions, or that the emperor had changed his mind. Count Hardenberg, the distinguished Prussian minister, said—"The capture of the Danish fleet was not the *cause*, but the *pretext* of the rupture of Russia with England. The cabinet of St. Petersburg was not sorry at so fair an opportunity for getting quit of all restraints upon its meditated hostilities in the north; and, notwithstanding all its loud declamations against the Copenhagen expedition, it beheld with more satisfaction the success of England in that quarter, than it would have done the junction of the Danish fleet with the navy of the French emperor."

armed neutrality. The imperial declaration to this effect, issued on the 16th of October, 1807, reproached the English cabinet with withholding assistance from Russia and Prussia when they were engaged in a war which it had kindled—with having acted in a hostile manner to the commercial vessels of Russia at the very time when the blood of its people flowed for the interest of England in the struggle against France—with rejecting the mediation of Russia to effect a general pacification—and with sending her fleets and armies to the coasts of Denmark, "to execute there an act of violence of which history, so fertile in wickedness, does not afford a parallel example." Mr. Canning, in an able reply, observed—"The vindication of the Copenhagen expedition is already before the world, and Russia has it in her power at once to disprove the basis on which it is erected, by producing the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit. These secret articles were not communicated to his majesty—they are not yet communicated—not even that which prescribed a time for the acceptance, by Great Britain, of the proffered mediation of Russia. Even after this unworthy concealment, however, so unsuitable to the dignity of an independent sovereign, the mediation was not refused: it was conditionally accepted, and the conditions were a communication of the basis on which the proposed treaty was to be founded, and of the secret articles of Tilsit. * * * Instead of granting either of these demands, Russia declares war."

Alexander followed his hostile declaration against England by summoning the king of Sweden to join in the league against it, by acceding to the continental system of excluding English commerce and manufactures. Gustavus, relying on the support of England, resolutely declined, and thus bade defiance to the united power of Russia and of France. War was therefore declared against him by Russia, and Count Buxhoven entered Finland at the head of a Russian army of 25,000, in the February of 1808. There he issued a proclamation, which contained the following passage:—"Good neighbours,—It is with the greatest regret that my most gracious master, the emperor of all the Russias, sees himself forced to send into your country the troops under my orders. But his majesty the king of Sweden, whilst withdrawing more and more from the happy alliance of the two greatest empires in the world, draws closer his connections with the common enemy, whose oppressive system and unparalleled conduct towards the most intimate allies of Russia and of Sweden herself, cannot be coolly endured by his imperial majesty. These motives, as well as the regard which his imperial majesty owes to the safety of his own states, *oblige him to place your country under his protection*, and to take possession of it in order to procure by these means a sufficient guarantee in case his Swedish majesty should persevere in the resolution not to accept the equitable conditions of peace that have been proposed to him."

Gustavus, naturally irritated at a war being commenced by an invitation to his subjects to break their allegiance, issued a declaration, in which he personally reproached the Russian emperor with perfidy and meanness, and declared that the war, "based on the avowed design of Russia to dictate all their foreign connections to the northern powers, was undertaken for no other object than to add Finland to the Russian dominions, and compel Sweden to sacrifice her fleet and commerce as a security for Cronstadt and Revel." But the struggle was an unequal one; and, after much fighting, in a series of petty but brilliant actions, which proved the bravery of the troops of both nations, Finland was, partly by bribery and partly by the bravery of the Russian troops, annexed to the Russian empire. By an imperial ukase, issued on the 28th of March, Alexander declared—"We unite Finland, conquered by our arms, for ever to our empire, and command its inhabitants forthwith to take the oath of allegiance to our throne." This declaration was, however, somewhat premature, for the struggle was prolonged after this period; but the Russian forces were largely reinforced; accumulated misfortunes fell upon the Swedes; and they were driven to sign a convention in November, 1808, by which the whole of Finland, to the east of the Gulf of Bothnia, was ceded to Russia. In the following year Gustavus, whose despotic conduct had rendered him hateful to his subjects, was dethroned by them; and the first care of his successor was to conclude a peace with Russia.

The acquisition of Finland was of great importance to Russia, as it secured its ascendancy in the Baltic. It is regarded as a great political fault, on the part of Napoleon that he suffered Russia to make itself master

of this formidable bulwark of the north; but that was the price he paid for the neutrality of Alexander with respect to Spain. "France and Russia," observes a modern historian, "relying on each other's support, now laid aside all moderation, and even the semblance of justice, in their proceedings; and, strong in their mutual forbearance, instantly proceeded to appropriate, without scruple, the possessions of all other states—even unoffending neutrals, or faithful allies—which lay on their own side of the line of demarcation. It was easy to see that the present concord which subsisted between them could not last. The world was not wide enough for two such great and ambitious powers, any more than it had been for Alexander and Darius, Rome and Carthage. Universal empire, to one or other, would, it was likely, be the result of a desperate strife between them; and in that case it would be hard to say whether the independence of Great Britain had most to fear from the Scythian or the Gallic hosts."

At this period, however, Russia received a considerable check at sea from the hands of England. A Russian fleet, consisting of ten ships of war, under the command of Admiral Siniavin, was dispatched to Lisbon for the purpose of compelling the Portuguese to declare against England, and to adopt the continental system. The fleet imprudently remained at Lisbon in fancied security, as the French were in possession of that city. During this period the convention of Cintra was signed, and the French abandoned Portugal. A few days afterwards the Russian fleet surrendered to Admiral Cotton, without firing a shot, on the condition that the vessels should be restored when peace was concluded. England acted with peculiar moderation; and instead of making the officers and crews prisoners of war, sent them back to Russia at her own expense. Some French writers have made the (to us improbable) conjecture, that this bloodless capture had been previously arranged between the two powers, and thus furnished another instance of the dissatisfaction of Alexander at the conditions he had entered into at Tilsit, and his readiness to employ duplicity to evade them. Certainly, heavy reasons existed to account for any dissatisfaction, if it had yet begun to be entertained. From the official accounts of the Russian trade up to the treaty of Tilsit, it appeared to have been continually increasing; and nearly 4,000 merchant ships, of which a fourth part were English, annually entered the ports of the empire; but in 1808, the number that arrived in the eighteen most considerable ports, was less than 1,000; of which only 300 visited the ports of the Baltic. The soundest policy for Russia was peace; for in the war with France, Alexander had been compelled to call upon the rich for extraordinary contributions, which they readily furnished in great abundance. Further wars necessarily led to new sacrifices; but, as matters stood, this great empire occupied the undignified position of being no longer at liberty to follow its own policy, but was compelled to make war according to the arrangements of Napoleon. Some little misunderstanding had certainly commenced between Alexander and Napoleon; and the former expostulated earnestly with M. de Caulaincourt (who had succeeded General Savary as ambassador at St. Petersburg), on the prolonged occupation of Prussia by the troops of Napoleon. Alexander also desired to be permitted to annex the provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia to the Russian empire, to which Napoleon now made some objection, as it was not agreeable to him to have to lead the Russians by the hand to Constantinople, or bring them nearer to that object of their ambition.

Since the peace of Presburg, Austria had remained neutral in the struggle which had been carried on against the ambition of France. She was now, however, despite her earnest protestations to the French emperor to the contrary, preparing to renew the war. The cabinet of Vienna deemed the opportunity favourable, on account of the occupation of the French armies in Spain; and it was evident that they were ready to declare against Napoleon on the first opportunity. To overawe Austria was one of the reasons which made Napoleon write to the emperor Alexander, desiring a personal interview. The former believed that the Austrian government would scarcely dare to recommence hostilities with France, when in a close friendly alliance with the next most powerful military state in Europe. Another reason was, that Napoleon was exasperated against the Turks, who, asserting that France aimed at sacrificing them to Russian ambition, behaved with a defiant ferocity towards the French at Constantinople. Napoleon, therefore, in inviting Alexander to personal conference with him,

held out to that ambitious potentate a lure which to him was irresistible—that is, the complete partition of the Ottoman empire; and, consequently, the probable permission to proceed undisturbed against the Turks until he had obtained possession of Constantinople. In his letter to Alexander, Napoleon announced his intention of discussing the question of the empire of the East, of considering it under all its aspects, and of solving it definitely. He also expressed a desire to admit Austria as a sharer in the spoliation of Turkey; and, returning to the wild scheme which he had entertained in concert with the late emperor Paul, specified as an essential condition of this partition, a gigantic expedition to India, across the continent of Asia, executed by a French, Russian, and Austrian army.

Alexander received the invitation of his ally with transports of joy, and read it instantly in the presence of the French ambassador. "Ah, the great man!" he frequently exclaimed while doing so; "the great man! There, he has come back to the ideas of Tilsit!" Then, addressing M. de Caulaincourt (the ambassador), the emperor said, in reference to Napoleon—"Tell him that I am devoted to him for life; that my empire, my armies, and all, are at his disposal. Your master," he added, "purposes to interest Austria in the dismemberment of the Turkish empire; he is in the right. It is a wise conception; I cordially join in it. He designs an expedition to India; I consent to that too: I have already made him acquainted, in our long conversations at Tilsit, with the difficulties attending it. He is accustomed to take no account of obstacles; nevertheless, the climate and distances here present such as surpass all that he can imagine. But let him be easy; the preparations on my part shall be proportioned to the difficulties. Now we must come to an understanding about the distribution of the territories which we are going to wrest from Turkish barbarism. Discuss this subject thoroughly with M. de Romanzoff. Still we must bear in mind, that all this cannot be discussed usefully and definitively but in an interview between me and Napoleon."

On the proposal of Alexander, Erfurth (a town of Upper Saxony) was selected as the place of meeting between him and Napoleon; and September was the time named. The latter caused every preparation to be made, for the purpose of giving dignity and brilliancy to the meeting of two such powerful potentates. Four fine regiments were ordered to march to Erfurth, where they were to act as a guard of honour to the sovereigns present at the interview. Officers of his household were sent with the richest portions of the crown furniture, in order that the largest houses in the town might be arranged to suit the wants of the distinguished persons about to be collected there; consisting of emperors, kings, princes, ministers, and generals. The tragedian Talma, and the first French actors, were also commanded to repair to Erfurth, in order that the dramatic literature of France should contribute to distinguish so remarkable an incident. Finally, Napoleon gave orders for the display of an extravagant sumptuousness; for he desired that France should command respect by her elegance and civilisation as much as by her arms. The large party at St. Petersburg who were hostile to the French alliance bitterly censured the proposed meeting. The free speech of the court of the empress-mother, on this subject, was with difficulty restrained by the express command of Alexander. She herself broke out into violent reproaches against Romanzoff, telling him that he was leading her son to destruction, and that perhaps at Erfurth a fate awaited him similar to what had befallen the unhappy sovereigns of Spain at Bayonne.* Finally, she expressed her apprehensions to Alexander himself, who did his best to assure her that her fears were without foundation.

The Russian emperor arrived at Erfurth on the 27th of September, 1808, accompanied by his brother the Grand-duke Constantine; the minister Romanzoff, the French ambassador, and a few aides-de-camp, having travelled in a plain *calèche* more rapidly than the most hurried couriers. Napoleon had arrived on the morning of the same day; and, on the approach of Alexander, rode out, surrounded by an immense staff, to meet him. On alighting they embraced each other cordially, with every sign of extreme pleasure. A great number of sovereigns, generals, and diplomatists had been invited, and were present to give dignity to the occasion: amongst them were Prince William of Prussia and the king of Saxony. Germany was repre-

* At Bayonne, Charles IV. and his son Ferdinand—to which place they had been invited by Napoleon—were intimidated into a renunciation of the Spanish crown.

sented by a crowd of crown princes, as well as by many of its men of genius, including Göethe and Wieland; and the old and quiet town assumed a most animated and brilliant appearance. The place was thronged with soldiers, officers, equipages, and servants in livery; while princes and distinguished statesmen met in the street as simple pedestrians. The kings and princes invited were to dine every day at Napoleon's table, as he was the host, and the sovereign of the north was his guest. In the evening of the 27th the town was illuminated; and, after the crowd of imperial, royal, and titled persons had partaken of a splendid banquet, the tragedy of *Cinna* was performed before them by the most accomplished actors France ever possessed.

Between the numerous entertainments which took place, Napoleon and Alexander found time to confer together alone on the important matters they had to arrange. The former had reconsidered the Eastern question, and renounced the idea of the partition of Turkey; for he saw that it was impossible to agree with Alexander on that subject unless he surrendered Constantinople, which he was resolved not to do. As a compensation, however, he agreed to concede Wallachia and Moldavia to Russia, in return for which he required a close alliance for peace and war, and an absolute union of efforts against England and Austria, in the event of the latter power resuming hostilities. Alexander assented; for though somewhat disappointed respecting Constantinople, he was gratified by the cession of Moldavia and Wallachia, which formed a stepping-stone to its acquisition. He renewed his protestations of attachment to Napoleon, and of adherence to his policy, to which friendly statements the latter replied in terms of reciprocity. To bring over Alexander to his views respecting the present partition of Turkey, Napoleon examined in detail with him the various plans that had been proposed for its accomplishment. For himself, he peremptorily withheld his consent that Russia should, if she could, take Constantinople. Then he pointed out the difficulties which Russia would encounter in the execution of such a project. Austria, he said, would certainly not accede to it, whatever offers might be made to her; and she would prefer a desperate conflict to a partition of the Turkish empire. England, Austria, Turkey, Spain, and part of Germany, would join in a last effort to resist this unsettlement of the world. Was the present moment, he urged, such as the two empires ought to choose for so gigantic a work? Would not the attainment of Finland, Moldavia, and Wallachia make the reign of Alexander equally distinguished with those of his predecessors which were the most productive of territorial aggrandisement? Besides, he added, they (the two emperors) were both young; they could afford to wait, and postpone their vast projects respecting the East. Alexander, though not convinced, was satisfied; but he stipulated for the *immediate* possession of the two Danubian provinces.

The first eight or ten days of the period over which the interview was prolonged, was devoted to the consideration of this subject; and great as had been the previous courtesy of the two emperors towards each other, it was from that time expressive of more good-will than ever. M. Thiers observes—"Alexander especially seemed to blend affection with politics; in the promenade, at table, at the theatre, his demeanour towards his illustrious ally was familiar, deferential, and enthusiastic. When he spoke of him, it was in a tone of admiration, with which no one could fail to be struck." One evening, at the theatre, Alexander paid Napoleon a compliment remarkable for its elegance and aptness. The play was Voltaire's tragedy of *Œdipus;* and when the representative of Philoctetes uttered the well-known line—

"L'amitié d'un grand homme est un bienfait des dieux;"*

Alexander grasped Napoleon's hand, and, with a profound bow, exclaimed—"That I have never more truly felt than at the present moment!"

The most important part of the compact entered into between the two emperors, was that by which Alexander engaged to support Napoleon in the war which was foreseen to be approaching with Austria. Napoleon felt convinced, that if the union between France and Russia was sincere and manifest, that Austria would be forced to remain quiescent, for she would be crushed between the two empires if she attempted to stir; and that the submission of Austria would compel England also to yield and agree to a naval peace. The two emperors also renewed their alliance, and engaged to make peace or war in common. They resolved to

* "The friendship of a great man is a blessing from the gods."

make a formal proposal of peace to England, in so public and conspicuous a manner, as to render refusal the more difficult on the part of the British cabinet. France, however, was only to consent to such a peace as should insure to Russia, Finland, Moldavia, and Wallachia; while Russia was to consent to such a peace only as should secure to France, independently of her other possessions, the crown of Spain. Immediately after the signing of the convention, Russia might take such steps with respect to the Porte as were necessary to obtain, by peace or war, the two provinces of the Danube; but the language held by Russia to Turkey was to be such as would not compromise the alliance of France with the latter power. At the urgent intercession of Alexander, some modification of the severity of French supremacy was obtained for Prussia. Finally, it was agreed that if the conference did not lead to peace on the continent, the two emperors should meet each other again within a year. Before parting, they wrote a joint letter to the king of England, in which they invited him to conclude a peace on the basis of sacrificing his Spanish allies.*

Another subject, of a domestic nature, yet fraught with much political significance, was talked of by the two emperors before their separation. It related to a marriage between Napoleon and a sister of Alexander. The former had for some time thought of divorcing Josephine, that he might marry a princess who could give him an heir; but the affection which bound him to the wife of his youth, and the difficulty of fixing his choice, had hitherto proved obstacles to his design. But now an opportunity presented itself, as it was generally reported that Alexander's marriageable sisters were ladies excellently endowed, both with respect to appearance and accomplishments. The pride of Napoleon, however, made him averse to make any proposal, and Alexander never alluded to the subject—a circumstance that almost displeased his imperial friend. On Talleyrand reporting to Napoleon some complimentary observations of the czar, the emperor exclaimed—"If he likes me, let him give me proof of the fact, by uniting himself with me more closely, and bestowing on me one of his sisters. Why has he never said a word to me of this in our daily confidential intercourse? Why does he affect thus to avoid the subject?" The acute minister understood the hint, and brought the subject before Alexander, who received the overture with the most flattering expressions of regard for Napoleon; but he feared that his mother, who exercised an absolute control over her daughters, would not give her consent. The czar added, that he should, doubtless, succeed in favourably disposing his sister the Grand-duchess Catherine, but that he could not flatter himself with the hope of subduing his mother's prejudices, and that he could not bring himself to restrain her by an exertion of his imperial authority. He would, however, make the attempt, but without answering for its success.

The interview terminated on the 14th of October, each emperor lavishing presents and decorations on the suite of the other. They parted with an exhibition of emotion that was probably sincere. "They were never to meet more," observes M. Thiers; "and of their projects of that hour not one was destined to be accomplished!"

* This letter, dated Erfurth, 12th October, 1808, was as follows:—"Sire,—The present circumstances of Europe have brought us together at Erfurth. Our first thought is to yield to the wishes and wants of every people, and to seek, in a speedy pacification with your majesty, the most efficacious remedy for the miseries which oppress all nations. We make known to your majesty our sincere desire in this respect by the present letter. The long and bloody war which has torn the continent is at an end, without the possibility of being renewed. Many changes have taken place in Europe; many states have been overthrown. The cause is to be found in the state of agitation and misery in which the stagnation of maritime commerce has placed the greatest nations. Still greater changes may yet take place, and all of them contrary to the policy of the English nation. Peace, then, is at once the interest of the people of the continent, as it is the interest of the people of Great Britain. We unite in entreating your majesty to listen to the voice of humanity, silencing that of the passions; to seek, with the intention of arriving at that object, to conciliate all interests, and by that means to preserve all the powers which exist, and to insure the happiness of Europe, and of the generation at the head of which Providence has placed us.

"ALEXANDER.

"NAPOLEON."

CHAPTER II.

AUSTRIA BEGINS A NEW WAR WITH NAPOLEON, BUT IS REDUCED, AFTER A SHORT CAMPAIGN, TO PURCHASE PEACE BY THE CESSION OF TERRITORY; ALEXANDER, WHO HAD COLDLY SECONDED NAPOLEON, SHARES THE SPOIL; ABANDONING THE IDEA OF A DOMESTIC ALLIANCE WITH ALEXANDER, NAPOLEON MARRIES MARIA LOUISA, DAUGHTER OF THE EMPEROR OF AUSTRIA; ALEXANDER FEELS SLIGHTED; REPLY OF ENGLAND TO THE PACIFIC PROPOSALS OF FRANCE AND RUSSIA; ALEXANDER CAUSES THE WAR WITH TURKEY TO BE RENEWED; HE ISSUES AN UKASE, ANNOUNCING THAT MOLDAVIA AND WALLACHIA ARE ANNEXED TO THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE; AFTER THREE CHEQUERED CAMPAIGNS, ALEXANDER DEEMS IT PRUDENT TO CONCLUDE PEACE WITH TURKEY, BY WHICH HE ABANDONS MOLDAVIA AND WALLACHIA, BUT RETAINS BESSARABIA.

THE Austrian government was deeply wounded in consequence of no representative of it being invited to the conferences at Erfurth; and it naturally anticipated evil to itself from the ominous conjunction of two such powers as France and Russia. Austria had made its preparations, and entered into a secret alliance with England, which, however, wisely advised the government of that empire, not to take any hostile steps against France, unless its resources were clearly equal to the inevitable struggle which such a proceeding would provoke. The Austrian cabinet, notwithstanding the amicable relations which existed between Alexander and Napoleon, actually sent Prince Schwartzenberg to St. Petersburg, with directions to use every effort to obtain the concession of Russia to a new confederacy against France. The Austrian ministry was aware that Alexander was capable of acting with the unblushing treachery towards his friend and ally which their application implied, and they knew that, though fascinated by the manners and the vast schemes of Napoleon, he yet had a lingering belief in the assumed necessity of ultimately joining in a confederacy for the deliverance of Europe from the aggressive ambition of France. "In truth," observes Alison of his imperial idol, "the emperor Alexander was much perplexed how to act; the obvious interests of his empire impelling him one way, and his secret engagements with Napoleon, another. After a short struggle, however, the latter prevailed. Alexander had given his word to the French emperor; and though capable of the utmost dissimulation, so far as the mere obligations of cabinets were concerned, the czar was scrupulously faithful to any personal engagements which he had undertaken.* He was occupied, moreover, with those great schemes of ambition, both on his northern and southern frontier, which had formed the bait by which Napoleon had lured him into the French alliance, and little inclined to forego present and certain conquests in Finland and Moldavia, for the problematical advantages of a contest in the heart of Germany. All attempts to engage Russia in the confederacy, therefore, proved abortive; and the utmost which the Austrian envoy could obtain from the imperial cabinet, was a secret assurance that Russia, if compelled to take a part in the strife, would not, at least, bring forward any formidable force against the Austrian legions."

Austria commenced the war on the 8th of April, 1809, and at first achieved some successes; but the campaign, during which Vienna was taken by the French, concluded in the July following with the bloody battle of Wagram, in which 24,000 Austrians were killed or wounded. So obstinate was the conflict, that the loss of the French nearly equalled that of their vanquished foes. The emperor Francis desired an armistice, which was followed by a peace signed at Vienna on the 14th of October. Austria purchased this peace by large territorial concessions to the French; and Alexander, who had assisted Napoleon with an army of 30,000 men, received for his share of the spoils of Austria, the eastern part of Galicia in ancient Poland; a territory containing a population of 420,000 persons.

* There is a moral contradiction in this sentiment. It is not permitted to a gentleman to be publicly false and privately true; treacherous with respect to duties, yet sincere with regard to his friendships: indeed, it is not, strictly speaking, possible. In such cases the truth and sincerity are semblances, not realities. Alexander showed, in the sequel, that though fascinated by Napoleon, he had never entertained any really earnest friendship for him; both of them, in fact, were much too selfish to be deeply influenced by an emotion the essence of which is self-denial.

On the 15th of December, 1809, the marriage of Napoleon with the empress Josephine was dissolved by an act of the senate, and a jointure of 2,000,000 francs, or £80,000 a-year, settled upon the unhappy lady. Napoleon, anxious for an heir, and feeling the want of historical descent, now hesitated whether he should ally himself with the imperial family of Russia, or with that of Austria. He desired that his contemplated marriage should not only, by giving him a son, make him the founder of a new dynasty, but that it should serve his foreign policy by consolidating his system of alliances. The recent policy of Napoleon pointed to a Russian alliance; but since the interview at Erfurth, some coolness had arisen between him and Alexander, whom, he complained, had but ill seconded him in the war with Austria. The mother of Alexander, filled with the haughty prejudices of the high aristocracy of Europe, had hurriedly married her daughter, the Grand-duchess Catherine, to the Duke of Oldenburg, in order to avoid a domestic alliance with Napoleon. The latter, however, was not yet diverted from his purpose; and he directed his ambassador at St. Petersburg to propose to Alexander for the hand of his younger sister, the Grand-duchess Anne. Alexander replied, that he would consult his mother, without compromising the French emperor on the subject. Anxious at the same time to take advantage of the wishes of his imperial ally, he bargained, as the price of his sister's person, that a convention should be entered into, binding Napoleon never to reconstruct the kingdom of Poland.

The French emperor, impatient of the delays created by Alexander, demanded, on the 10th of January, 1810, a categorical answer in the space of ten days. This period was consumed in discussions with the empress-mother, who spoke of the extreme youth of the grand-duchess, who was only sixteen, and of the difference in their religion. In conclusion, she demanded a Russian chapel and priests in the Tuileries, and the delay of a few months, to prepare the young princess for so important a change in her condition. Napoleon was annoyed. "To adjourn," said he, "is to refuse; besides, I do not choose to have foreign priests in my palace, between my wife and myself." Before the negotiations with Russia were concluded, he proposed for the hand of the Archduchess Maria Louisa, the daughter of the emperor of Austria. Francis instantly assented to the proposal, in which he thought he saw the security of his own empire, and the breaking up of the union between France and Russia. The young lady also accepted the brilliant proposal with becoming reserve, but with real delight. She was eighteen, of a good figure, and a fair German complexion. "She is not beautiful," said Napoleon on a subsequent occasion, "but she is the daughter of the Cæsars." The marriage was celebrated with extraordinary pomp at St. Cloud, on the 1st of April; and the following day the emperor and empress made their entrance into Paris amidst the roar of artillery, the clang of bells, and the excited acclamations of the people.

Alexander, though he had shown no particular solicitude for the connection of Napoleon with his sister, experienced a sense of slight and mortification at seeing him married to the scion of a rival imperial family. This feeling was apparent even in the congratulations he caused to be conveyed to Napoleon on the occasion; indeed, he could not but feel that the hand of his sister was, to some extent, discarded, even while the proposal for it was under consideration at St. Petersburg. "Personally, I may have some reason to complain," said he to the French ambassador, "but I do not do so; I rejoice at whatever is for the good of France." Alexander deceived himself; and so strong was the sense of irritation which he felt on this point, that it materially contributed to the coldness which soon afterwards sprung up between the two courts.

England did not shrink from the prospect of having nearly the whole continent arrayed against her, in the event of her refusing to come to terms with Napoleon and Alexander. She had braved this position before, and found the result not so serious as would reasonably be supposed. Still mistress of the seas, she was comparatively secure against the efforts of her adversaries. It had been found impossible effectually to close the continent against her from one end to the other; and the attempt, therefore, to annihilate her commerce was a failure. At this period also, great enthusiasm existed in England on behalf of the Spaniards; and the nation was not so desirous of peace as to wish to obtain it on the condition of sacrificing an

ally. Mr. Canning, therefore, replied to the overtures of France and Russia—that England, though she had often received proposals for peace which she had strong reasons for not believing to be sincere, would never refuse to listen to overtures of that kind, so long as they were honourable to her. She accordingly insisted that all her allies, the Spanish insurgents as well as the others, should be included in the negotiations. On this condition, Mr. Canning affirmed himself ready to name plenipotentiaries, and to send them wherever their presence might be desired. Napoleon would not consent to the admission of the Spanish insurgents; and England declared the pacific proposals addressed to her to be illusory; that the negotiations were, therefore, to be considered as broken off; and that war would be continued with all the energy called for by the circumstances.

Alexander, feeling that a quarrel with Napoleon was by no means improbable, availed himself of the advantages of his friendship, while it lasted, to crush the power of Turkey, and possess himself of the Danubian principalities. By the treaty of Tilsit, an armistice was arranged between Russia and Turkey; but the Russian troops had, since that period, retained possession of Moldavia and Wallachia. Active hostilities had not, however, been renewed; for Russia had been occupied with the conquest of Finland, and Turkey distracted by a series of tumults and revolutions which terminated in the exaltation of the able and inflexible Mahmoud to the throne of the sultans. But, on the termination of the war with Finland, Napoleon abandoned the principalities to Russia, and Alexander caused his army on the banks of the Danube to be reinforced, until it amounted to 80,000 infantry and 25,000 cavalry; and gave directions to Prince Prosorowski, its commander, to cross that river and carry the war into the heart of the Turkish territories.

Notwithstanding the powerful force of the Russians, which was far superior to that brought into the field by the Turks, the former experienced many reverses, besides suffering severely from the unhealthiness of the climate. The campaign of 1809, however, terminated somewhat successfully for the Russians, who resolved to carry on their operations with increased vigour during the following year. On the 21st of January, 1810, Alexander issued an imperial ukase, announcing that Moldavia and Wallachia, which, for three years, had been occupied by his troops, *were annexed to the Russian empire;* the southern boundary of which, it said, was now the course of the Danube from the frontiers of Austria to the Black Sea.

During the campaign of 1810, Silistria, one of the strongest places on the Danube, was taken by the Russians, while Tourtoukai and Rasgrad yielded soon after to the terrors of a bombardment. The Russians were, however, repulsed from the famous stronghold of Shumla, after several weeks spent in fruitless efforts before it. They then undertook the siege of the Turkish town of Roudschouck, which was defended by Hassan Pasha, a man of cool judgment and considerable military skill. Acting upon the peculiar tactics of his country, he did not return the fire of the besiegers until the day of the assault, the 3rd of August. The Russians were then received with a murderous fire from every roof, window, and loophole from which a gun or musket could be brought to bear upon them. Two columns of troops were permitted to enter the town, where they were at once cut to pieces by the furious Janissaries. The assault had been made at daybreak, and the struggle was maintained until six in the evening, when the Russians were compelled to retreat, leaving 8,000 of their number, in killed and wounded, in the ditch and around the walls. Of the latter, 4,000 were at once decapitated by the victorious Turks.

The Moslems failed to follow up their advantage, and the Russian general was thus allowed time to repair his disasters, and enable him to retain his position. Kamenskoi, who now commanded the Russians, made a grand attack on the Turkish camp on the 7th of September. The battle of Battin followed, during the first day of which the Russians suffered severely, and narrowly escaped a defeat. The Turks, intoxicated with their partial success, gave way to every demonstration of joy, and, in the sight of their foes, beheaded the wounded who had been left on the field. The following day the contest was renewed at dawn, the whole of the Russian artillery brought to bear upon the Turkish intrenched camp, and the victory finally remained with the Russians, who, in retaliation for the cruelty practised by the Turks, put all the wounded and prisoners to death. This success was followed by the capture of Sistowa, a fortified place in the neighbourhood;

together with the whole Turkish flotilla, which had taken refuge under its walls. Roudschouck, also, which had been so bravely defended, was now compelled to capitulate; the pasha, his troops, and the inhabitants being allowed to retire, while the town, cannon, standards, and military stores fell to the victors. The campaign was concluded by the siege of Nicopolis, which capitulated to the Russians, who then, in consequence of the rainy season having set in, recrossed the Danube (with the exception of those left to garrison the towns they had captured), and took up their winter quarters in Wallachia and Moldavia.

During the early part of the winter, the Russian army was again reinforced; and, in consequence of the death of Kamenskoi, General Kutusoff was appointed to the chief command. However, the pacific connection between the emperors Napoleon and Alexander was in so precarious a state, that in the February of 1811, the latter gave orders for five divisions of the army to leave their winter-quarters on the Danube, and direct their march towards the Vistula, in Poland. The Russian army on the Danube, thus reduced to one-half of its former amount, was no longer able to carry on offensive operations. The Turks, encouraged by this reduction in the strength of their enemies, and roused by the dangers they had incurred in the preceding campaign, made the most vigorous efforts for the prosecution of the war, and trusted to regain all the strongholds they had lost on the right bank of the Danube. In this they were deceived; for the spirit of the Russians had not diminished, and they were now led by a general of great military talents.

Towards the end of June, Achmet Pasha advanced with 60,000 men, and seventy-eight pieces of artillery, against the Russians. General Kutusoff concentrated his troops, and took up his position in front of Roudschouck. There he was attacked by the Moslems on the 2nd of July, who, with wild shouts and eager fury, charged the Russian squares on three sides at once, at the same time that they were played upon by the Turkish batteries. This concentrated mode of attack had nearly secured the victory; for though the squares on the right withstood the shock, the centre suffered severely, while the third was nearly swept away by the torrent of Turkish cavalry which burst upon it. Four regiments of dragoons and Cossacks were charged in flank by the Moslem cavalry, pierced through, and almost destroyed. Had the Moslem horse been supported by a competent body of infantry, they must have obtained a victory. Such was not the case and these brave Asiatics were driven back by the deadly volleys of grapeshot from the batteries of the town. The Turks retired sullenly from the field after about 3,000 men had been killed or wounded on each side, and the Russians also withdrew within the walls of Roudschouck, which they shortly afterwards burnt and abandoned. Neither side obtained any advantage in this sanguinary battle, nor could either of them lay claim to a victory.

The Turks now crossed the Danube, and became the assailants. At first, success attended their efforts, and the Russians were so severely pressed, that it seemed probable they would be driven out of the Danubian provinces. In this state of affairs they were reinforced by a large body of Cossacks. General Kutusoff then, by some very able manœuvres, contrived to surround the Turkish army, and attack it in the rear. The Moslems were taken by surprise, and thrown into disorder. Their own cannon was turned against them, and used with terrible effect; and so desperate was their situation, that had the Russian general been less cautious, the whole Turkish army might have been destroyed. Its position, entirely surrounded, and subjected to an incessant cannonade, was perfectly desperate. Yet the Turkish general, with unshaken courage, refused the most advantageous offers of capitulation, and formed the audacious design of cutting his way, by a sudden irruption, through the Russian left, and intrenching himself under the shelter of the guns of Roudschouck. Fortunately for the Turks, Alexander, fearing the enmity of his recent friend Napoleon, was anxious for a peace. A convention, therefore, between the Russian cabinet and the Porte, with the object of adjusting their cause of quarrel, was concluded at Giurgevo at the end of October; and thus the misery of the Turkish army was terminated, and its honour saved. They capitulated on the 4th of December, on condition of abandoning their intrenched camp without their arms or cannon, which were to be restored to them if peace were concluded. This ended the campaign of 1811, in which both parties had made prodigious efforts, and neither had gained decisive success.

The negotiations which followed were earnestly pressed by Russia; for Alexander was, by this time, well aware of the formidable contest with Napoleon which was impending over him. This circumstance might have made the Turks less inclined to conclude a peace, especially as the French ambassador used every effort to induce them to continue the war. But they were made acquainted, by England, with the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit, in which Napoleon had rewarded their friendship to him by not only agreeing to the partition of their European dominions, but had himself stipulated for the possession of Greece, the islands of the Archipelago, Albania, and Macedonia. Concurrent testimony of the treachery of Napoleon convinced the Porte of the imminent danger to which they would be exposed, if he obtained a similar supremacy in the east of Europe to that which he had so long exercised in the west.

The Turkish government, therefore, forbore to make the utmost of the necessity under which Russia lay of concluding the war. The Ottoman ministry saw, that if Napoleon subdued Russia, he would turn the forces of both empires against them, and that his possession of Moscow would be but a preliminary to the subjugation of Constantinople. They therefore consented to abandon the provinces conquered by Russia, in the beginning of the war, to the north of the Danube, and agreed that the river Pruth should form the boundary of the two empires. Thus, though Russia lost Moldavia and Wallachia, which Alexander, in the insolence of anticipated triumph, had declared annexed to the empire, she gained Bessarabia, a province which conferred on its holders the immense advantage of commanding the mouths of the Danube. The treaty was signed at Bucharest on the 28th of May, 1812, and was followed, on the 18th of July, by another, concluding peace with England. Sultan Mahmoud was, however, highly dissatisfied with this peace, which he regarded as disgraceful: so strong was his feeling on this point, that he even put a Turkish officer of distinction, who had been engaged in its negotiation, to death for having concealed certain facts which would have warranted the Porte in holding out for better terms. England made an ungenerous use of Turkey, upon whom she brought all her influence to bear in favour of Russia, and thus enabled that power to withdraw advantageously from the war, in order that she might direct the whole of her energies against France. Had Russia been at war with Turkey on one side, and France on the other (especially if consideration be had to the state of those powers at the period), her position would have been one of no common danger.

"The vigorous and unlooked-for resistance," observes Alison, "which Turkey at this period opposed to all the efforts of that Russians, sufficiently illustrates the elements of strength which at that period lay dormant, till roused to present danger, in the Ottoman empire; and may perhaps suggest the necessity of modifying some of those opinions as to the declining condition of the power of the grand seignior, which have been so long received as political maxims in Europe. When it is recollected that Russia for three years directed her whole force against the Turks; that in the year 1810 she had a hundred thousand men upon the Danube; and that this array was composed of the conquerors of Eylau—it certainly appears not a little surprising, that the Ottoman empire was not altogether overthrown in the shock. Nevertheless, the contest was extremely equal; and though the forces with which the Ottomans had to contend on the Danube fully equalled those which fronted Napoleon on the Vistula, yet they opposed nearly as effectual resistance to the Muscovite arms, as did the conqueror of Western Europe. The contest began on the Danube, and it terminated, after three years' bloodshed, on the same river, with the loss of only one or two frontier towns to the Ottomans. This broad and decisive fact proves, that although the political power of Turkey has unquestionably declined for the last century and a-half, and the enormous abuses of its civil government have occasioned, during that period, a constant diminution in its inhabitants and strength, yet it still possesses great resources when they are fairly drawn forth by impending danger; and that in the native bravery of its inhabitants is often to be found, as in the British soldiers, more than a compensation for all the errors of their direction or government."

CHAPTER III.

NAPOLEON ANNEXES THE DOMINIONS OF THE DUKE OF OLDENBURG TO THE FRENCH EMPIRE; DISSENSIONS BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND RUSSIAN EMPERORS; IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE HOSTILE ATTITUDE OF NAPOLEON, ALEXANDER PLACES HIS DOMINIONS IN A STATE OF DEFENCE, AND RELAXES THE "CONTINENTAL SYSTEM" WITH RESPECT TO ENGLISH COMMERCE; NAPOLEON INSULTS THE RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR; DRIVES SWEDEN INTO AN ALLIANCE WITH RUSSIA; MODERATION OF ALEXANDER; ENTHUSIASM IN FRANCE AT THE PROJECTED INVASION OF RUSSIA; POWERFUL NATIONALITY OF THE LATTER STATE, AND ITS PREPARATIONS FOR DEFENCE; NAPOLEON AT DRESDEN; HIS ADVANCE INTO POLAND; THE INVADING ARMY CROSS THE NIEMEN; PROCLAMATION OF ALEXANDER TO THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE.

In the last chapter we advanced somewhat beyond our main narrative, in order to bring the events of the war with Turkey under one head. The friendship of Napoleon and Alexander endured for nearly five years, and no rupture of it had yet taken place. We have shown that a coldness had, nevertheless, arisen between these high-placed potentates; but the chief canker to Alexander, was his enforced adherence to the principle of excluding English commerce and manufactures from the continent. This had been productive of the most ruinous consequences to the trade of Russia, and had caused great dissatisfaction in that country. A system of connivance to evade the prohibition had naturally arisen; but this was merely an alleviation of the evil, which seriously oppressed the prosperity of the empire.

Such was the state of things when, in the December of 1810, Napoleon annexed to the French empire the dominions of the Duke of Oldenburg, who was related to Alexander by having married his sister Catherine. This unjust act of spoliation excited a feeling of irritability not only in the mind of the emperor, but in those of the inhabitants of St. Petersburg. Alexander, also, still felt an uneasiness respecting the grand-duchy of Warsaw, from which he feared that Napoleon might reconstruct the overthrown kingdom of Poland. The grand-duchy had been largely augmented with territory surrendered by Austria at the treaty of Vienna, in 1809; and the anxiety of Alexander induced him to open a negotiation on that subject with the French emperor. Napoleon at first consented to gratify his cooling friend on this point; and, early in 1810, he authorised the French ambassador at St. Petersburg to draw up a convention, in which it was expressly stipulated that the kingdom of Poland should never be re-established, and that even the name of Poland should be effaced for ever from every public and official document. Alexander was gratified, and again expressed himself in the language of friendship towards the towering rival whom he secretly dreaded. Napoleon subsequently refused to ratify this convention, and proposed a suspicious alteration of its terms. Alexander felt such conduct to be a slight, and, in a conversation with the French ambassador, he remarked, "If affairs change, it is not my fault: I shall not be the first to disturb the peace of Europe. I will attack no one; but if they come to seek me, I shall defend myself." Napoleon, when pressed on this subject, answered in warm language; and the Russian cabinet conceived an apprehension that he meditated an attack on their Polish possessions. A new military levy was therefore ordered, of one man in every hundred throughout the Russian empire, and the Russian forces in Poland considerably increased.

Napoleon, through the medium of his ambassador, demanded an explanation of these preparations. Alexander responded with a dignified firmness. "You assert that I am arming," said he to M. de Caulaincourt; "and I am far from denying it. I am effectually armed; I am ready, quite ready; and you will find me prepared to defend myself to the utmost. What would you have thought of me if I had acted otherwise—if I had been so forgetful of my duty as to leave my country exposed to the prompt, exacting, and terrible will of your master? But I have only armed after receiving certain information that Dantzic is being placed in a state of defence; that its garrison is being augmented; that the troops of Marshal Davoust are being reinforced and concentrated; that the Poles and Saxons have been ordered to hold themselves in readiness; that Modlin and Thorn have

been repaired, and all the fortifications provisioned." Then, leading Caulaincourt into a cabinet, in which were spread open his maps, the emperor added—"On receiving this information, see what I have done. I have ordered defensive works, not in advance of, but behind my frontier; on the Dwina and the Dnieper, at Riga, at Dunaburg, at Balernisk; that is to say, at a distance from the Niemen almost as great as that which separates Strasburg from Paris. If your master should fortify Paris, should I complain of it? And when he carries his preparations so far in advance of his frontiers, should I be accused of provoking war because I arm myself behind mine? I have not such good generals as yours; I am not myself so good a soldier or administrator as Napoleon; but I have good soldiers and a devoted people; and we will perish sword in hand, rather than permit ourselves to be treated like the Dutch, or the people of Hamburg. At the same time, I declare to you, upon my honour, that I will not strike the first blow. I will let you pass the Niemen before I pass it myself. Believe me, when I say that I do not desire war; and that my nation, although hurt and terrified at your proceedings, does not desire it; but, if attacked, she will not recede."

Though Alexander was not disposed to make the seizure of the duchy of Oldenburg a cause of war with France, yet he thought it necessary in some way to resent what could not but be regarded as a slight to him as well as the spoliation of his relation. On the 31st of December, 1810, therefore, he issued an ukase, which prohibited the importation of various articles of French manufacture, and allowed that of colonial produce. This, in effect, was a material relaxation of the system of exclusion which had been carried on with respect to English commerce; as, under the pretence of carrying on a trade in the colonial produce of Russia, English merchants were able to effect extensive dealings with that country. A coast-guard of 80,000 men was established, under pretext of enforcing obedience to this edict; but, in reality, as a covert means of augmenting the regular army. Napoleon understood all this, and made constant preparations for the war which his own proceedings were rendering inevitable. He had aimed at isolating Russia from all other states, and making any other alliance than with France impossible to her. On the 15th of August, 1811, he bantered Prince Kourakin, the Russian ambassador, for some time in the presence of several of his diplomatic compeers. Speaking of the recent war of Russia with Turkey, he said, with a provoking and insulting sarcasm, the more bitter on account of its truth—"If we are now dictating despatches, or writing for the journals, I will at once admit that your generals have been constantly victorious, and that it was the state of your finances which compelled you to withdraw a portion of your troops from living at the expense of the Turks, to make them live at the cost of the Russian treasury. But if we are speaking frankly before three or four of your colleagues, who know the real state of affairs, I will plainly tell you that you have been beaten; that your errors have caused you to lose the line of the Danube, and that its loss resulted less from the ill-advised manœuvres of your generals, than from the mistake of your government in depriving them of the necessary forces, by withdrawing five divisions from the Danube to the Dnieper. And why was this done? To make a demonstration against me, whom you call your ally! You have committed faults upon faults! If you have any cause of anger against me, you should openly declare it. In any case, instead of scattering your forces, you should have concentrated them against Turkey, so as to have overwhelmed it, and compelled it to a peace which should have been as advantageous as that of Finland, and then you would have been in a position to have taken precautionary measures against me. But in policy, finance, and war, you have committed a thousand errors; and for whom? For the Prince of Oldenburg and some contrabandists. For the sake of such persons it is that you have exposed yourselves to the risk of a war with me, whose resources you well know!" The emperor added—"I suppose you reckon upon having allies. Where are they? Is Austria one of them—Austria, with whom you were at war in 1809, and from whom you have taken a province at the conclusion of peace? Is Sweden one of them—Sweden, from whom you have taken Finland? Is Prussia one of them—Prussia, whose spoils you accepted at the peace of Tilsit, after having been her ally? You deceive yourselves; you will have no allies. Come to an understanding then with me, and let us have no war." This conversation, in which

Napoleon overwhelmed and greatly embarrassed the Russian ambassador, was much talked about, and formed a topic of conversation in all the saloons of Paris and St. Petersburg. "This new circumstance," said the emperor Alexander, with an air of sadness, "has but confirmed my nation in its resolution to defend its dignity and independence to the death. Napoleon would not have spoken thus, if he were not resolved upon war."

The French emperor had acted with great subtlety towards Russia, yet his own violence and domineering ambition threw an ally into her arms. This was Sweden, which Napoleon placed in the painful position of declaring war against England, or against himself. Bernadotte,* who in accepting the dignity of crown prince of Sweden, had attached himself earnestly to its interests, protested and entreated, but was compelled to assent to this tyrannical dictation. In the November of 1810, Sweden declared war against England, which seeing its position, treated it with a generous forbearance. Napoleon was not yet satisfied; he made other demands upon the Swedish government, and acted in a manner so offensively overbearing, that it refused compliance. To punish it, Napoleon, in January, 1812, poured his troops into Pomerania, seized the fortress of Stralsund, confiscated the Swedish ships which he found in the harbour, and committed other unjustifiable acts of hostility. The limits of passive endurance were past: Sweden entered into an alliance with Russia, and concluded a peace with England.

Napoleon and Alexander each remained for a time in an attitude of defence, and occupied in preparing for that outbreak on which the former had determined; and the latter, though he desired to avoid, would not descend to avert by any undignified concession. The dangers to which Alexander was exposed, appear to have strengthened and purified his character, and he acted as a patriotic monarch should have done. Extremely averse to entering upon the war, he desired that the whole of Europe should see that he was not the aggressor. "The joy of England must be great," said he, "to see two such powers going to war." Even so late as the early part of the year 1812, he made proposals to Napoleon, with the object of bringing about an accommodation; but the latter left them unanswered. He had resolved to make a grand display of his military power on the banks of the Vistula, and, if prevented by submission from conquering Russia, to show at least that he could overawe it.

The attention of the whole of Europe was fixed in suspense upon the approaching conflict between its two greatest powers, and most politicians anticipated that it would result in the final prostration of Russia. That empire was, indeed, seriously endangered; and it is not impossible that it might have been conquered and dismembered by the swords of France, had not Napoleon, intoxicated by long prosperity, attempted to finish in one campaign that which it must have taken several successful ones to accomplish. The expedition which Napoleon proposed for the conquest of Russia, was regarded with enthusiasm throughout France; and during the spring of 1812, the roads of that country and of Germany were thronged by cavalry, infantry, and artillery, hastening to the scene of the approaching conflict. "Young men," observes Alison, "of the richest and noblest families solicited employment in an expedition where success appeared certain, resistance impossible, and danger unlikely. All heads were swept away by the torrent; ambition, in every age and rank, was dazzled by the apparent brilliancy of the prospect. The expedition, said they, which is preparing, will throw that of Egypt into the shade. Never had the instinct of war, the passion for military glory, more strongly seconded the ambition of the chief of an empire. 'We are setting out for Moscow, but we shall soon return,' were the words with which the joyous youth everywhere took leave of their parents, their relations, their friends. The march to St. Petersburg or Moscow, seemed only a military promenade—a hunting party of six months' duration, in which little danger was to be met, but ample excitement experienced; a last effort, which would place the empire of Napoleon and the glory of France beyond the reach of danger. The magnificence of the spectacle, and the brilliancy of the prospect, spread these feelings even amongst the

* Bernadotte, though a Frenchman, and one of Napoleon's marshals, had been elected by the Swedish Diet as the successor of Charles XIII., the reigning sovereign, who was without natural heirs. Bernadotte was much respected by the Swedes, who, moreover, thought that by selecting him as their future sovereign, they would secure the friendship and protection of the French emperor.

people of the vanquished states. the expected restoration of Poland, and humiliation of Russia, gave an air of romance to the approaching expedition; and thousands breathed wishes for its success."

In Russia, the intense nationality of its nobles and its people was aroused, and they rallied loyally around their emperor. He and his counsellors were at times elated with the hope, that the apparently irresistible foe, who had gathered for their destruction such a power as Europe had never before seen, might be baffled by the difficulties of carrying out an offensive war into the heart of Russia; at others, they cherished the mournful resolution of perishing in the defence of their country, rather than any confident hope of being able to achieve its deliverance.

But the chief hope of the Russians lay in the vast extent of their empire, which it was impossible to overrun; and the severity of its climate, which rendered it inaccessible to invaders, except for a comparatively brief period of the year. The plan devised by the Russians was, therefore, to lay waste their country in the path of the enemy, and then, retiring into the farthest part of the empire, see how the dreaded Napoleon would be able to maintain an enormous army in the midst of desolated plains, equally deficient in food for his soldiers, and forage for his horses. They conceived the hope, that, like another Pharaoh, he would perish in the vastness of the desert, as did the Egyptians in the vastness of the deep. Clouds of light horse were to harass the flanks of the enemy, and cut off its foraging parties; the forces of Russia were to decline battles, and to retreat into the interior of the empire to avoid them, only pausing to fight when the French should be exhausted with hunger and fatigue. By this means it was hoped that the vast armies of Napoleon would be gradually wasted away. Some of Alexander's officers even advised that the desert should be carried forward, and that for this purpose, they should invade Poland and Old Prussia, and then retreat after having destroyed their rich granaries and laid the country desolate; but to this proposition he would not consent.

The forces collected by the emperor Alexander, to oppose those of Napoleon, consisted of 260,000 men, divided into two armies; one under the command of General Barclay de Tolly,* and the other under that of Prince Bagration. These were, as the war proceeded, swelled by the addition of the army from the Danube, and by other reinforcements.

The force Napoleon had collected for the invasion of Russia, was the most tremendous accumulation of armed men, that had been formed in modern times, or, probably, since the beginning of the world. It amounted to 587,000 men: of whom 270,000 were French; 80,000 Germans of the confederation of the Rhine; 30,000 Poles; 30,000 Austrians; 20,000 Prussians; and the remainder chiefly natives of the various Italian states. The emperor of Austria, though now the father-in-law of Napoleon, contributed his contingent with an unwillingness he did not deem it prudent to show; while the ruined monarch of Prussia, who bitterly hated his oppressor, had no choice in the matter, but was compelled to send his troops into the field, to fight against the side to which he wished success. Indeed, Frederic William was aware, that if Napoleon subdued Russia, Prussia, as a state, would disappear from the map of Europe; but he was now as powerless to resist the will of his conqueror, as is the straw or bubble to contend against the current of the stream on whose bosom it is swept rapidly onward.

Despite the general enthusiasm which prevailed in France respecting this expedition, it was viewed with alarm by some of its profoundest statesmen, and also by many of its chief military men. Talleyrand exhausted his utmost efforts to dissuade his imperious master from it; but in vain. It is said that he even predicted the overthrow of the French empire as its result. The astute Fouché also presented a memorial to Napoleon, with the desire of inducing him to forego a design which he felt would lead to ruin. The emperor received it with a haughty coldness. "War with Russia," he remarked, "it would seem, pleases you as little as that in Spain." Fouché replied, that he hoped to be pardoned for having thrown together some reflections upon so important a crisis. "It is no crisis at all,

* Barclay de Tolly was descended from a Scotch family, a younger branch of which had migrated to Livonia. He had entered the Russian army at the almost infantine age of twelve, and had risen by his military merits to the highest rank in the service. His admirers estimate him as the greatest general of Russia after Suwarrow. Prince Bagration was descended from the ancient princes of Georgia, and was a brave, impetuous soldier, who loved the excitement of danger. To the Russian minister Balachoff, Napoleon observed, "Bagration is your only general."

sir," resumed the emperor, "but a mere war of politics. Spain falls whenever I have destroyed English influence at St. Petersburg. I have 800,000 soldiers in readiness; with such an army, I consider Europe as an old prostitute who must obey my pleasure. Did not you yourself once tell me that the word *impossible* is not French? You grandees are now grown too rich; and though you pretend to be anxious about my interests, you are only thinking of what might happen to yourselves, in the event of my death, and the dismemberment of my empire. I regulate my conduct much more by the sentiments of my army, than by yours. Is it my fault that the height of power which I have attained, compels me to ascend to the dictatorship of the world? My destiny is not yet accomplished. The picture exists hitherto only in outline. There must be one code, one court of appeal, and one coinage, for all Europe. The European states must be melted into one nation, and Paris be its capital. I will destroy all Russian influence, as well as all English influence in Europe. Two battles will do the business; the emperor Alexander will come to me on his knees, and Russia shall be disarmed. Spain costs me very dear: without that, I should have been master of the world by this time; but when I shall become such, by finishing with Russia, my son will have nothing to do but quietly to retain my place."

On the 9th of May, 1812, Napoleon quitted Paris and proceeded to Dresden, to which city his progress was one prolonged festivity, or triumphal march. He had expressed a wish that the emperor of Austria, and the minor kings and princes of Germany, should meet him there. He imagined that so brilliant an assemblage of sovereigns, would contrast with the insulated state of the Russian monarch, and produce in him an alarming sense of being generally deserted. Either from motives of interest or fear, his desire was obeyed, and Dresden became the scene of a gorgeous munificence, the description of which reads like some creation of a warm imagination. As at Erfurth, the most gifted actors of Paris combined their talents, and plays were performed, of which the passages descriptive of heroes and illustrious princes, were all applied to the soldier-monarch. Maria Louisa had accompanied her imperial partner to Dresden. Around her was cast the whole gorgeousness of rank and wealth, in their greatest distinction and most wild profusion. A modern historian observes—"During the magnificent series of pageants which followed her arrival, flattery exhausted its talent, and luxury its magnificence; and the pride of the Cæsars was forgotten in the glory of one who had risen upon the ruins of their antiquated splendour." But it was the great soldier himself who was the chief attraction of these brilliant scenes. General Count Ségur* says—"Whole nations had quitted their homes to throng his path; rich and poor, nobles and plebeians, friends and enemies, all hurried to the scene. Their curious and anxious groups were seen crowding together in the streets, the roads, and the public places; they passed whole days and nights with their eyes fixed on the gate and windows of his palace. It was not his crown, his rank, the splendour of his court, but him only, on whom they desired to feast their eyes. It was a memento of his features which they were anxious to obtain; they wished to be able to tell their less fortunate countrymen and posterity, that they had seen Napoleon."

The emperor remained at Dresden until the 29th of May, living in a style of the most gorgeous pomp, and distributing, with more than Eastern munificence, diamonds, snuff-boxes and crosses, among the crowd of princes, ministers, dukes, and courtiers who thronged around his steps. He then led his enormous host into Poland, where he was soon assailed by the piteous complaints of the peasantry, whom his soldiers pillaged without mercy. The cavalry cut down the green rye, and even stripped the houses of their thatch, in order to find provender for their horses. Napoleon expressed himself hurt by these proceedings, and addressed severe reproaches to those princes or generals who sanctioned them. But the depredations continued, for they soon became necessary. The means of providing such a multitude with food, had been considered as far as was possible. An army of provision-waggons was to be loaded from the magazines established on the Vistula: but partly because the vehicles were too heavy for the soil they were intended to traverse, and partly from an inefficient organ-

* *History of the Expedition to Russia;* by General Count Philip de Ségur, son of the French ambassador, at the court of Catherine II.; to whose writings we have previously referred. The son was one of Napoleon's favourite generals, and accompanied him in the fatal invasion of Russia.

isation on this point, most of them were left behind before reaching that river. Contributions were, therefore, made on the peasantry, who were speedily ruined by the extent of these exactions, enforced by troops from whom they expected deliverance from their bondage to Russia.

Before daybreak on the 23rd of June, the invading army approached the river Niemen. Leaving his carriage, Napoleon mounted his horse, and reconnoitred the Russian river. As he came up to the bank, his horse suddenly fell and threw him on the sand. Some one observed, "This is a bad omen; a Roman would recoil!" But the emperor, rising unconcerned, gave orders for the construction of three bridges, and retired to his quarters humming a tune. The next morning, the emperor issued the following address to his army, by whom it was received with the most ardent enthusiasm:—"Soldiers! the second Polish war has commenced. The first ended at Friedland and at Tilsit. At Tilsit, Russia swore an eternal alliance with France, and war with England. She now violates her oaths. She will give no explanation of her capricious conduct until the French eagles have repassed the Rhine; by that means leaving our allies at her mercy. Russia is hurried away by fatality; her destiny must be accomplished. Does she imagine us to be degenerated? Are we not still the soldiers of Austerlitz? She places us between war and dishonour; the choice cannot be doubtful. Let us advance then—let us cross the Niemen, and carry the war into her own territory. The second Polish war will be as glorious for the French arms as the first; but the peace we shall this time conclude, will carry with it its own guarantee, and put an end to the fatal influence which, for fifty years, Russia has exercised in the affairs of Europe."

After this address had been read to the soldiers, the signal to advance was given. The vast columns of the imperial army defiled out of the forests and hollows on the banks of the river, and commenced their passage over to the Russian side; which continued incessantly during the 24th and the 25th. They met with no opposition; and, indeed, not a foe was to be seen. Some of the officers fancied that they heard the distant report of cannon, and listened attentively to ascertain from what direction it came. But this was but the work of imagination: scarcely, however, had Napoleon himself crossed the river, than the day, which had been brilliant, became overcast; a wind arose, and a thunder-storm burst and rolled over the army. Black and heavy masses of clouds poured out their contents for several hours, and the roads and fields were inundated. Many there were, even amongst the most enthusiastic, who felt terrified at what they conceived to be a fatal presage.

Alexander had left St. Petersburg on the 21st of April, and joined his army. When intelligence of the passage of the Niemen by the French reached him, he was at a ball at the country-house of General Benningsen, in the neighbourhood of Wilna. For some time he remained with the company without exhibiting any change of manner, or communicating the intelligence he had received. He then wrote and issued the following proclamation to the empire:—"For long we have observed the hostile proceedings of the French emperor towards Russia, but we always entertained the hope of avoiding hostilities by measures of conciliation; but, seeing all our efforts without success, we have been constrained to assemble our armies. Still we hoped to maintain peace by resting on our frontiers in a defensive attitude, without committing any act of aggression. All these conciliatory measures have failed; the emperor Napoleon, by a sudden attack on our troops at Kowno, has declared war. Seeing, therefore, that nothing can induce him to remain at peace, all that remains for us is to invoke the succour of the Most High, and oppose our forces to the enemy. I need not remind the officers and soldiers of their duty, to excite their valour; the blood of the brave Slavonians flows in their veins. Soldiers! you will defend your religion, your country, and your liberty. I am with you. God is against the aggressor." The emperor also announced the invasion of the country to the governor of St. Petersburg, in a letter which concluded with these patriotic and resolute observations:—"I have the fullest confidence in the zeal of my people and the bravery of my soldiers. Menaced in their homes, they will defend them with their wonted firmness and intrepidity. Providence will bless our just cause. The defence of our country, of our independence and national honour, have forced me to unsheathe the sword. I will not return it to the scabbard so long as a single enemy remains on the Russian territory."

The nationality and patriotism of the Russian people and soldiers needed not these addresses to excite them. The latter even received with regret the command to retire before the enemy, who was advancing with rapid strides upon Wilna, the capital of Lithuania. But the policy of the Russians in retiring and leaving the country waste behind them, was indisputably a wise one. To have immediately encountered the invaders, would have been to be overwhelmed beneath their immense numerical superiority. The obstacles which nature had placed in the country against invasion, were silently yet terribly telling in favour of the Russians. The waste of active warfare had already commenced its work upon the French army. In consequence of incessant rains and fatigues, and unwholesome provender, 10,000 horses dropt and died on the road from the Niemen to Wilna; while shortly after the arrival of the invaders at that city, and even before a shot was fired, 25,000 sick and dying men filled its hospitals, and the surrounding villages.

At Wilna Napoleon received a letter from Alexander, in which the latter, animated by a spirit of forbearance which was scarcely to be expected, wrote, "that it was not yet too late to negotiate; that a war was begun which the soil, the climate, and the character of Russia rendered interminable, but that all accommodation had not become impossible; and that from opposite banks of the Niemen they might yet come to an understanding." It was already impossible for Napoleon to retire to the other side of the Niemen, without utterly losing the *prestige* that attached to him as a great general. Therefore he felt irritated at the proposal, and replied—"I will treat of peace at Wilna, and retire behind the Niemen when it is concluded." The time of negotiation was, in fact, long gone by; and the quarrel between these two powerful potentates, could only be settled by an appeal to the sword.

CHAPTER IV.

ENGAGEMENTS BETWEEN THE RETIRING RUSSIANS AND THE ADVANCED GUARD OF THE FRENCH; ALEXANDER APPEALS TO THE NOBLES AND PEOPLE OF MOSCOW; THEIR ENTHUSIASTIC PATRIOTISM; ASSAULT ON SMOLENSK, AND DESPERATE DEFENCE OF THAT CITY; THE RUSSIANS CONTINUE THEIR RETREAT; CLAMOURS OF THE PEOPLE AGAINST THE POLICY OF A CONSTANT FLIGHT FROM THE ENEMY; BATTLE OF VALTELINA; FRIGHTFUL CONDITION OF THE FRENCH ARMY; GENERAL KUTUSOFF APPOINTED TO THE CHIEF COMMAND OF THE RUSSIANS; THE GREAT AND TERRIBLE BATTLE OF BORODINO; THE RUSSIANS CONTINUE THEIR RETREAT; THE FRENCH ENTER MOSCOW, AND FIND IT DESERTED.

Napoleon committed the serious error of remaining for seventeen days at Wilna; a circumstance which permitted the Russians to retire in excellent order. The officers nearest to the person of the emperor remarked to each other, that a genius so vast as his, and always increasing in activity and audacity, was no longer seconded by a vigorous constitution. They were surprised at finding him affected by the heat of a burning atmosphere; and they remarked to each other, with melancholy forebodings, the tendency to corpulence which his frame had acquired, and which they regarded as the forerunner of premature decay.

The division of the Russian army, under the command of Prince Bagration, was sharply followed by that of the French, under Jerome Buonaparte and Marshal Davoust; and on the 9th and 10th of July, engagements took place between the advanced guard and cavalry of each. These terminated rather in favour of the Russians; but the latter wisely continued their retreat. On the 23rd of July, an obstinate conflict between the same forces took place at Mohilow, on the Dnieper, in which each side lost about 3,000 men; after which Bagration again retired in excellent order, and joined the main army under Barclay de Tolly, at Smolensk, on the 3rd of August.

The emperor Alexander had left the army on the 16th of July, and hastened to Moscow; to which city the efforts of the enemy were evidently directed. His object was to stimulate by his presence the patriotic ex-

ertions of its inhabitants. He was received by all classes with a frenzy of enthusiasm; and having caused the chief nobles and merchants to be summoned to meet him within the ancient walls of the Kremlin, he promised to have recourse to the extremest measures, rather than lay down his arms. "Never," said he, "was danger more urgent. The national religion, the throne, the state, can be preserved only by the greatest sacrifices. May the destruction with which we are threatened recoil upon the head of the invader, and may Europe, freed from the yoke of servitude, have cause to bless the name of Russia!" The emperor also issued an earnest proclamation to the people, in which he said—"We invite all classes to a general armament, in order to co-operate with ourselves against the designs of the enemy. Let him find at every step the faithful sons of Russia ready to combat all his forces, and deaf to all his seductions; despising his fraud, trampling under foot his gold; paralysing, by the heroism of true valour, all the efforts of his legions of slaves. Illustrious nobles! in every age you have been the saviours of your country: holy clergy! by your prayers you have always invoked the divine blessing on the arms of Russia: people! worthy descendants of the brave Slavonians, often have you broken the jaws of the lions which were open to devour you! Unite, then, with the cross in your hearts and the sword in your hands, and no human power shall prevail against you." The people of Moscow enthusiastically responded by raising a levy of ten out of every hundred males, and promising to clothe and arm them at their own expense. The merchants also made an enormous contribution in money to promote the national defences—an example which was followed by many other cities and provinces in the empire.

Napoleon and the centre of the French army advanced from Wilna on the 16th of July, with the intention of turning a fortified camp the Russians had erected at Drissa. The emperor, however, soon learned, that discovering it to be untenable, they had abandoned it, and were marching towards Witepsk, which they reached on the 25th. Thither Barclay de Tolly was followed by Napoleon; and on the evening of the 27th, the soldiers on both sides anticipated a mortal struggle on the following day. But General Barclay had not yet been joined by Prince Bagration; who, he learnt, was directing his march towards Smolensk. Barclay, therefore, silently decamped during the night; and on the following morning the French were surprised to find the camp of the enemy so utterly deserted, that not even a baggage-waggon or a straggler, with the exception of a single Rusian soldier found asleep under a bush, had been left behind. The invaders were so exhausted with the rapidity of their progress, under a burning summer's sun, that it was found imperative to pause at this point. "Here I stop," exclaimed Napoleon: "here I must look around me; rally, refresh my army, and organise Poland. The campaign of 1812 is finished; that of 1813 will do the rest."

He was, however, too restless to adhere to this resolution, especially as he frequently received intelligence concerning the prodigious preparations of Alexander in the interior of the empire. Napoleon, therefore, held a military council, to consider the expediency of a further advance. Several of his generals were extremely adverse to this, as fraught with great hazard. Berthier dissuaded him even with tears. The emperor overruled their objections. "Why," he exclaimed, "should we remain at Witepsk? The vicinity of the rivers, indeed, makes it a defensible position in summer; but in winter what would avail their frozen streams? If they remained there, it would be requisite to construct towns and fortresses capable of defying the elements; while at Moscow all would be ready-made to their hands." He added, that he perceived that their thoughts were dwelling on Charles XII.; but that if the expedition to Moscow wanted a fortunate precedent, it was because it had wanted a man capable of undertaking it; that in war, fortune went for one-half in everything; and that if people always waited for a complete assemblage of favourable circumstances, nothing would ever be undertaken. "No blood has yet been shed," he observed; "and Russia is too powerful to yield without fighting. Alexander can only negotiate after a great battle. If it is necessary, I will even proceed to the holy city in search of that battle; and I will gain it. Peace waits for me at the gates of Moscow."

Notwithstanding the sufferings of his troops, who were perishing by thousands from disease and hunger, Napoleon resolved to continue his march. He abandoned Witepsk on the 13th of August, and on the

16th came in sight of Smolensk and the united Russian armies, under Barclay de Tolly and Prince Bagration. At this sight, Napoleon, transported with joy, exclaimed—"At length I have them!" He was again deceived. Barclay de Tolly, instead of risking a battle to save Smolensk, thought it sufficient to protect the flight of the inhabitants, and to empty the magazines. Having done this, the Russian army continued its retreat. General Newcrosskoi, and a body of Russian troops, amounting to 30,000 men, which had already fought an heroic action with the French cavalry near Krasnoi, remained in the town and covered the retreat of the main army. Napoleon, irritated that his foes had again escaped him, ordered an assault on the city. It was defended by 200 pieces of heavy cannon, which kept up such a storm of fire against the assailants, that, unable to breach its massy walls, they were compelled eventually to retire. The Russians then set fire to Smolensk, and secured their retreat under cover of the dark columns of smoke which rose from the burning city. The loss on both sides was very heavy. It is variously estimated; but French and Russians probably had each of them, in killed and wounded, no less than 10,000 men.

In the meantime, Alexander, leaving Moscow, hurried to St. Petersburg, and thence to Orebro, in Sweden, where he concluded a treaty of alliance with England; by which the latter agreed to furnish a subsidy of £800,000, and stipulated, that if the Russian fleet was endangered by the French invasion, it should be removed, as a measure of security, to the British shores. On the 20th of June, Alexander also contracted an offensive and defensive alliance with the supreme junta of Spain. On the 21st, he had an interview at Abo with Bernadotte, the crown prince of Sweden. By an alliance concluded with him, it was arranged, that the Russian army which had been kept on the frontiers of Finland to guard against an outbreak from the Swedes, should be at liberty to be used against the French. As a return, Alexander, untaught by the tribulation suspended over his own head, promised, as a compensation for the loss of Finland, to join Sweden in wresting Norway from Denmark. During the interview of Alexander with Bernadotte, the news arrived of Napoleon's entry into Smolensk. "Should St. Petersburg itself be taken," exclaimed the emperor, "I will retire into Siberia; I will there resume our ancient customs, and, like our long-bearded ancestors, will return anew to conquer the empire." "This resolution," exclaimed Bernadotte, with more enthusiasm than reason, "will liberate Europe."

The abandonment of Smolensk was regarded by the Russian soldiers and people rather as an act of pusillanimity than of prudence; and a violent clamour was raised against Barclay de Tolly, whose foreign extraction was not forgotten. They declared him to be a traitor, who permitted all their divisions to be destroyed piecemeal, and dishonoured the army by an interminable flight. "Why employ this stranger?" said the people; "was not Kutusoff, the comrade and rival of Suwarrow, yet living? A Russian was wanted to save Russia."

The Russian army was again divided; and the troops under Barclay had, from motives of an erroneous policy, taken the road to St. Petersburg; while that under Bagration was retreating by the Moscow-road. Napoleon sent his pursuing columns in both of these directions. On the 19th of August, Marshal Ney, with three divisions of the French army, attacked the Russian rearguard at Valtelina, which Barclay had stationed there to cover a cross-movement from the St. Petersburg to the Moscow-road; which he saw to be imperative, unless he would allow the French to cut the Russian forces in two, and beat them in detail. The troops engaged were at first inconsiderable in number; but they were gradually strengthened on both sides, until the engagement swelled into an extensive battle, in which, altogether, 30,000 men were engaged. This was carried on with obstinate bravery; for the Russians fought to defend their cannon, wounded, and baggage; and the French with the hope of taking them. The French made repeated charges with the bayonet; but were as constantly driven back by the stolid bravery of the Russians. The contest was continued until night, and then ceased, from the exhaustion of the assailants. Neither side obtained any advantage; but the Russians retained their position; and victory may be regarded as rather favouring them than their adversaries, though both sides laid claim to it. The French lost about 8,000 men, amongst whom was that distinguished soldier General Gudin; and the Russians 6,000. The result might have been far

more favourable to the French, but for the indecision of General Junot; who, alarmed by an overwhelming sense of responsibility, remained in inaction. Napoleon was so irritated in consequence, that he threatened to dismiss him from the army. At the dawn of the following day, Napoleon visited the battle-field; and was astonished at the energy with which his troops must have fought, judging from the number and attitudes of the dead. They lay mingled with the Russians, amidst the stumps of broken trees, on ground trampled by the feet of the combatants, furrowed with balls, strewed with the fragments of weapons, tattered garments, scattered limbs, dead or wounded horses, and carriages overthrown. The emperor was compelled to pass over or tread upon carcasses, broken weapons, and bayonets twisted by the violence of the shock. The battalions of General Gudin were melted down to platoons; their clothes yet smelt of burnt cartridges and powder, and their faces were begrimed with smoke. Napoleon experienced a sense of grateful admiration for these brave men, who had fought their last battle. "With such troops," he exclaimed, "you might conquer the world. This is the most glorious of our fields; the dead have won immortal glory!"

Notwithstanding his apparent cheerfulness, which sustained the spirits of his troops, the emperor was occasionally oppressed with forebodings of evil. The enemy fled before him, and could not be brought to a decisive engagement. He was pushing forward over desolate tracts, laid waste by the retiring Russians; or through dark forests intersected by swampy streams or rocky dells. The spirits of the troops were oppressed by the solitude around them, and the sufferings they had to endure. The losses already sustained by hunger, fatigue, and sickness, had been tremendous. Typhus fever and dysentery had swept off thousands; and what remained of Smolensk was but one vast hospital. Provisions were scarce, and many soldiers suffered severely from the intemperate use of a spirit distilled from grain, and mingled with the juice of narcotic plants. Numbers of those who, debilitated by fatigue and want of proper food, had indulged in it, were seized with dizziness, stupefaction, and torpor. In this state they sat or lay down in the ditches or on the roads, their half-open, watery, and lack-lustre eyes fixed on vacancy, until their exhausted frames succumbed, and they expired sullenly and without a groan. The convents of Smolensk which had escaped the flames, had been converted into hospitals, and were the scene of frightful horrors; while around the ramparts of the city was such an accumulation of corpses, that they infected the air, and increased the sickness which was devastating the invading army. Napoleon's generals took care that he should be well acquainted with these matters; for most of them dreaded this advance into so vast and sterile a territory. The emperor, however, decided on advancing, in the hope of eclipsing the sufferings of his troops by the brilliancy of a great battle. "The condition of the army," said he, "is frightful; I know it. At Wilna one-half were stragglers; now they amount to two-thirds. There is not a moment to lose; we must grasp at peace, and it can be only found at Moscow. Besides, the state of the army is such, as to render a halt impossible: constant advance alone keeps it together: you may lead it forward, but you cannot arrest its movement. We have advanced too far to retreat. If I sought but for military glory, I should have nothing to do but to return to Smolensk, and extend my wings on either side, so as to crush Wittgenstein and Formasoff. These operations would be brilliant; they would form a glorious termination to the campaign; but they would not conclude the war. Peace is before us. We have only to march eight days to obtain it. So near is our object, it is impossible to deliberate: let us advance to Moscow."

The emperor continued to advance upon that city; and the Russians, under Barclay de Tolly, to fall back in good order before him. That general, stung by the reproaches of the Russians, had at length resolved on giving battle to the French, when the emperor Alexander, yielding to the outcry against him, deprived him of the command, and gave it to General Kutusoff who, as the pupil of Suwarrow, was pointed out by the army and the people as the person most fit to hold it. This man, who had restored the fortunes of Russia in the last campaign against the Turks, is thus described by M. Thiers:—"Although seventy years of age, so perfectly worn out by war and pleasure as to be scarcely capable of holding himself on his horse, thoroughly corrupt, false, perfidious, and a liar, he was possessed of consummate prudence, and had the art to make himself the idol of the party which was ardent for the plan of

engaging, whilst he was himself the decided partisan of the system of retreat. And no man could be more capable than he was of gaining the mastery over men's minds, of directing them as he chose, of ruling them by affecting passions which he had not, and of opposing Napoleon by patience—the only arm with which he could be successfully fought."

Kutusoff was, however, compelled to assent to give battle to the French, on account of the near approach of the latter towards Moscow. He therefore halted on the plain of Borodino, which had been selected as offering many advantages to an army acting on the defensive. Napoleon announced to his troops that they were on the eve of a great battle, and allowed two days for rest and for the collection of provisions. He knew the necessity of terminating, if possible, this wearisome struggle by a decisive contest; for every day told upon his jaded troops, who now suffered so much from want of water, that the men sometimes dropped dead while in search of it, from the effects of exhaustion and thirst.

On the 5th of September, the French army came in sight of the Russians, drawn up in order of battle at Borodino, and defended by some hastily-erected intrenchments and redoubts; one of the latter, of great size, standing on a height which commanded the whole plain in front of the army. It was defended by 10,000 Russians, and supported by twelve pieces of heavy artillery. Napoleon gave orders for the attack of this redoubt, as he well knew its immense importance in the coming encounter. The task of taking it was assigned to the fiery Murat; and after a frightful and most sanguinary struggle it was captured. The Russians returning to the attack, cut down the troops who had entered it; and the redoubt was three times taken and retaken in the course of the evening; but at night it remained in the hands of the French.

The next day was occupied in preparations; and, by a kind of mutual consent, it had been allowed to pass by without even the discharge of a musket. Over each army reigned a portentous calm, like that which precedes great tempests. The French passed the day in repose, and indulged in cheerful discourse. Sustained by the love of military glory, they felt no doubt but that they were going to obtain a great victory, and to enter Moscow with their invincible leader. Feelings of a far different kind prevailed in the Russian camp. Gloomy, exasperated, resolved to fight to the death, having no hope but in the assistance of heaven and the saints, the troops were on their knees in the midst of a thousand flambeaux, before a miraculous image of the Madonna of Smolensk—saved, it was said, on the wings of angels from the conflagration of that unfortunate city, and now carried in procession by the Greek priests through the bivouacs of the camp of Borodino. At the same time, General Kutusoff—who, so far from believing in the miraculous image, scarcely believed in the existence of the Deity—accompanied the procession with his head uncovered, his eyes fixed on the ground, and surrounded by his staff. He afterwards issued a proclamation to the soldiers, appealing to their fanaticism, and abusing the French emperor, whom he called a reptile, and an arch-rebel against all laws, both human and divine.

Napoleon passed the night in a state of sleepless anxiety, for he entertained apprehensions that his weak and famished soldiers might be physically unequal to sustain the shock of encounter with their furious enemies. He contemplated a fearful struggle; and observed, that a great day was at hand, and that the battle would be a terrible one. During the whole night he suffered much from illness. Fatigue, care, and anxious expectation, had worn him out. The chilliness of the atmosphere had struck to him; while fever, a dry cough, and excessive thirst, distressed him. He also laboured under an attack of an old and painful disorder, of a kind very depressing to the spirits. At five in the morning he mounted his horse, and advancing towards the group of officers who waited his approach, took a survey of the Russian position.

The French army then with the emperor consisted of 133,000 men, who brought into the field 590 pieces of cannon. The Russian force was estimated at 132,000 men, assisted by 640 pieces of artillery. Thus the forces on each side were nearly equal; for although the French were superior in discipline to the Russians, they were in a far inferior physical condition. At six in the morning the battle commenced by the advance of the French columns, under Davoust, against the Russian left wing. They were received with so severe a fire, that

several of the French generals were killed, and others wounded—a circumstance which created some hesitation in their ranks. They shortly rallied; and Kutusoff, seeing that the left wing was in danger of giving way before them, ordered up considerable reinforcements to its support.

Marshal Ney then received orders to support the left of Davoust, by attacking the redans in that part of the enemy's line. Ney's three divisions advanced to the charge, preceded by 70 pieces of cannon, and endeavoured to take the heights of Semenowskoi, which became the principal object of contention. After four hours passed in sanguinary fighting, in which success had favoured first one side and then the other, Ney sent to the emperor and desired assistance. Napoleon, perceiving that the Russians still retained the heights, resolved on a grand attack. He therefore sent the young guard, together with Murat and a large body of his cavalry, to the support of Davoust and Ney; while 400 pieces of cannon were brought to bear upon the redoubts. Under cover of a tremendous fire from the latter, immense columns of infantry and cavalry advanced to the assault. A terrible carnage took place, and continued for about an hour, when the Russians were compelled to retire from the contested heights; which, however, they did in good order.

During this time an obstinate conflict was carried on in the centre, where the Russians were driven from the village of Borodino; but General Barclay de Tolly and Prince Bagration succeeded in retaking the great redoubt, which, on the evening of the 5th, had fallen into the hands of the French. Yet, after a murderous struggle, it was again recaptured by the latter. During the contest for this position, many distinguished French officers perished. As Murat was speaking to General Galichet, a bullet whistled between them. "Not a very safe position this," said the fearless king, with a smile. "But we will remain in it, nevertheless," was the intrepid reply. At the same moment the Russian cuirassiers poured down *en masse*, and the French division had scarcely time to form into two squares, connected by a line of artillery. Murat took the command of one of them, and Galichet of the other; and during a quarter of an hour they received, with the most imperturbable coolness, the furious charges of the Russian cavalry.

The Russian soldiers who had been charged with the defence of the redoubt, desperately refused quarter at the hands of their assailants, and nearly all perished in the assault. Trusting to profit by this success, General Grouchy led his cavalry against the chasseurs of the Russian guard, who drove them back with severe loss. This encouraged General Kutusoff to make a forward movement, with the hope of re-occupying the ground on which his army had stood, in the centre, at the beginning of the action. Large bodies of Russian infantry and cavalry advanced on this errand under a fearful fire, which the French directed upon them from the batteries they had erected on the captured heights. By several gallant charges, the Russians even recaptured some of the redoubts from which they had been driven; but they were speedily retaken; and Kutusoff, wearied of exposing his troops to a profitless butchery, at length recalled them.

Still this terrible battle lasted until night, by which time the Russians were everywhere driven from their original position, but were ranged in unbroken ranks in another to the rear of it. During the day, Napoleon showed an irresolution, which many of his officers believed deprived him of the advantages of a decided victory. Several portions of the French reserve had been brought into action; but the imperial guard, amounting to 20,000 men, remained in the rear. The position of the Russians was such, that it was presumed a final shock, directed against them obliquely, might have thrown them into disorder. But the French were exhausted by the fatigue and carnage of the day: the men could scarcely handle their arms, or the cavalry remain upon their horses; even the sabres were bent and blunted by repeated strokes. Napoleon saw that the contest could not be carried on with men so unlike their usual selves; and he would not endanger his guard. "At a distance of 800 leagues from France," said he, "it would scarcely be wise to risk our last remaining reserve." The French fell back to the ground they had occupied before the battle, and the sun sunk upon this terrible scene of slaughter.

This fearful 7th of September is now memorable as the date of the most gigantic and sanguinary battle recorded in the annals of modern history. The loss on each side was frightful. Of the Russians, 15,000 were killed, and 30,000 wounded: amongst the former was the brave soldier, Prince



Bagration; while the latter included thirty generals of distinction. Very few were taken prisoners; and it was by the number of these that the French had been accustomed to judge of the extent of a victory. They knew that a multitude of dead was rather a proof of the courage of the enemy, than an evidence of decided success. The loss of the French can scarcely be regarded as inferior to that of the foe whom they claimed to have beaten. No less than forty-three French generals were killed or wounded; while the total loss was 12,000 in killed and 38,000 wounded! An awful result; the more so as the battle was not a decisive one. The trophies of victory were also nearly equal; the French took thirteen pieces of cannon from their enemies, who also captured ten from them.

Murat exclaimed, "That in this great day he had not recognised the genius of Napoleon!" Such was the common feeling among the French generals; and at night there were no manifestations of joy or of enthusiasm. Throughout the day the emperor had exhibited an unaccustomed apathy, and remained so far from the theatre of action, as to make the communication of his orders tardy, and correct observation difficult, if not impossible. Illness, doubtless, had some share in producing this result; but Napoleon, knowing by painful experience the obstinate valour of the enemy, anticipated another great battle before the walls of Moscow, and would not, therefore, expose his troops to further loss in this. "It was my duty," said he, "to think of the general result of the campaign; and it was for that I spared my reserves."

General Kutusoff did not, however, venture another battle for the sake of saving Moscow. On the day after the battle, the Russians retired in good order to within half a league of Moscow, and there held a council of war. Some of the Russian generals were for risking another conflict for the sake of saving the capital, the loss of which, they contended, would spread consternation throughout the empire. Kutusoff and Barclay urged that the retreat should be continued. The former observed—"Notwithstanding the valour which my army displayed at Borodino, I was obliged to yield to numbers, and commence my retreat. Since then the enemy has received numerous reinforcements; and at present I have fewer chances of success than I had then. Our dangers are increased by the proximity of Moscow, where I should lose half my army, if it was necessary, after a reverse, to traverse the capital. On the other hand, if we retire without combating, we must abandon it; a cruel sacrifice, it is true, but not one which draws after it the destruction of the empire. On the contrary, the enemy, far removed from his resources, possessing as his only communication the road from Smolensk to Moscow; on the eve of experiencing reverses on the Dwina by the arrival of the armies of Moldavia and Finland, will find himself in the most critical position. The army is in a bad position, and is inferior in numbers to the enemy. Such were the losses which it sustained at Borodino, that entire brigades are now commanded by field-officers, and regiments by captains; consequently, the same precision as heretofore in its movements is scarcely to be expected. Everything, therefore, conspires to prove that we should be beat if we fought a battle. The safety of the country depends on the preservation of the army; a victory would not rid us of the enemy; while a disaster so near Moscow would occasion its entire destruction." This reasoning prevailed, and on the 14th of September the Russian army continued its retreat, mournfully defiling through the streets of "the sacred city."

It has been conjectured that the Russian general might have arrived at a different conclusion, had he known the exhausted and impoverished condition of the French, deficient alike both in provisions and in ammunition. On the morning of the 14th, the advanced guard of the French army came in sight of the domes and towers of Moscow. Filled with hope, they shouted with delight at the prospect of a termination of the sufferings they had undergone. The sounds reached the ears of the emperor, who, hastening forward, exclaimed, "Behold at last that famous city! It was full time."

Napoleon was, however, doomed to experience a bitter disappointment. Moscow was found to be deserted. Murat and his cavalry preceded the French army into the city, as yet untouched, but inanimate. "Struck with profound astonishment," observes Ségur, "at the sight of this complete solitude, they replied to the taciturnity of this modern Thebes by a silence equally solemn. These warriors listened, with a secret shuddering, to the steps of their

horses resounding alone amid these deserted palaces. They were astonished to hear nothing but themselves amid such numerous habitations." On learning the news, the emperor was incredulous, and he waited in expectation of receiving a deputation from the magistrates or chief nobles of the city. At length he became convinced of the truth; and on the 15th of September he entered the city, and at first took up his residence in a suburban palace. The silence that reigned throughout the city was painful to the French troops, who, however, took possession of the houses, which they found full of excellent provisions. The superior officers were received at the gates of palaces by servants in livery, eager to offer a brilliant hospitality. The owners of these mansions, unaware of the fate which awaited the city, had taken great pains to procure protectors for their rich dwellings, by receiving French officers into them. The latter, after the privations they had so recently experienced, welcomed with pleasure the luxury, fraught with all those signs of sensuousness which form so strange but frequent a contrast with ardent, popular devotion, and savage military energy.

The emperor Alexander behaved with a dignified patriotism on this occasion. After the entrance of the enemy into the capital, the czar issued an address to the empire, which concluded with these spirited words: "Let there be no pusillanimous depression; let us swear to redouble our courage and perseverance. The enemy has entered deserted Moscow as into a tomb, without the means either of ruling or subsistence. He invaded Russia at the head of 300,000 men; half have perished from the sword, famine, or desertion; the other half are shut up in the capital, bereft of everything. He is in the centre of Russia, and not a Russian has yielded to his power. Meanwhile our forces increase, and surround him. He is in the midst of a warlike people, whose armies envelop him on every side: soon, to escape from famine, he will be compelled to cut his way through our brave battalions. Shall we, then, yield, when Europe is in admiration at our exertions? Let us show ourselves worthy of giving her an example, and bless the hand which has chosen us to be the first of nations in the cause of freedom.* In the present miserable state of the human race, what glory awaits the nation which, after having patiently endured all the evils of war, shall succeed, by the force of courage and virtue, not only in reconquering its own rights, but in extending the blessings of freedom to other states; and even to those who have been made the unwilling instruments of attempting its subjugation!"

CHAPTER V.

CONFLAGRATION OF MOSCOW; NARROW ESCAPE OF NAPOLEON FROM THE KREMLIN; HE REMAINS AT MOSCOW WITH THE EXPECTATION OF RECEIVING PROPOSALS OF PEACE FROM ALEXANDER; TALKS OF MARCHING ON TO ST. PETERSBURG; ALEXANDER REFUSES ALL NEGOTIATION; NAPOLEON ABANDONS MOSCOW; BATTLES BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND RUSSIANS; RETREAT OF THE FRENCH BEFORE THE ADVANCING ENEMY; THE WINTER SETS IN SUDDENLY; DREADFUL SUFFERINGS OF THE FRENCH; THEIR DEFEAT AT KRASNOI; FEARFUL PASSAGE OF THE BEREZINA; NAPOLEON ABANDONS THE ARMY AND RETURNS TO PARIS; THE REMAINS OF THE GRAND ARMY REACH THE PRUSSIAN TERRITORY, AND ARE TREATED WITH COMPASSION.

THE French army at Moscow anticipated either a speedy peace, as a result of its occupation of the capital of the enemy, or good winter cantonments in case the war should be prolonged. These hopes were doomed to be extinguished beneath a tragic accumulation of disappointment and distress.

On the very day that the French entered the city, a fire broke out in a building containing vast quantities of spirits; and before

* This is unfamiliar language when uttered by a Russian czar; but Alexander really meant the freedom of princes, not the freedom of peoples. Napoleon was the oppressor of monarchs; and the latter rising against him, uttered gracious language to the subjects on whose resources and energies they so depended, and whom it was, therefore, necessary to conciliate.





it was effectually extinguished, another conflagration burst forth in a collection of buildings called the Bazaar, situated at no great distance from the Kremlin. The soldiers were unable to prevent the destruction of the Bazaar; but although a violent wind prevailed, the fire did not extend further. During the night, the Exchange was discovered to be in flames, which the wind carried to many neighbouring buildings. It is said, that rockets were also seen in the air, and some wretches seized in the act of spreading the conflagration. Napoleon ordered that military commissions should be formed in each quarter of the city, for the purpose of trying and executing all incendiaries, and that all the available troops should be employed in extinguishing the flames. The following day the emperor hastened to the spot; and Marshal Mortier, whom he had appointed governor of the city, pointed out to him some houses closely shut up, and uninjured from without, yet from which a black smoke was already issuing. Napoleon left the spot in a pensive humour, and proceeded to the vast palace of the Kremlin, to which he now removed his head-quarters.

On the 16th, the emperor wrote a letter containing proposals of peace to Alexander, and dispatched it by a Russian officer who was found in the great hospital. It remained unanswered. Alexander had taken his course, and resolved to defeat the enemy by a kind of passive resistance. This night, also, fires raged in different parts of Moscow, and the city appeared to be in flames in every direction. Napoleon was greatly agitated. He rose frequently, paced to and fro, and again sat down abruptly. Then hastening to the window, he watched the progress of the conflagration, at the same time uttering such exclamations as, "What a tremendous spectacle!—It is their own work!—So many palaces!—What extraordinary resolution!—What men!—These are indeed Scythians!"

Though the fire was still a considerable distance from the emperor, as the river Moskwa and an extensive vacant space was between them, yet the panes of the windows against which he leaned, already felt hot to the touch. At this moment, it was reported that the Kremlin was undermined, and some of the attendants of the emperor were beside themselves with fear; but he received the information with a smile of incredulity. The atmosphere, at length, became oppressive from the thick smoke which filled it; and several of his generals, including even the fiery and fearless Murat, implored him to remove from this scene of danger. It was not until a shout arose that the Kremlin was on fire, that Napoleon yielded to their entreaties. The tower of the arsenal was in flames, and a Russian soldier of the police had been found in it. The incendiary was interrogated in the presence of the emperor, and afterwards dispatched by the enraged grenadiers with their bayonets.

Napoleon then yielded to necessity, and abandoned the Kremlin, though not without great danger of perishing in the flames by which that vast collection of buildings was besieged in every direction. By a narrow passage the emperor, his officers, and his guards made their escape. General Ségur, who was of the party, thus narrates the incident:—"But what had they gained by this movement? They had approached nearer to the fire, and could neither retreat nor remain where they were; and how were they to advance? how force a passage through the billows of this sea of flame? Those who had traversed the city, stunned by the tempest and blinded by the ashes, could not find their way, since the streets themselves were no longer distinguishable amidst smoke and ruins.

"There was no time to be lost. The roaring of the flames around us became every moment more violent. A single, narrow, winding street, completely on fire, appeared to be rather the entrance than the outlet to this hell. The emperor rushed on foot, and without hesitation, into this narrow passage. He advanced amid the crackling of the flames, the crash of floors, the fall of burning timbers, and of the red-hot iron roofs which tumbled around him. These ruins impeded his progress. The flames, which, with impetuous roar, consumed the edifices between which we were proceeding, spreading beyond the walls, were blown out by the wind, and formed an arch over our heads. We walked on a ground of fire, beneath a fiery sky, and between two walls of fire. The intense heat burned our eyes, which we were nevertheless obliged to keep open and fixed on the danger. A consuming atmosphere, glowing ashes, detached flames, parched our throats, rendering our respiration short and dry; and we were already almost suffocated by the smoke. Our hands were burnt, either in endeavouring to protect

our faces from the insupportable heat, or in brushing off the sparks which every moment covered and penetrated our garments.

"In this inexpressible distress, and when a rapid advance seemed to be our only means of safety, our guide stopped in uncertainty and agitation. Here would probably have terminated our adventurous career, had not some pillagers of the first corps, recognising the emperor amidst the whirling flames, ran up and guided him towards the smoking ruins of a quarter which had been reduced to ashes in the morning."

From this spot Napoleon arrived at Petrowsky, where he passed the night in ruminating on the terrible state of danger to which his troops were exposed. The next morning (the 17th) he cast his first looks towards Moscow, in the hope that the conflagration had subsided. The whole city appeared like a vast furnace, from which columns of fire rose in whirling eddies to the sky. For some time he observed a painful silence, and then exclaimed—"This forebodes great misfortunes to us!" Moscow had been the aim of all his hopes, and now it was no more. Napoleon hesitated, and was unable to decide what course was the best to pursue. To preserve appearances he talked of marching on to St. Petersburg; but he well knew that his troops were destitute of all the requisites for so extensive an excursion.

The fire ceased on the 20th of September. About two-thirds of the city had been consumed; but the Kremlin had escaped the flames, and the emperor resolved on returning to it. "The camps which he traversed on his way thither presented an extraordinary sight. In the fields, amidst thick and cold mud, large fires were kept up with mahogany furniture, windows, and gilded doors. Around these fires, on a litter of damp straw, imperfectly sheltered by a few boards, were seen the soldiers and their officers, splashed all over with mud, and blackened with smoke, seated in arm-chairs, or reclined on silken couches. At their feet were spread or heaped, Cashmere shawls, the rarest furs of Siberia, the gold stuffs of Persia, and silver dishes, off which they had nothing to eat but a black dough, baked in the ashes, and half-broiled and bloody horseflesh. Singular assemblage of abundance and want, of riches and filth, of luxury and wretchedness! Between the camp and the city were met troops of soldiers dragging along their booty, or driving before them, like beasts of burden, Muscovites bending under the weight of the pillage of their capital; for the fire brought to view nearly 20,000 inhabitants, previously unobserved in that immense city. Some of these Muscovites, of both sexes, were well dressed; they were tradespeople. They came with the wreck of their property to seek refuge at our fires. They lived pell-mell with our soldiers, protected by some, and tolerated, or rather scarcely remarked, by others.*

What remained of Moscow was abandoned to pillage; for recent events had so disorganised the French soldiers, that it was found impossible to restrain them. They were frequently seen seated on bales of merchandise, or heaps of sugar and coffee; amidst wines and the most exquisite liqueurs, which they were offering in exchange for a morsel of bread. Such was the state of things when the emperor reentered Moscow and returned to the Kremlin. He issued strict orders with the object of restoring order, but he was unable to effectually accomplish so desirable a result. The destruction of Moscow was publicly attributed, by the Russian authorities, to the French, and used as a fresh means of exciting hatred against them. It is, however, and without doubt correctly, attributed to Count Rostopchin, the governor of the city. He was denounced in Napoleon's bulletins as having kindled the conflagration by means of 300 incendiaries, who set fire to the city in as many places simultaneously. Rostopchin never acknowledged the act; and in the year 1823, published a pamphlet on the subject, altogether denying that he was the author of it; but without altering the decided conviction of Europe upon the subject. General Buturlin, the Russian historian of the campaign, in a subsequent edition of his work, remarks—"It is ungenerous to disbelieve a man who would thus voluntarily despoil himself of the glory of a civic crown; but, on the other hand, information the most positive leaves no room in the author's mind to doubt that the fire of Moscow was prepared and executed by the Russian authorities;" *i.e.*, by the governor of the city.

Several days passed on, and Napoleon waited in expectation of proposals of peace and submission from Alexander. The latter did not make any reply to the letter sent to him; and the French emperor at length

* General Count Ségur

became exasperated. On the 3rd of October, he summoned his marshals, and proposed to them to burn the remainder of Moscow, and then to march on to St. Petersburg; but their expostulations induced him to forego so desperate an enterprise. It is probable that he did not himself seriously contemplate it; for he sent his aide-de-camp, Count Lauriston, to the Russian camp, to propose an armistice and obtain a safe-conduct to St. Petersburg. "I want peace," said the emperor to the count; "I must have peace; I absolutely will have peace; only save my honour!"

General Kutusoff informed Lauriston, that to grant him a safe-conduct to St. Petersburg exceeded his powers; but he sent the letter from Napoleon to Alexander, and offered an armistice until the return of the messenger. During the continuance of the truce, some of the Cossack chiefs asked the French officers, "If they had not, in their own country, corn enough, air enough, graves enough; in short, room enough to live and die? Why, then, did they come so far from home to throw away their lives, and to fatten a foreign soil with their blood?" The armistice was badly observed by the Russians; and Kutusoff's only object in granting it was to gain time till the winter set in, and the retreat of the French became impossible, or utterly ruinous. Some weeks elapsed before an answer came from the emperor Alexander. It was addressed to Kutusoff, and contained an absolute command to "admit of no negotiation whatever, or relation tending toward peace with the enemy."

The weather had been remarkably fine; but, on the 13th of October, a fall of snow gave the first indication of winter. On the 17th the Russians assumed offensive operations. The advanced guard of the French army—consisting of 30,000 men, commanded by Murat, and posted in the neighbourhood of Winkoroo—was attacked by a Russian force under General Benningsen. The French were taken by surprise, and sustained a defeat. Murat was wounded; two generals killed; besides the loss of three or four thousand men. They also lost thirty-eight pieces of cannon, and all their ammunition and baggage-waggons. In fact, it was with great difficulty that they were able to effect their retreat, which they did in much disorder. This incident aroused Napoleon from his apathy, and he resolved on the abandonment of Moscow. "Let us march upon Kaluga," said he, "and woe be to those whom I meet with by the way!"

The emperor commenced his march from Moscow on the 19th of October, at the head of more than 100,000 soldiers: only 12,000 sick were left behind; for the rest, at Moscow, had promoted the recovery of the remainder. Yet Napoleon perceived with pain that his cavalry and artillery might be said rather to crawl than to march. The army was followed by a train of carriages and vehicles of every kind, loaded with trophies and the plunder which the soldiers had accumulated. Some Russian girls also voluntarily accompanied their seducers; and many of the peasants, who had been taken prisoners, were compelled to carry or drive the booty of their captors. Some of the host of camp-followers were even wheeling along barrows filled with whatever they could remove, unconscious, in their greediness, that they must necessarily abandon them in the course of the march.

General Kutusoff, on hearing of the retreat of the French from Moscow, marched towards Malo-Jaroslawitz, with the hope of being able to intercept their passage. On the 24th, a battle took place at this town, between the advanced guards of the two armies. Each side desired to gain possession of the town, which had been set on fire, and was, while burning, taken and retaken no less than seven times. The French at length remained in possession of it; but their victory was purchased with the loss of 3,000 men in killed and wounded. That of the Russians amounted to about 8,000. During the action, Kutusoff had established himself in such a position as to preclude the possibility of a farther advance towards Kaluga without a general battle.

Such was the strength of the Russian position, that Marshal Bessières, who had been sent by the emperor to reconnoitre, pronounced it to be unassailable. No alternative, therefore, remained but to fall back on the road to Smolensk—a movement which so much resembled retreat in the face of an enemy, that the contemplation of it plunged Napoleon into a state of irritable melancholy. On the morning of the 25th, he sat up himself to examine the ground, and narrowly escaped being taken prisoner by a body of Cossacks. The emperor agreed with Bessières, that an attempt to force the Russian position would be too hazardous; and, on his return, he held a council as to the course to be pursued. Murat recommended an attack; and said, that with the remnant of

his cavalry, and that of the guard, he would reopen the road to Kaluga at the point of the sword. Bessières urged, that a retreat had become unavoidably necessary. Napoleon sadly and unwillingly acquiesced. "Hardihood has had its day," said he; "we have already done too much for glory; nothing remains to be thought of but the safety of the army." Ségur relates, that this decision cost the emperor so much pain, that, in the inward struggle which it occasioned, he lost the use of his senses.

Orders were issued for the retreat of the army to Smolensk, by Borowsk and Mojaisk; and, at dawn of the 26th of October, Napoleon, for the first time in his life, retired in the open field from his enemies. At the same time Kutusoff, dismayed by the first movement of the French, and fearing to risk a battle, abandoned Kaluga. These well-matched combatants retired from each other out of mutual awe. Before the entire evacuation of Moscow by the French, Napoleon ordered the Kremlin to be blown up. General Mortier, to whom this task was committed, caused barrels of gunpowder to be placed in all the halls of the palace of the czars, and 183,000 pounds under the vaults which supported them. The explosion was tremendous, and much of that mighty pile of buildings was shattered into ruinous heaps.

Dejection prevailed throughout the French army. After some days' marching they came in sight of a devastated plain, on which 30,000 half-devoured corpses, and a number of skeletons, were mingled with fragments of helmets and cuirasses, broken drums, gun-stocks, tatters of uniforms, and blood-stained standards. A sense of horror ran through the spectators as they murmured, "It is the field of the great battle!" It was, indeed, the terrible plain of Borodino; and there, furrowed by cannon-balls, stood the great redoubt, looking like an extinguished and destroyed volcano. The troops hurried on, merely turning their faces to take a last melancholy look at the hideous golgotha, where so many of their companions had been so uselessly sacrificed. Napoleon, harassed by the number of unnecessary persons who accompanied his retreating troops, caused 2,000 Russian prisoners to be marched on before, and then massacred. His troops were astonished; and some of his generals murmured at this atrocity; the rest of the unfortunates were abandoned, and left to perish. This barbarity resulted from the indifference exhibited by the Russian authorities for the lives of their soldiers, in rejecting all proposals of an exchange of prisoners.

General Kutusoff, on being informed of the retreat of the enemy, moved in pursuit on a line parallel to the road they occupied. The French were at first allowed to retire without molestation; and Napoleon trusted that he had got so far in advance of Kutusoff, as to secure an uninterrupted retreat. By the 2nd of November, the emperor had reached Wiazma. But the rear-guard of the French, under Davoust, on approaching that town on the 3rd, found the road occupied by the advanced guard of the Russians, under General Milaradowitch;* while Count Platoff and a large body of Cossacks pressed upon their rear. A furious engagement took place, and lasted nearly the whole day. It terminated with the retreat of the French in disorder, after a loss of 6,000 men; 2,000 of whom were made prisoners. The baggage of the French, and several pieces of artillery, also fell into the hands of the enemy.

The weather, though cold at night, had been generally very favourable by day. On the 6th of November, the terrible Russian winter set in. The army marched through semi-darkness, occasioned by cold and penetrating fog. Then came a snow-storm, so heavy that it seemed as if the very sky was falling; and a tempest of wind, which howled through the forests and over the plains with resistless fury. The snow drifted into every hollow and ditch; and the deceitful surface, yielding to the tread of the straggling soldiers, engulphed those who fell; and, from their debility, generally soon found a winding-sheet and a grave in this snowy wilderness. "Those who followed, turned aside; but the storm driving into their faces the snow that was descending from the sky and that which it raised from the ground, seemed bent on opposing their progress. It penetrated through their garments, and soddened their torn shoes and boots. Their wet clothes froze upon their bodies; an icy envelope encased them, and stiffened all their limbs. A keen and violent wind interrupted respiration; it seized their breath at the moment when they exhaled it, and converted it into icicles, which hung from their beards all round their mouths. The unfortunate creatures still

* Milaradowitch, from his impetuosity and his love of fighting, was denominated by the French, the Russian Murat.

crawled on, shivering, till the snow, gathering like balls under their feet, or the fragment of some broken article, a branch of a tree, or the body of one of their comrades, caused them to stumble and to fall. There they groaned in vain; the snow soon covered them; slight hillocks marked the spot where they lay: such was their only grave! The road was studded with these undulations, like a cemetery. The most intrepid and the most indifferent were affected; they passed on quickly with averted looks. But before them, around them, there was nothing but snow. This immense and dreary uniformity extended further than the eye could reach; the imagination was astounded; it was like a vast winding-sheet, which nature had thrown over the army. The only objects not enveloped by it were some gloomy pines—trees of the tombs, with their funereal verdure, the motionless aspect of their gigantic, black trunks, and their dismal look, which completed the doleful appearance of a general mourning, and of an army dying amidst a nature already dead."*

Many of the soldiers dropped, or threw away their arms; while the fingers of others were frozen to the muskets they still held. Numbers left their ranks and wandered over the country in hope of finding shelter for the coming night; but they either fell into the hands of the Cossacks or were massacred by the peasantry, who, in some cases, stript them naked, and left them to expire in the snow. The night, of sixteen hours' duration, was passed by the army in misery which baffles description. The pine-branches, laden with frost, could scarcely be kindled; and the fires, when lighted, were not unfrequently extinguished by the snow. The repasts of the soldiers consisted of the half-cooked flesh of lean horses, killed in consequence of exhaustion, and a few spoonfuls of rye-flour mixed with water. The next morning, the bivouacs were marked by circular ranges of soldiers lying dead on the frozen ground, while around lay the bodies of several thousand horses. The effect of these horrors on the minds of the army was terrible; a gloomy despondency fell on the men, and neglect of discipline spread rapidly. A dreadful selfishness entered into almost every bosom, and the men snatched the cloaks from their fallen comrades, to warm their own shivering limbs. Those who first got round the fires at night fiercely repelled their less fortunate comrades, who strove to share in the warmth; and saw them sink down and die with indifference. Nearly every one seemed engrossed in providing for his own safety; and in this general extinction of sympathy, the fate of others remained unheeded. Some brave and firm men there were, however, who still bore up with heroic endurance, and strove to preserve their customary serenity amidst the fearful scenes which surrounded them.

The horrors of famine were soon added to the sufferings of the retreating French. Horseflesh became the sole means of subsistence to the great body of the troops; and when one of these wretched creatures fell by the wayside, a group of starving men seized upon it and shared its remains amongst them. By degrees the army assumed the appearance of a hideous mass of stragglers, arrayed in fur cloaks or finery found at Moscow, or stript from the dead who had perished by the way. As to the emperor, he, throughout the retreat, remained grave, silent, and resigned, concealing his mental suffering, and presenting the appearance of a great mind struggling with adversity. At this period it was that he received intelligence of General Malet's conspiracy against him at Paris, and his whole thoughts were bent on reaching the French capital.

The army arrived at Smolensk between the 9th and the 13th of November, straggling into the town in a wretched manner. Such was the rush for food, that it required the most strenuous efforts of the troops who had been left there, to prevent the new-comers from murdering one another at the doors of the magazines. Napoleon had made great exertions to provide supplies of provisions along his line of retreat; but a series of calamities had prevented his efforts from being adequate to the immense demand upon them. On the 14th, the emperor and the French army quitted Smolensk, marching in gloomy silence. Napoleon had hastened his departure, in consequence of the reverses experienced by detachments of the French army, under Murat and Marshal St. Cyr, in engagements with the Russians. At the same time, the Russian general, Kutusoff, with the object of arresting the further retreat of the French, and compelling them to surrender, directed his march upon the village of Krasnoi. On the 16th, 17th, and 18th, engagements took place on this spot and in the neighbourhood. The Russians were, in all, both the assailants and

* Ségur.

the victors. The result of these battles was a loss to the French of 10,000 men killed or drowned, and 26,000 taken prisoners; amongst whom were 300 officers; 116 pieces of cannon were also captured. This terrible blow was inflicted by the Russians with the loss of only 2,000 men to themselves. Napoleon and a part of his army escaped; but the troops who followed him were reduced to 10,000 weakened combatants, and twice that number of stragglers. But for the caution of the Russian commander, it is probable that the French army might have been utterly annihilated.

The latter continued their dismal retreat, but in a state of terrible disorganisation. Napoleon, surrounded by a body of officers, who still preserved some appearance of regularity, marched on foot, with a birch staff in his hand, to avoid falling on the ice-bound roads. He would, doubtless, have perished amidst the appalling confusion by which he was surrounded, but for the incessant devotion of the officers near his person. His rear divisions had to sustain repeated attacks from the Russians, especially from the flying bodies of Cossacks; but the frost and the snow, and the fierce blasts of night which swept over those vast open plains, killed more than either sword or spear, bullets or bayonets. The wretched soldiers perished like rotten sheep; and when Napoleon arrived at Oresa, in Lithuania, he had only 12,000 men with arms in their hands, and his 40,000 horses had dwindled down to 3,000 starved and miserable animals. He was affected by the painful condition of his troops. "These poor soldiers rend my heart," said he; "I cannot, however, give them relief."

In this state the emperor and his skeleton army reached the banks of the Berezina, where he was joined by a corps of reserve of nearly 50,000 men, under Marshals Victor and Oudinot, who had been left behind in his advance upon Moscow. This seasonable relief saved Napoleon from destruction, and he once more found himself at the head of a tolerably numerous force. But fortune no longer smiled upon him with any constancy, and these reinforcements were soon terribly thinned by the enemy. On reaching Borrisow, a town on the banks of the Berezina, the French found every passage occupied by the Russians, whose main army, under Kutusoff, was also approaching. The brave Marshal Ney observed to his brother-officers—"Our situation is unparalleled. If Napoleon extricate himself to day, he must have the devil in him." Murat proposed to the emperor to save himself and cross the river at some leagues' distance; adding, that he had some Poles who would answer for his safety, and conduct him to Wilna. To this proposal Napoleon would not listen; and though fully aware of his dangerous position, he resolved to make an effort to delude the enemy. After gazing upon the thickening clouds of Russians who covered the opposite bank of the river and filled the neighbouring woods and marshes, he gave orders to make a false attack further down the stream.

This stratagem succeeded. The Russians filed off in pursuit, and their columns were lost in the woods. Napoleon instantly ordered bridges to be constructed, and defended with cannon. His orders were obeyed; but the Russians, discovering their mistake, speedily returned and opened a destructive cannonade, which swept the French lines, and did terrible execution upon them. Galled by this murderous fire, the troops, in their eagerness to gain the opposite shore, lost all consideration for the condition of their comrades. The feeble and the wounded were overthrown, and ruthlessly trampled to death. There had been time only to erect two narrow bridges across the river; the widest of which would scarcely admit of the passage of a gun-carriage. This frail structure, crowded to excess with fugitives pushing madly forward to escape from the fire of the Russian artillery, and heavily laden with ordnance and ammunition-waggons, at length gave way, and sank with a tremendous crash. The air was rent with the hideous yells of those crushed by the falling cannon, with the piercing shrieks of women, and the dismal groans of the wounded, as they were precipitated into the half-frozen current, where they met an untimely grave. So loud were the distracted cries of these miserable victims, that the thunder of the artillery was almost drowned by their frantic importunity for that help which it was impossible for them to obtain. The remaining bridge presented a scene of horror scarcely less terrible. In the struggle to obtain a footing on this, now the only path, thousands were thrust into the stream, as well as mowed down by the incessant showers of grapeshot directed against them by the Russians. Amidst all this carnage, the divisions of Marshals Ney and Victor, stationed to protect the passage of the troops, fought bravely against a much superior force, and steadily maintained their ground until late in the evening. Then, after having suffered a severe loss, they made good their retreat over the bridge, and set it on fire in order to cut off pursuit. The measure was, doubtless, a necessary one, but it involved the abandonment of a great number of wounded soldiers and camp attendants, who were left to their fate; together with a quantity of baggage and cannon. This fatal passage had cost Napoleon about one-half of his reinforced army. According to the Russian accounts, when the river was cleared from the ice in the following spring, not less than 36,000 dead bodies were taken from its bed.

Napoleon and the skeleton of the "grand army," contrived to evade their Russian pursuers. Continually harassed by bodies of Cossacks, who hung on his rear and hovered on both his flanks, the emperor ran imminent hazard of capture. On the 3rd of December he arrived at Malodezno, from whence he issued the famous twenty-ninth bulletin, which agitated or astounded the whole of Europe. The emperor felt that fiction was no longer available, and he told the whole truth in all its sternness; frankly confessing that, except the guards, he had no longer an army. On the 5th he arrived at Smorgoni, where he took leave of his generals, left the command of the army, such as it was, to Murat, and set off in a sledge to Paris, accompanied by Marshal Caulaincourt, whose name he assumed during the journey. After pausing at Warsaw and at Dresden, he reached the palace of the Tuileries on the night of the 18th of December. Notwithstanding the fearful calamities of which his ambition had been the cause, he was received by the people with enthusiasm. The disastrous results of the campaign, and the sacrifice of so many thousand Frenchmen, seemed forgotten in the reflection that the emperor was safe.

The army left under the command of Murat after the flight of Napoleon, mustered, including the garrison of Wilna and the division by which it was joined after the passage of the Berezina, about 80,000 men. The sufferings endured by these wretched creatures were of the most harrowing description. They perished by thousands, from want and the extreme severity of the weather. So destitute was their condition, that at Wilna, when rations were distributed from the magazines there, veteran soldiers were seen to shed tears of joy at the sight of a loaf of bread. After eagerly devouring it, many fell asleep, and died during their slumbers, from the effects of cold.

The French were attacked at Wilna, and, after a vain attempt at defence, compelled to continue their retreat, leaving in the hospitals there about 17,000 dead and dying men. The miserable remains of the French army, once more dragging their weary limbs along the interminable roads, were literally hunted by Platoff and his Cossacks, whose spears dispatched all poor wretches who lagged behind from exhaustion. Many of the unhappy soldiers lost their senses, from the effect of the horrors of their situation. At length the Russians gave up the pursuit, and the ghastly fragments of the "grand army" entered the Prussian territory, and took up their quarters at Königsberg, where they were received with feelings of compassion by the inhabitants. The loss of the French and their auxiliaries in this awful campaign, is estimated by Boutourlin at 125,000 killed, 132,000 dead of fatigue, hunger, disease, and cold, and 193,000 prisoners, including 3,000 officers and 48 generals.* They also left behind 900 pieces of cannon, and 25,000 waggons. The Russians state their own loss to have amounted to 230,000 men; comprising 130,000 soldiers killed in battle, and 100,000 persons who perished in the woods, in consequence of the burning of Moscow and other places. This is supposed to be below the truth. Remarkable as it may appear, the Russians suffered more from the cold than the French: amongst the ranks of the latter, the survivors were chiefly Italians, or Frenchmen of the provinces to the south of the Loire.

The Austrian and Prussian contingents had rendered but little assistance to Napoleon; and, during the retreat, they took the first opportunity to desert him. The Prussian general York, whose duty it was to have covered the retreat of the French army, on being closely pressed by his pursuers, suddenly made a truce with his Russian opponent, General Diebitsch; and a few days afterwards they concluded the convention of

* In all, 450,000 men. Alison estimates the loss of the French at 550,000 men: he says, that out of the 600,000 French soldiers who entered Russia, not more than 32,000 escaped from it. The remainder of the survivors, amounting, in all, to 85,000 men, were Austrians and Prussians.

Posarum, by which all hostilities between the Russians and the Prussians ceased; and the latter continued their retreat to their own country unmolested. The Austrians, also, were permitted to retire unassailed, and immediately afterwards resumed a questionable neutrality, which leant more towards Russia than to France.

CHAPTER VI.

RUSSIA AND PRUSSIA TAKE THE FIELD AGAINST NAPOLEON; PROFITLESS VICTORIES OF THE LATTER; AUSTRIA JOINS THE ALLIES; CAMPAIGN OF 1813; THE ALLIES INVADE FRANCE; REVERSES OF NAPOLEON; HIS MISTAKEN MARCH TOWARDS THE RHINE; ADVANCE OF THE ALLIES ON PARIS; BATTLE BEFORE THE CITY; CAPITULATION OF PARIS, AND ITS OCCUPATION BY THE ALLIES; GENEROUS BEARING OF THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER; A PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT DECLARE NAPOLEON DETHRONED; RESTORATION OF THE BOURBONS, AND DEPARTURE OF NAPOLEON FOR ELBA; PEACE BETWEEN FRANCE AND THE ALLIES; ALEXANDER VISITS ENGLAND, AND IS RECEIVED WITH ENTHUSIASM.

Russia now prepared to retaliate on the foe who had inflicted upon her so much calamity. On the 22nd of February, 1813, Alexander issued a proclamation, in which he endeavoured to excite the whole of Europe against Napoleon. This document observed—"We take advantage of our victories to extend the hand of succour to the oppressed nations. The moment is come: never was a more glorious opportunity presented to unfortunate Germany—the enemy flies, without courage and without hope. He astonishes, by his terror, the nations that were wont to be astonished by his pride and his barbarity. We speak with the frankness which is suitable to strength. Russia, and England her intrepid ally, who for twenty years has continued shaking that colossus of crime which threatens the universe, have no thought of their own aggrandisement. It is our benefits, and not the limits of our empire, that we wish to extend to the remotest nations. The destinies of Vesuvius and of Guadiana, have been determined on the banks of the Borysthenes; it is thence that Spain will recover the liberty that she has defended with heroism and energy in an age of feebleness and baseness."

Prussia had not only deserted Napoleon in the campaign, but she had thrown off the mask—entered into an alliance with Russia, and declared herself hostile towards her former oppressor. The French emperor prepared for the approaching contest with his customary self-reliance. He appealed to the senate, who voted a conscription of 350,000 men; and such was the enthusiasm of the principal cities of France, that in addition to these immense levies, they voted regiments of volunteers, to be raised and equipped at their own expense.

Alexander endeavoured to induce Austria to enter with him into a European alliance against France; but Austria held aloof from this extremity, and offered her mediation, with a view of putting an end to the calamities which were desolating Europe. Shortly afterwards, however, the Austrian cabinet made a secret convention with Russia, which evinced its inclination in favour of that power.

Towards the end of March, an allied army, consisting of 80,000 Russians and 60,000 Prussians, crossed the Elbe, near Wittenburg and Dresden. General Kutusoff, worn out by the fatigues of the last campaign, was no more; and the emperor Alexander himself assumed the chief command of his army. To oppose them, Napoleon led an army of 250,000 men to Saxony: of these troops, however, nearly a fourth part were Germans of Saxony, Westphalia, or Bavaria, whose fidelity was at the least doubtful; while those who came from France were young and inexperienced, for the veteran soldiers had mostly perished. On the 2nd of May, the battle of Lützen took place; in which, after a furious contest, the allies were defeated with a loss of 15,000 men. The victory of the French was, however, by no means a decisive one, and was purchased at a loss equal to that of their enemies. The latter retreated on the following morning to Dresden, from whence they proceeded to a strongly-intrenched position which had been prepared at Bautzen. There they were followed by Napoleon; and a second battle took place, extending over the 20th and

21st of May. After an obstinately-disputed conflict, the allies again retreated. They had now adopted the policy of not placing themselves in danger of undergoing a total defeat, but of retiring whenever the issue of an action seemed doubtful, and taking advantage of their numerous cavalry to cover their retreat, trusting that, in the end, the superiority of their physical resources would obtain for them the advantage. In consequence of the carnage occasioned by the Prussian artillery, the loss of the victors exceeded that of the allies: that of the latter, in killed and wounded, is estimated at 16,000 men; that of the French at 19,000. Alexander, though unfortunate in his assumption of the duties of a general, yet performed them with a courage and coolness which elicited admiration.

The allies were driven again to retreat before the French. Diffident of their power to contend successfully with Napoleon, unless assisted by Austria, they grasped at the offer of an armistice which the French emperor proposed, with the hope of regaining his influence over Alexander. It was concluded at Plesswitz, in Silesia, on the 4th of June. This was an error on the part of Napoleon, and eventually proved of more advantage to Alexander than a victory; for during the continuance of it, Austria, provoked by the undiminished obstinacy and haughtiness of Napoleon (who peremptorily rejected the main condition of definitive peace),* was prevailed on to join the alliance against him; and when, on the 17th of August, the armistice expired, the forces of the allies, swelled also by the adhesion of Bavaria and Wirtemburg, amounted to more than half a million of men. Of this enormous host, Alexander was ambitious to take the chief command; but finding that Austria was unwilling to consent, from distrust of his military talents, he surrendered his claim in favour of the Austrian prince, Schwartzenberg.

Russia, Austria, Prussia, and Sweden, had entered into a league against Napoleon; while England was carrying on the war against him in Spain, and subsidizing Russia, Prussia, and Sweden. In fact, Europe was in arms against France; Denmark only declared in his favour. The resources of France were now inadequate to the tremendous struggle which such an accumulation of power threatened. To narrate the particulars of this campaign would lead us far beyond our limits; we can only refer to its chief incidents and its result. On the 26th and 27th of August, Napoleon gained a great victory over the allies at Dresden, in which the latter lost 40,000 men in killed, wounded, and prisoners; 40 pair of colours, and 60 pieces of cannon. This good fortune did not continue; and the French army having advanced upon Bohemia, was defeated at Kulm by the Russians, and at Mullendorf by the Prussian general, Kleist. Upon this the hopes of Napoleon were blighted by one defeat after another; and in the battles of Grossbeeren, Dennewitz, Katzbach, Görde, and many others, the Prussians, under the brave Blucher, restored the honour of their arms, and reduced Napoleon to a most critical position in the neighbourhood of Leipzig. Such was the activity of Blucher, that he obtained the name of "Marshal Forwards;" as he was constantly advancing, and almost as constantly fighting. Napoleon's armies lost strength and ground on every side, and his German allies began to forsake him. He, however, determined to make a final stand at Leipzig. There he fought three successive battles, on the 16th, 18th, and 19th of October, against an immensely superior force. During the first two days of action, the French fought gallantly, but lost ground before their assailants. On the 18th, a body of 10,000 Saxons, raising the patriotic shout for Germany, deserted the French and went over to the allies. This defection induced Napoleon to resolve on effecting a retreat towards the Rhine. He made his arrangements during the night. On the morning of the 19th, his army filed out of Leipzig by a long narrow bridge. During this operation they were attacked by the allies, who, after a desperate struggle, burst into the town. As the French blew up the bridge to prevent the allies from pursuing, 25,000 Frenchmen, who remained in the town, were compelled to surrender as prisoners of war. Napoleon himself narrowly escaped a similar fate. The horrors of the passage of the Berezina, though on a smaller scale, were renewed. Multitudes, in their attempt to cross the deep but rapid stream, were drowned, or perished beneath the fire of the enemy. The remnant of the French army fled towards the Rhine, and was compelled to fight its way, at Hanau, through the Bavarians, its late allies. The passage of the Rhine was effected by Napoleon on the 2nd

* Namely, to give up all his conquests in Germany, and to withdraw with his troops beyond the Rhine.

of November; but such had been the disasters of the campaign and the retreat, that out of an army of 250,000 men, which he led into the field in the month of May, only seventy or eighty thousand recrossed that river. Leaving this force on the left bank, the emperor hastened to Paris. About 80,000 men, whom he had left to hold the Prussian fortresses, eventually surrendered to the allies.

Frederic William advised his allies to carry out their retaliation on Napoleon by an invasion of France; but, for some time, a contrary opinion prevailed at head-quarters, and nearly two months were passed in inactivity. The emperor of Austria, naturally solicitous that the sceptre of France should remain in the hands of his daughter and her descendants, was averse to the adoption of extreme measures against Napoleon, and desired only to humble him sufficiently as to render him no longer formidable to his neighbours. At length it was resolved that no lasting peace could be expected in Europe until the entire dethronement of Napoleon, and the restoration of the ancient territorial limits of France and its ancient race of monarchs. The Russian troops were delighted at the idea of proceeding to Paris; and they resolved to give that city to the flames, in revenge for the destruction of Moscow. Alexander, to his honour, restrained this savage spirit. On the eve of crossing the Rhine, he issued an address to his troops, in which he said—"Our enemies, by piercing to the heart of our dominions, wrought us much evil; but dreadful was the retribution: the Divine wrath crushed them. Let us not take example from them; inhumanity and ferocity cannot be pleasing in the eyes of a merciful God. Let us forget what they have done against us. Instead of animosity and revenge, let us approach them with the words of kindness, with the outstretched hand of reconciliation. Such is the lesson taught by our holy faith. Divine lips have pronounced the command—'Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you.' Warriors! I trust that, by your moderation in the enemy's country, you will conquer as much by generosity as by arms; and that, uniting the valour of the soldier against the armed, with the charity of the Christian towards the unarmed, you will crown your exploits by keeping stainless your well-earned reputation of a brave and moral people."

On the 31st of December, 1813, the allied army of Russia, Prussia, and Austria, crossed the Rhine. Napoleon, with undiminished spirit, instantly prepared to meet the invaders. On the 25th of January, 1814, he embraced his wife and son, whom he never saw again, and left the palace of the Tuileries for the army, the head-quarters of which were established at Chalons. His presence imparted both confidence and enthusiasm to his troops, amounting, notwithstanding his activity, to no more than 70,000 men, who had been dismayed at the approach of the enemy, and the retreat to which they had been driven. He now commenced the campaign which has been considered by tacticians as that in which he most strikingly displayed his astonishing genius for military combinations, fertility of resources, and quickness of movement. During it, a conference of the representatives of France and the allies was held at Chatillon, with the object of arranging a peace; but hostilities were actively carried on pending its deliberations. The offers of the allies were not unreasonable; but Napoleon abated nothing of his haughty bearing, and broke up the congress, rather than surrender Antwerp and Mantua.

The events of the campaign were at first favourable to Napoleon, and he inflicted many severe checks on the allies. For more than two months he held at bay the various armies of the allies—now defeating one, then flying to attack another, at times suffering severe reverses himself, yet almost instantly recovering his strength. The courage and genius of the emperor appeared as if capable of effecting miracles. The chances of war were, however, fearfully against him, and the numerical superiority of his enemies overwhelming. At the battle of Craone he experienced a tremendous loss; while at Laon he suffered a severe defeat. Paris was in an alarming situation; for, in consequence of a diversion produced by Blucher, the road to it was left open to Schwartzenberg. Napoleon, self-possessed among the many dangers that environed him, marched against the army of the Austrian general, which he encountered at Arcis-sur-Aube. The battle was an indecisive one, and Napoleon retreated towards the Rhine; thus abandoning the defence of Paris. His object was to threaten the communications of the enemy, and to draw near to the garrisons of the frontier,

from which those supplies of veteran troops could be obtained which were no longer to be found in the heart of France. He trusted, by this means, to threaten the communications of the allies in such a manner as would deter them from advancing further in the direction of the capital. The French troops were greatly discouraged at this retrograde step: murmurs arose; and many of the officers questioned even the sanity of their leader. They were plunging into an endless warfare, and directing their steps towards Germany; while the capital of their country, containing all that was dear to them, was in danger of becoming the prey of the enemy.

The allies, also, were astonished at this movement; and no sooner had it taken place, than, by a junction of part of Blucher's army with that of Schwartzenberg, no less than 180,000 armed men stood between Napoleon and Paris. At the same time the allied generals received intelligence of the occupation of Bordeaux by the British troops, and the proclamation of Louis XVIII. with the general concurrence of the inhabitants. Alexander called a council of war, in which the prevalent opinion leaned towards pursuing the French emperor, and attacking him wherever they should find him. This was, however, abandoned in favour of a proposition to march on to Paris, of which, it was presumed, they could take possession, and destroy Napoleon's power there before he could get back to its relief—a decision which excited an extraordinary enthusiasm throughout the allied army, and elicited the unbounded exultation of the Russians.

As the allies advanced, they were encountered by the French forces under Marshals Marmont and Mortier, whom they defeated at the battle of Fère-Champenoise. In this and some other combats the French lost half their artillery, and nearly 11,000 men. Marmont and Mortier immediately retreated towards Paris, the defence of which now devolved on them alone. The allied army continued its advance. "My children," said Alexander to his soldiers, "it is now but a step to Paris." With enthusiastic cheers they responded, "We will take it, father; we remember Moscow." Contrary to what might have been expected, the Russian emperor exerted himself to the utmost to preserve a strict discipline amongst his troops; and with so much success, that the terrified French peasantry were protected from outrage and plunder.

As the allied army approached Paris, the greatest agitation prevailed within that city. Crowds of trembling peasants beset the barriers; the banks were closed, business suspended, and the inhabitants hastened to bury their plate and other valuables. In compliance with a conditional order from Napoleon, the empress and her son left the capital, and proceeded to Blois, a city seated on the waters of the Loire. Maria Louisa was calm, though pale; but the little king of Rome resisted violently, and exclaimed, with tears, that they were betraying his papa. The hearts of the people sunk at their departure; and notwithstanding the preparations for defence, the general conviction was, that nothing remained but to make the best terms that could be obtained from the enemy.

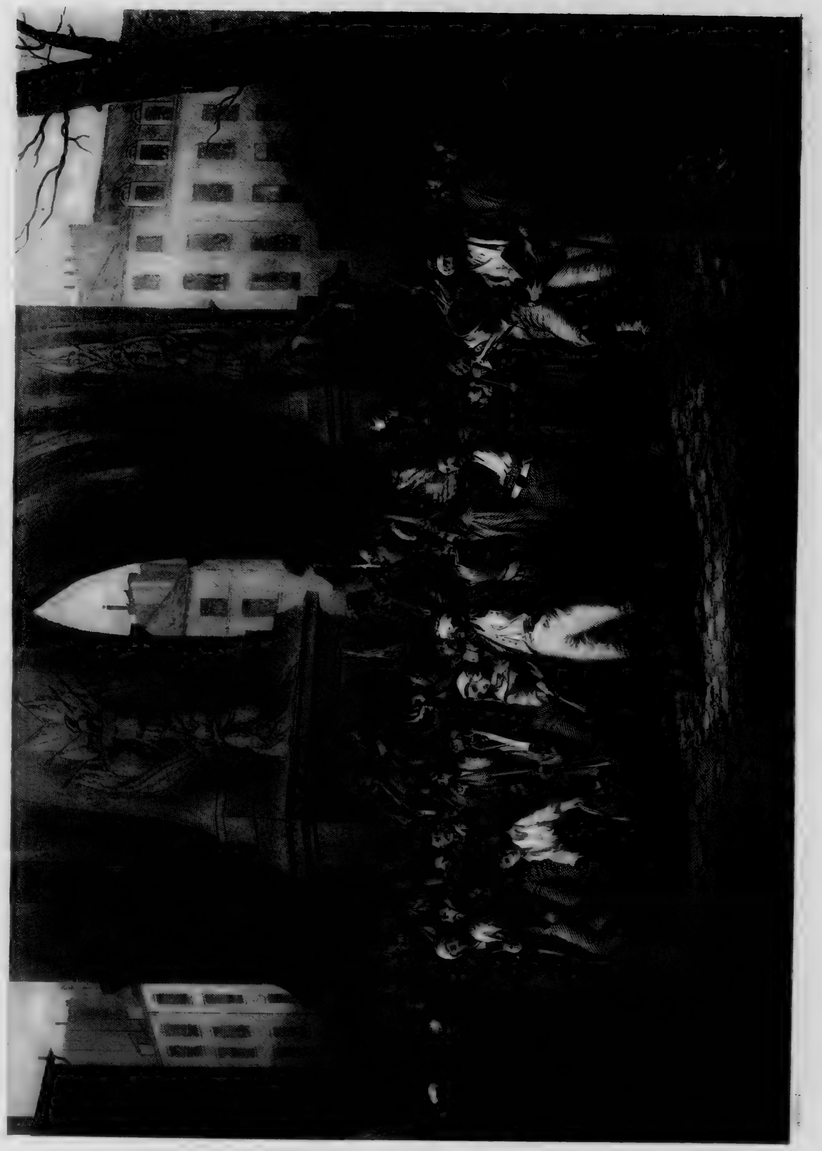
Before the allies could enter Paris, they had again to encounter the French troops under Marshals Marmont and Mortier. These occupied the front of the army gathered for the defence of the city, and were backed by such battalions of the national guards as could be spared from the internal defences of the city. The scholars of the Polytechnic school also came forward as volunteers, to serve the artillery. In all, not more than 35,000 men took part in the defence; but they were supported by 153 pieces of cannon. The veteran soldiers, though firm, and prepared to lay down their lives for their country, were yet sad; for they knew the enemy they had to encounter, and felt that the coming struggle would be in vain. Of the allied troops, 100,000 were ready for the attack; the remainder being left behind, at the Marne and at other places, to keep an eye on the movements of Napoleon. The battle took place on the 30th of March, and the resistance of the French was an intrepid one. The struggle commenced soon after five in the morning; and, for a time, the Russians were repulsed, and their cuirassiers routed. At eight, the emperor Alexander arrived on the field, and ordered up three divisions of the guards, who restored the battle, and drove back the French. At eleven the Prussian army approached, and a vigorous attack was made by the allies, who were received at the point of the bayonet; while the Russian guards were mowed down by the French artillery. The carnage was terrible; and persons unused to war were seen contending with the veterans of Russia. For four hours the

French maintained their position against the constantly-increasing masses and reiterated attacks of the Prussians. The heights which command Paris were then stormed, and at length taken; when Joseph Buonaparte, to save the inhabitants from the horrors of a bombardment, entered into a capitulation with the allies. The latter assented to the demands of the French marshals—that Paris should be protected, its monuments intrusted to the care of the national guard, and private property respected. It was proposed that the French generals and the regular troops should surrender as prisoners of war; but this they resolutely refused, declaring that they would sooner renew the struggle, and perish in the streets. It was therefore finally arranged that they should evacuate Paris; that the public arsenals and magazines should be surrendered; that the national guard should be either disbanded or employed, under the direction of the allies, in the service of the city; which was recommended to the generosity of the victors. In the battle, the allies lost upwards of 9,000 men, of whom 7,100 were Russians. The loss of the French did not exceed 4,500: they had surrendered their capital, it is true; but only to the forces of banded Europe.

A deputation, consisting of the mayor and principal magistrates of Paris, waited on the emperor Alexander, and were received by him with great courtesy. "Gentlemen," said he, "I am not the enemy of the French nation: I am so only of a single man, whom I once admired, and long loved; but who, devoured by ambition and filled with bad faith, came into the heart of my dominions, and left me no alternative but to seek security for my future safety in the liberation of Europe. The allied sovereigns have come here, neither to conquer nor to rule France, but to learn and support what France itself deems most suitable for its own welfare; and they only await, before undertaking the task, to ascertain, in the declared wish of Paris, the probable desire of France."

The day after the battle, the allied sovereigns, preceded by a great military force, entered Paris. The spectacle was a grand one; and the terror of the Parisians gave way to admiration. Alexander and Frederic William had issued a pacific proclamation; and the former was received with a gratitude which amounted to enthusiasm. Cries of "*Vive l'Empereur Alexandre!*" "*Vive le Roi de Prusse!*" burst from the crowd. "We have been long expecting you," said one unpatriotic sycophant to the czar; who generously answered—"We should have been here sooner, but for the bravery of your troops." Subsequently, Alexander gave an order for the release of all the French prisoners of war confined in Russia.

When Napoleon heard of the attack on Paris, he hurriedly fell back to its relief; but it was too late. Near Fontainebleau he met the columns of the garrison, which were evacuating the city. He had learned the news with rage and incredulity. "It is too dreadful!" he exclaimed: "that comes of trusting cowards and fools! When I am not there, they do nothing but heap up blunder on blunder." At Paris, a provisional government, which had been established, with Talleyrand at its head, passed a decree dethroning the emperor, and absolving the army and people from their oaths of allegiance to him. Then arose the question, Who should rule France? "Sire," said Talleyrand to the emperor Alexander, "there are but two courses open to us: Buonaparte, or Louis XVIII." Napoleon at first refused to abdicate; but at length consented to do so in favour of his son. The generals by whom he was surrounded at Fontainebleau, had assured him that he ought to do so, having previously refused to join him in a last desperate attempt upon Paris. The work of defection had commenced, and Marmont joined the allies with the French troops who had so bravely defended Paris. Other desertions followed; and even the brave Marshal Ney abandoned his master, and gave in his adhesion to the party of Talleyrand. It did not escape the observation of the autocrats who now held the fate of France in their hands, that the recognition of Maria Louisa as regent, and the infant Napoleon as heir, would be a continuation of the revolutionary *régime*, and they therefore decided in favour of the Bourbons. Indeed, so great a reaction had been produced by the sufferings to which the reckless ambition of Napoleon exposed the nation, that the proposed restoration of the Bourbons to the throne actually became popular. After a violent explosion of passion, the emperor signed an absolute and unqualified resignation of the throne. This document was signed on the 11th of April. It was arranged, that Napoleon was to



retain the barren title of emperor. The island of Elba was assigned him as a place of residence; and a sum of 2,500,000 francs a-year provided for his support. Before the conclusion of this treaty, he was deserted by nearly all the persons of distinction who had formerly thronged around him, and made to feel the bitterness of ingratitude, and the littleness of human nature. He took an affectionate leave of the few generals who remained faithful to him, and of his old guard. "I bid you farewell," said he; "I am satisfied with you; for twenty years I have always found you in the path of glory. All Europe has armed against me; part of the troops have betrayed their duty; France herself has deserted me, by choosing another dynasty; with my soldiers I might have maintained a servile war for years; that, however, would have rendered France unhappy. Be faithful to the new sovereign whom your country has chosen; do not lament my fate; I shall always be happy with the knowledge that you are so. I might have died—nothing was more easy—but I shall always follow the path of honour; with my pen will I record the exploits we have achieved together. Farewell my brave companions—surround me once more—adieu, my children, farewell." He then departed for Elba, where he arrived on the 4th of May. During the voyage he recovered his spirits, and observed—"The Bourbons will be turned off in six months." Before the end of May, his first wife, Josephine, breathed her last. Maria Louisa had been persuaded to abandon him, and place herself and her son under the protection of her father, the emperor of Austria.

On the 7th of April the Comte d'Artois was called to the throne of France, with the title of Louis XVIII. "Nothing is changed; there is only one Frenchman the more in Paris," he observed, as he entered that city on the 3rd of May, where he was received rather with apathy and a sense of humiliation, than with any ardent demonstrations of loyalty. A treaty of peace was signed on the 30th, by the plenipotentiaries of France on one hand, and those of Russia, Prussia, and England on the other. This, at one blow, swept away all the conquests of the Revolution, and reduced France to its original limits as they stood on the 1st of January, 1792.

The emperor Alexander and the king of Prussia left Paris on the 5th of June, and proceeded to England, which they had been invited to visit by the prince-regent. They were conveyed from Boulogne to Dover in an English ship of war, commanded by the Duke of Clarence; and remained for about three weeks in this country, where they met with an enthusiastic reception from all classes. Amongst the great number of princes and generals by whom they were attended, the most popular with the English people was the brave old Marshal Blucher, and Count Platoff, the hetman of the Cossacks. The emperor and king were entertained with unexampled magnificence by the citizens of London, at Guildhall; and Alexander was invested, at Carlton House, with the order of the Garter. At Oxford, academical honours were bestowed on the allied sovereigns; while at Portsmouth, a splendid naval review was got up for their entertainment. On visiting the arsenal at Woolwich, Alexander was so impressed by the enormous amount of stores in that military emporium, that he exclaimed—"Why, this resembles rather the preparation of a great nation for the commencement of a war, than the stores still remaining to it at its termination." From England Alexander proceeded to Holland, where he visited the cottage which Peter the Great had lived in while working as a ship's carpenter at Saardam. Thence, after a short stay, Alexander proceeded to Carlsruhe. On the 25th of July he arrived at St. Petersburg, where his appearance was greeted by illuminations and other testimonies of national joy. The synod and the senate decreed him the title of "Blagoslovennuiy," or "Blessed," which, however, he declined to accept; while to a proposal for erecting a monument to commemorate his exploits, he replied—"I beg the public bodies of the empire to abandon all such designs. May a monument be erected to me in your hearts, as it is to you in mine! May my people bless me in their hearts, as in mine I bless them! May Russia be happy, and may the Divine blessing watch over her and over me!"

CHAPTER VII.

CONGRESS OF THE SOVEREIGNS OF EUROPE AT VIENNA; NAPOLEON LEAVES ELBA, AND THE BOURBON SOVEREIGN TAKES TO FLIGHT; THE ALLIES PROSCRIBE HIM AS A GENERAL ENEMY; ENGLAND AND PRUSSIA TAKE THE FIELD AGAINST HIM; WATERLOO, AND THE FINAL OVERTHROW OF NAPOLEON; PARIS AGAIN CAPITULATES, AND LOUIS XVIII. IS A SECOND TIME RESTORED; THE SECOND TREATY OF PARIS; ALEXANDER FOUNDS THE "HOLY ALLIANCE;" HE ESTABLISHES A CONSTITUTION FOR POLAND; HE REFUSES TO ASSIST THE GREEKS IN THEIR STRUGGLE AGAINST THE OPPRESSION OF TURKEY; DESPOTIC CONDUCT OF ALEXANDER DURING THE LATTER YEARS OF HIS LIFE; HIS INQUISITORIAL SEVERITY WITH RESPECT TO EDUCATION; HIS DREAD OF CONSPIRACY AND ASSASSINATION; HIS DEATH; ESTIMATE OF HIS CHARACTER.

A CONGRESS of the sovereigns of Europe commenced its deliberations at Vienna, at the close of the year 1814. The emperor Alexander and the king of Prussia attended in person, as did also a number of lesser princes. France was represented by M. Talleyrand, and England at first by Lord Castlereagh, and subsequently by the Duke of Wellington. The principal business to be transacted by the congress, was the redistribution of the numerous provinces surrendered by France at the peace of Paris. So extensive had been the conquests of France, that territories inhabited by no less than 31,691,000 persons, were at the disposal of the allies. The greatest difficulty was with respect to Poland; for Alexander insisted that the whole grand-duchy of Warsaw should be ceded to Russia, as an indemnity for the sacrifices she had made, and the losses she had sustained during the war. He asserted, that if he returned to St. Petersburg without obtaining some adequate compensation for the sacrifices his nation had undergone, he would jeopardise the safety of his crown; alluded to the circumstance that Poland was already, in fact, occupied by the Russian troops; and hinted that he had not less than 300,000 troops ready to march at a moment's notice. It was thus seen, that his scrupulous regard to justice, existed only when his own empire was threatened. Now that the danger was past, he was quite ready to seize the territory of his neighbours with as much greediness, though with more caution, as had ever been displayed by Napoleon.

Prussia, bribed by a hope that her dominions should be restored to her as they stood at the commencement of the war of 1806, together "with such additions as might be deemed practicable," supported the claim of Alexander, which was opposed by France, Austria, and England. On behalf of the latter power, Lord Castlereagh energetically opposed the union of the crowns of Poland and Russia on the same head, or the proposed annexation of Saxony to Prussia, as contrary to the principles on which the war against Napoleon had been maintained. The arguments of the British plenipotentiary were strenuously supported by those of Talleyrand and Metternich. Alexander was irritated at this opposition, and dissensions arose to such a height, that another appeal to arms became probable, in which France and Austria, sanctioned by England, would have entered into an alliance against Russia and Prussia. Alexander suspended the return of his troops to Russia, and kept them in Poland ready for the resumption of hostilities. His brother, the Grand-duke Constantine, also issued an address to the Poles, announcing the intention of the czar to restore to them their lost nationality, and calling upon them to rally round his standard as the only means of effecting it.

The ambition of Alexander raised up a counteracting influence. Austria, France, and England, entered into a secret treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, binding themselves to act together, honourably to carry into effect the stipulations of the treaty of Paris. Alexander and Frederic William did not long remain in ignorance of this proceeding, which induced them to lower the high tone they had assumed, and consent to an abatement of their pretensions. Prussia was compelled to content herself with but a portion of the territory of Saxony, which she acquired in addition to a part of the grand-duchy of Warsaw, and the whole of her territory as it stood prior to the battle of Jena.

Before the allies had settled their disputes, they were startled by the intelligence that Napoleon had left Elba. The restored Bourbon sovereign had disgusted the people of France; a conspiracy was formed against the impotent Louis XVIII.; and the exiled

emperor secretly invited to return. After an absence of about ten months, he left Elba, and landed at Cannes on the 1st of March, 1815, with about 1,000 men of his old guard, who had followed him into banishment. Wherever he appeared the army declared in his favour, and his march to Paris was a triumphal progress. The allies immediately signed a proclamation, which proscribed Napoleon as a public enemy, with whom neither peace nor truce could be concluded; and expressed their determination to employ the whole forces at their disposal, to prevent Europe from being again plunged into the abyss of revolution. The alarm thus excited by the common enemy, led to a settlement of the disputes between the allies themselves. Alexander agreed to accept of the grand-duchy of Warsaw, without the fortress of Thorn and its dependent territory, and with the exception of that portion ceded to Prussia. He also consented that Poland should not be incorporated with Russia, but should form a separate kingdom, preserving its own laws, institutions, language, and religion.

Louis XVIII. abandoned Paris at midnight on the 19th of March, and retired again into exile. On the evening of the 20th Napoleon arrived at the Tuileries, where he was received by a great number of his supporters with extraordinary enthusiasm. Still the great body of the citizens looked on with silent astonishment, and it soon became apparent that the emperor was recalled by a party and not by a nation. The people, longing for repose, feared the return of the hordes of Russia to ravage their fields and reoccupy their capital. The royalists of the south even took to arms in defence of the Bourbon cause; but this attempt to light up the flames of servile war happily proved abortive. The authority of the emperor would soon have been re-established in France, but for the overwhelming external opposition which was gathering its forces against him. Russia, Prussia, Austria, and England, each agreed to furnish 180,000 men to effect his overthrow. During this eventful year, Great Britain paid subsidies to her almost bankrupt allies, amounting to no less than £11,000,000.

Napoleon endeavoured, but in vain, to open a diplomatic intercourse with the allies. The emperor Alexander, who had hitherto been influenced by the remains of a kindly feeling towards him, was now the most decided of his opponents. "We can have no peace," said he to a secret agent of Napoleon; "it is a mortal duel betwixt us; he has broken his word. I am freed from my engagement; Europe requires an example." Napoleon had probably expected this result, and he taxed the resources of his almost exhausted empire to the uttermost to prepare for war. At a great *fête* held in the Champ de Mai, he addressed to the people one of his spirit-stirring orations, in which he said—"Frenchmen! in traversing, amid the public joy, the different provinces of my empire to arrive in my capital, I trusted I could reckon on a long peace; nations are bound by treaties concluded by their governments, whatever they may be. My whole thoughts were then turned to the means of founding our liberty on a constitution resting on the wishes and interests of the people. Therefore it is that I have convoked the assembly of the Champ de Mai. I soon learned, however, that the princes who resist all popular rights, and disregard the wishes and interests of so many nations, were resolved on war."

On the 12th of June, Napoleon left Paris to assume the command of the army, which consisted of 122,000 men. Wellington with 80,000 men, and Blucher with 110,000, were in the field against him. Napoleon's design was to prevent the junction of these forces, and defeat them singly. While Wellington and Blucher were dreaming of an offensive campaign against him, they were suddenly called upon to defend themselves against the vigorous movements of Napoleon. On the 15th of June, he advanced upon Charleroi, which the Prussian troops, taken by surprise, abandoned at his approach. Marshal Ney, with 50,000 men, was dispatched by the emperor to Quatre Bras, the possession of which by the French would have probably cut off the communication between the British and Prussian armies. Napoleon himself followed the Prussian army, which was falling back towards Ligny. On the 16th, Napoleon attacked Blucher there, defeated him with a loss of 12,000 men, and drove him to retreat in great confusion towards Wavres. On the same day a severe encounter, though on a less extensive scale, took place between Wellington and Ney at Quatre Bras, the combatants numbering about 20,000 on each side. The misconduct of the Belgian troops had nearly led to a defeat of the allies; but the day was, to some extent, retrieved by the valour of the

British troops; and the forces, at this point, under the command of Wellington, after suffering a severe loss, retained possession of the field.

Wellington, however, deemed it expedient to retreat to Waterloo, where he trusted to be so near Blucher, that they might be able to assist each other in case of attack. As yet, the results of the campaign had been eminently favourable to Napoleon, who followed closely on the heels of Wellington; while 30,000 French, under Grouchy, pursued the Prussians. On the 18th, however, the great contest was brought to a final issue on the plains of Waterloo. This great battle has been often and most vividly described; its result is all that concerns us here, as the troops of Russia had no part in it. On witnessing the final overthrow of the old guard, Napoleon became pale as death, and, with an exclamation of despair, retreated from the field, in order to save himself from capture. The day terminated with the total rout of the French and their wild retreat, with the Prussian cavalry thundering at their heels. The French army was, in effect, destroyed; and few of the soldiers who fled from the fatal field of Waterloo, ever appeared in arms again. Thus was closed a war, or rather a succession of wars, which, commencing in 1792, had lasted, with but little interruption, for three-and-twenty years.

At the demand of the house of representatives, Napoleon again signed his abdication, and the former trusted that they would be able to restore a republic in France. It was not to be; Wellington and Blucher, at the head of their respective armies, were advancing rapidly upon Paris, which city was not in a condition to hold out against them. On the 3rd of July the city again capitulated, on the conditions that the French army should evacuate it, and that private property should be respected. On the 7th, the English and Prussian armies made their entrance into the French capital. There was no exultation as when Alexander and his ally occupied Paris so recently; the people looked on sadly and anxiously, for they felt humiliation for the present, and gloomy doubts as to the future. In the rear of foreign bayonets came Louis XVIII., a second time restored to a sullied throne by the enemies of his country. Even the royalist party was downcast; its blind devotion to a selfish and incompetent family was overborne by its sense of national defeat and degradation.

Napoleon, unable to effect his escape to America, resolved to throw himself on the generosity of the English government, and surrendered to Captain Maitland, of the *Bellerophon*. It would have been noble in England to have respected the wish of the ruined emperor, now so helpless and deserted. But this country was acting in concert with Russia and Prussia, the sovereigns of which had resolved no longer to brook his presence in Europe; and it was therefore irrevocably decided that he should be removed to St. Helena, to fret out his heart, and die on a sea-girt rock, twelve hundred miles from any continent. He reached St. Helena on the 16th of October, where he remained until his death, which took place during a tremendous storm on the 4th of May, 1821.

Early in July, the emperors of Russia and Austria, and the king of Prussia, arrived at Paris, which they subjected to the just but melancholy humiliation of restoring the various objects of art in the museum of the Louvre, which had been pillaged by Napoleon from the various states that had fallen beneath his power. Then was seen the force which would, doubtless, have been brought against Napoleon, in the event of a prolongation of the struggle; no less than 800,000 armed men—Russians, Prussians, Austrians, English, Italians, and Spaniards—occupied the French soil. The power of the allies was irresistible, and their eagerness for spoil excessive. Such were the territorial demands of the conquerors, that the dominions of the newly-made sovereign seemed on the eve of dissolution. France was only saved by the mutual jealousies of the allies themselves. At length conflicting claims were arranged, and the second treaty of Paris was concluded in November, 1815. By it the French frontier was restored to the state in which it stood in 1790; and it was stipulated that 700,000,000 of francs (£28,000,000 sterling) were to be paid to the allied powers for the expenses of the war. Other heavy penalties were to be paid by the French; but these it is not within our province to relate. A display of Russian power was exhibited on the plains of Vertus, on the 10th of September. This was a great review of 160,000 Russian troops, 28,000 of which were cavalry. The Duke of Wellington did not, however, appear strikingly impressed with the military efficiency of the Russians. "Well, Charles," said he to Sir Charles Stewart, afterwards Marquis of Londonderry, "you and I never saw such a sight before, and never shall again. The precision of the movements of these troops was more like the arrangements of a theatre than those of such an army; but still I think my little army would move round them in any direction while they were effecting a single charge."

The emperors of Russia and Austria, and the king of Prussia, before leaving Paris, signed an agreement or bond of union, to which, with much presumption, if not impiety, they gave the name of the "Holy Alliance." It was established at the suggestion of Alexander, ostensibly for the preservation of universal peace, on the principles of Christianity, but, in reality, for the extinction of all revolutionary principles, and the government of Europe on those of despotism. Alexander had carried his assumption of piety so far, that he may have succeeded in at last deceiving himself; yet this alliance had really no other object than to use religion as an instrument by which to crush the liberties of Europe, and establish the thrones of monarchs on the basis of a passive superstition. On the Christmas-day of 1815 Alexander issued a manifesto, in the names of Russia, Prussia, and Austria, solemnly declaring their "fixed resolution, both in the administration of their respective states, and in their political relations with every other government, to take for their guide the precepts of the holy religion of our Saviour—the precepts of justice, Christian charity, and peace; which, far from being applicable only to private concerns, must have an immediate influence on the councils of princes, and guide all their steps, as being the only means of consolidating human institutions, and remedying their imperfections." Alexander was induced to form this sinister league by the exhortations of the Baroness Krudener, a lady whom religious excitement had brought to, if not within, the verge of insanity. She had assumed the character of a prophetess, and contended that she had a mission to establish the reign of Christ upon earth. Having followed Alexander to Paris, she declared that he was appointed regenerator of the world, and succeeded in establishing some degree of influence over him; so much so, indeed, that at this period the emperor passed whole days at Paris in a mystical communication of sentiments with her.

The "Holy Alliance" was soon acceded to by all the principal powers of Europe, with the exception of England, the government of which refused to debase religion into a mere instrument of state-craft. Little credit was, however, due to the prince-regent or his ministers on that account; for when, on the 26th of September, 1815, Mr. (since Lord) Brougham moved for a copy of the terms of the alliance (which he stigmatised as nothing but a convention for the enslaving of mankind, under the mask of piety and religion), Lord Castlereagh replied, that a copy of the treaty had been communicated to the prince-regent, who entirely approved of its principles, but had refrained from giving in his adhesion, because "the forms of the British constitution prevented him from acceding to it." Happily the "Holy Alliance" was not of permanent duration. The congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, which met in 1818, and the congresses at Troppau and Laybach, respectively held in 1820 and 1821, were conducted on its principles; but it was everywhere the subject of execration; and eventually expired amidst the hatred and scorn of Europe.

On leaving Paris, Alexander proceeded to Warsaw, where he established a constitution for Poland; which, with an apparent policy, granted to its people more freedom than the Russians themselves enjoyed. Catholicism was recognised as the religion of the state; but all Dissidents were placed on an equality with Romanists as to civil rights: the liberty of the press was permitted; the legislative authority was vested in the king and two chambers; and judges were to be elected, partly by the king, and partly by the Palatinates. On a subsequent occasion he thus addressed the chambers:—"Prove to your contemporaries that liberal institutions, the principles of which are confounded by some with those disastrous doctrines which, in our days, have threatened the social system with a frightful catastrophe—prove that they are not delusions; but that, put in practice with good faith, and directed by pure intentions towards a useful and conservative object, they are perfectly in accordance with order, and insure the prosperity of nations." The Poles were, however, not to be lured by this language into a behaviour sufficiently submissive for the taste of Alexander; therefore, in the year 1820, he abruptly closed the chambers, and no new diet was summoned till 1825. Indeed, it must be ad-

mitted, that the Poles left their ruler little choice between governing despotically or not governing at all.

The insurrection of the Greeks in 1820, against the tyranny of the sultan, though publicly condemned by Alexander, was attributed by Turkey to the secret encouragement of Russia, and threatened a renewal of hostilities between those countries. Alexander was, however, indisposed for war, and resolved to adhere, at least until a more promising opportunity, to the principles of the "Holy Alliance." "Would you have believed," said he to the eccentric French writer, Chateaubriand, "as our enemies are so fond of asserting, that the alliance is only a word, intended to cover ambition? That might have received a colour of truth under the old order of things; but now all private interests disappear when the civilisation of the world is endangered. Henceforward there can be no English, French, Russian, Prussian, or Austrian policy; there can only be a general policy, involving the salvation of all, admitted in common by kings and people.* It is for me, the first of all, to declare my appreciation of the principles on which I founded the 'Holy Alliance.' An opportunity presents; it is the Greek insurrection. Certainly no event appeared more adapted to my personal interests, to those of my subjects, and to the feelings and prejudices of the Russians, than a religious war against Turkey; but in the troubles of the Peloponnesus *I saw revolutionary symptoms, and from that moment I held aloof.*"

The latter years of the life of Alexander were passed in an attempt at repose, after the wild turmoil arising from the wars he had been engaged in with Napoleon, and in promoting the internal advancement of the empire. Moscow rose from amidst its ashes, and was built in a more commodious and splendid manner. The emperor also gave much attention to the promotion of a kind of guarded education, in which the principles of devotion to the church, and passive obedience to the monarch, were carefully instilled, and from which everything foreign was rejected as dangerous. The emperor also caused extraordinary precautions to be taken against revolutionary intrigues; and, by an ukase of the 12th of August, 1822, he prohibited all secret societies, and closed all the lodges of Freemasons throughout the empire. For the same reason, the missionary societies in the German provinces of the empire were abolished; and a report that dangerous intrigues had taken place in some of the corps of the army, was positively contradicted by authority. Great rigour was exercised by the police, especially subsequently to 1823, towards everything suspected of an irreligious or revolutionary tendency. An ukase, dated November, 1824, even directed *Admiral* Schischkoff to be especially vigilant with regard to religious writings! What the state of the country must have been, in which almost irresponsible power in such a direction was given to a naval officer, we may well conceive. The censorship of the press was exercised with great rigour, and the academies placed under very strict superintendence. In 1821, four professors of the university of St. Petersburg were called to account for the contents of their lectures. Regulations for the importation of foreign books were rendered so strict and onerous as to be almost prohibitory. Under the pretence of excluding incompetent persons and adventurers from being employed as teachers in families, notice was given, that such persons who could not produce a certificate of their qualifications—in other words, of their political and theological orthodoxy—should be immediately discharged; and that any families who retained them should be punished by the infliction of a fine of a hundred roubles. These oppressive measures were chiefly carried into execution by General Araktcheieff, a Russian officer, whose narrow mind and arbitrary temper fitted him to become an oppressive instrument of despotism. During the latter years of the reign of the emperor, his duties were mostly delegated to this man, whose name became a word of terror throughout the empire.

Alexander was, in fact, absolutely haunted by the ghost of the revolution he had done so much to crush in France. The entrance of his army into Paris was eventually fatal to his peace of mind. There the officers of his army were inoculated with the republican notions of the French, and became dissatisfied with a government the extent of whose despotism they had not till then understood. Alexander lived in constant dread of conspiracy, and of sharing the fate of his father. Spies were set everywhere; and they were frequently persons of such a rank in life, as

* This is terrible rhodomontade. Alexander either talked nonsense, out of a sinister policy, or he was strangely ignorant of the opinions and principles prevalent throughout the greatest part of Europe.

to disarm the suspicion that it was possible they could descend to such detestable employment.

The health of the emperor gave way under this constant excitement, and he spent much of the latter part of his reign in travelling. He was also much affected by the death of an illegitimate daughter, to whom he was most affectionately attached. On the 13th of September, 1825, he left St. Petersburg on an excursion to the south of Russia, ostensibly to visit the empress, who was then residing at Taganrog for the benefit of her health. He was observed to look frequently back at the capital with a melancholy air, and to seem altogether out of spirits. There existed sufficient cause for this depression; for he had received information of the existence of an extensive conspiracy for the purpose of overthrowing the imperial form of government, and putting him and his family to death. During the journey he suffered much from depression and superstitious fears. These were increased by the sight of a comet. "Ilga," he inquired of an old and faithful servant, "have you seen the new star? Do you know that a comet always presages misfortune? But God's will be done."

Shortly after his arrival at Taganrog, Alexander proceeded to the Crimea. During this journey he paused at a picturesque spot named Orianda; and observed, that if he retired from the affairs of government, it was there he would wish to live; thus seeming to derive a secret pleasure in the thought of abdication. In the preceding year he had been attacked with erysipelas, which began in the leg, and, spreading upwards, was attended with occasional fever and delirium. From this he had to some extent recovered, when, while at Taganrog, he was attacked with the intermittent fever common to the Crimea. Trusting to the natural strength of his constitution, he obstinately refused to submit to the remedies which his physicians prescribed. It is said, that this conduct arose partly from a disgust for life, induced by further particulars which he received concerning the conspiracy, and the presumed design to assassinate him. On one occasion, when Sir James Wylie urged him to take some medicine, he remarked, "My friend, it is the state of my nerves to which you must attend; they are in frightful disorder."—"Alas!" responded the physician, "that happens more frequently to kings than to ordinary men."—"Yes," assented the emperor, "but with me, in particular, there are many special reasons, and, at the present hour, more so than ever." Some days afterwards, while suffering much from pain, he gazed intently on Sir James, and exclaimed, in an excited manner, "Oh, my friend, what an act—what a horrible act! The monsters!—the ungrateful monsters! I designed nothing but their happiness."

When at length the emperor, overcome by entreaties, yielded to the treatment of his physicians, and allowed leeches to be applied, it was too late. During the last few days that he continued to breathe, he was insensible; and on the morning of the 1st of December, 1825, he expired. He had almost reached his forty-eighth year, and had occupied the imperial throne for a quarter of a century. For some time, a rumour prevailed in foreign countries, that his death had been caused by poison; but it has been well ascertained, that there was no ground whatever for this suspicion.

The character of Alexander is not an easy one to trace correctly, for it was a union of apparent contradictions: in it a meretricious, and for the most part assumed, liberalism vainly struggled for freedom of action in the presence of a real and active despotism. The pretensions of Alexander, and his flatterers, have deceived many writers, who, unaccustomed to the necessary habit of psychological analysis, have fallen into the error of representing him as he *seemed to be*, rather than as he was. That he possessed the manners of a gentleman, and was highly polished in this respect, is undeniable. His manners were graceful, courteous, and condescending, without any of that frigid, palpable assumption of superiority, which is not pleasing even in princes. With the manners of a gentleman, he possessed also the accomplishments of one; but in no respect was he either solid or profound. The chief feature of his character was his duplicity; which is seldom a quality of an enlarged mind or a noble nature. An external liberality was mingled with a deep and ineradicable selfishness. Even his ambition was of a mean and acquisitive kind, and directed always towards the extension of territory, than to that glory which great men toil for. His admirers have spoken much of what they call his benevolence; but it consisted rather of the absence of cruelty, and of the occasional exhibition of a popularity-seeking

amiability. That he could be resolutely vindictive, is evinced by the unbending temper in which he carried on the war against his former friend Napoleon, and the obduracy with which he refused all terms of peace, and left the invading army to perish in its retreat from a fearful accumulation of horrors. He was, in fact, an amiable despot; but one whose whole reign was devoted to building up despotism on a surer and more enduring basis.

Alexander was enthusiastic, imaginative, superstitious, and, probably at times, really pious; but yet singularly given to that insincerity in this direction which has obtained the obnoxious but expressive name of "cant." The institution of that solemn, if not even blasphemous, mockery of real religion, the "Holy Alliance," was a most offensive instance of this. There is not only a wickedness, but a danger, in converting religion into a mere bulwark of the state, and an instrument of tyranny. A reaction invariably follows, earlier or later, against conventional piety, when it is used as a means of oppressive coercion. The present state of the educated classes in Russia, indicates that they are proceeding to the other extreme, and that a contempt for palpable superstition, in connection with state-craft, is leading them to trample upon and discard religion altogether. The Russian peasantry have a boundless credulity with respect to superstition; but the gentry and nobles, though they like the display of the external pomp of their gaudy religion, are fast becoming freethinkers.

Alexander did something for education; but it was for education as he pleased to have it. He founded or reorganised seven universities, and established 204 gymnasia, and above 2,000 schools of an inferior order; but nothing was taught in them of which he did not approve, or suspected of a liberal tendency. This was an attempt to dwarf down the intellect of the empire to a very narrow standard—to force it into an orthodox yet questionable channel, and to check its expansion. The severity of his censorship of the press, and his inquisitorial jealousy of foreign books, we have already spoken of. This arose from a morbid dread of revolutionary principles, which was perhaps natural enough in an absolute monarch at that time; but was still a weakness and a cause of tyranny. It is therefore highly objectionable to find writers of this age applaud such conduct, and bestow on it the titles of "virtue" and "greatness." The word "great" could not be applied to Alexander with respect to any one quality he possessed. His mind was scarcely advanced beyond mediocrity; and he was utterly destitute of that political prescience which great statesmen so frequently possess, and of which he had so brilliant an example in the emperor Napoleon. The Russian monarch died while still in the autumn of life; yet, as a ruler, he had lived too long. He had deserted the liberal principles which he professed rather than acted upon in his younger days; and the system which he laboured to create, of despotism founded upon superstition and the personal abasement of his subjects, gave symptoms of decay even during his own life. Where no constitutional means of remedying abuses exist, revolution is the natural resort of an oppressed people. It is idle to talk of the horrors which commonly accompany it; that perversion of power which brought about the revolution is responsible for them. Had Alexander lived another ten years, or even five, he would probably have shared the fate of his father Paul. Yet he might have been more popular, and personally loved, than any sovereign who ever occupied the imperial throne of Russia, had he but known how to have trusted his subjects, and to have progressed with the spirit of the times. That must advance; its onward movement is inevitable; and woe to the monarch who blindly devotes all his energies to drive it back!

Alexander had commenced this fatal and foredoomed struggle. He had placed the imperial will in obstinate yet trembling opposition to the natural laws which regulate the development of nations and the expansion of the human mind! What was the result? A blighted life, a constant dread of assassination, shattered nerves, a ceaseless gnawing at the heart, and a premature death. His vain attempts to crush liberalism—to drill the minds of his people as he did the movements of his soldiers—to stifle thought—to keep Russia always a child, when it was apparent that its growth to manhood was inevitable—to surround the press with multiplied and galling restrictions, enforced by bayonets and prison cells, and to chain up education like some wild thing, to be petted in bondage and dreaded when at liberty—caused him to leave the empire he desired to consolidate and render more united and passively obedient than

any other in the world, on the eve of a revolution which threatened to overthrow a despotic government altogether.

The czar has been spoken of as the high-principled, pure-minded advocate of order, and the magnanimous hero who arrested and crushed the devouring ambition of Napoleon. No merit is due to Alexander for his efforts in this direction; for, with respect to it, he was, at best, but "the accident of an accident." The attentive reader of the foregoing narrative will recognise the truth of the statement, that his motives were merely those of selfishness and fear. It was not until the emperor began to dread revolution at home, that he assumed to become an apostle of order abroad. Not until he had unjustly seized Finland, without a cause and without a blush, and failed in an unjust attempt to seize a great part of Turkey, that he became shocked at the aggressive spirit of Napoleon. But a very few years before, he had eagerly grasped at the offer to unite the brute energies of Russia to the military prowess of France, and to share with its great soldier the spoils of the world! The names of Tilsit and Erfurth cannot be erased from the pages of history. Alexander, during his friendly connection with Napoleon, acted with a perfidy, and a grasping, dishonest acquisitiveness utterly inconsistent with an honourable nature. He was ready to play the robber's part towards all his neighbours; and he despoiled his brother-in-law, the king of Sweden, of Finland with as much indifference as he received a Polish province plundered from his friend Frederic William of Prussia, and with as much readiness as he issued an edict prematurely annexing Moldavia and Wallachia to the Russian empire! Alexander, like a repentant robber, who finds the law cannot be defied with impunity, only turned politically honest when he found that dishonesty was dangerous, and that his accomplice in guilt was far his superior in dexterity, and not disposed to spare even him. To talk sounding nonsense about the honour and virtue of such a potentate as this, is an insult to the sacred name of truth and to the judgment of mankind!

The moderation of Alexander on the occasion of the entrance of the allies into Paris, has been much commended, and in some respects deservedly so. He acted with humanity, and bore in mind that his quarrel was not with the French people, but with their ruler. But this moderation, however estimable and apparently generous, was chiefly the result of policy. He did not desire to annihilate France, or to see it other than one of the great powers of Europe; it was not his interest to enrich Austria and Prussia with its spoils. But the cupidity of the Russian emperor was sufficiently active even at this period. He did not exhibit any moderation towards Poland, the sovereignty of which was ceded to him by his allies only because they were well aware that sooner than abandon his claim to it, he was ready to plunge Europe again into war. The political moderation of Alexander was, in fact, for the most part a delusion, and a mask beneath which he endeavoured to hide his aggressive intentions. Whenever this imperial Tartuffe desired to despoil his neighbours, he always assumed a more than ordinary amount of moderation and forbearance, and uttered the fulsome language of an obtrusive and pretentious piety.

Russia progressed during the reign of Alexander; and it must have been a strangely obtuse nation indeed, not to have progressed during five-and-twenty years of such intellectual activity and excitement as then prevailed throughout Europe. But this national advancement is to be attributed rather to the inevitable course of events, than to any exertions of the czar. It would have taken place to a much larger extent had the great Catherine still swayed the imperial sceptre; and to as great a one if any prince not deficient in the ordinary intelligence and firmness of a man, had held the place of Alexander. In matters of education, and political and social amelioration, his influence was rather that of a dragwheel than a spur. Certainly, he patronised science so long as it merely gathered facts, and did not make any speculative application of them—science, in a word, dissevered from its companion, thought; he patronised painting and the arts, and promoted agriculture, commerce, and manufactures. Such a course, however, is both the interest and the duty of a monarch; a small and feeble return to his people for the vast distinction and power he receives from them. The performance of such a duty does not give him a right to become a stumbling-block in the path of his people towards a rational civilisation and a moderate freedom, or to sit like a nightmare upon the bosom of the young intellect of the empire, while it

gasped and struggled to release itself from the terrible oppression, and to develop its energies unchecked by the iron hand of ignorant and trembling power. Alexander was a huge political pretence, a moral and pious sham, and a despot all the more dangerous because he always strove to hide the cloven hoof of tyranny beneath the gown and cowl of a pretended sanctimony. For awhile this assumption deceived his people; but when the excitement of the great war with France had cooled down—when judgment was partially dissevered from passion, they found out the hollowness of his pretensions; and Alexander, who had ever sought to win the applause of his people with as much assiduity as an actor upon the stage does that of his audience, died unmourned and even unregretted. The world has no sympathy with an unmasked hypocrite; and the educated classes of Russia had found out their emperor. Yet such is the influence of pretentious and hollow piety, and so difficult is it to destroy the false claims to respect of insincerity of this nature, that we believe the character of Alexander has not been drawn with unsparing truth until the appearance of this summary of it. It is a sad quality of common minds, that they ever busy themselves with composing elaborate adulation of those who occupy the high places of society, and of meanly refraining from all mention of their vices.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE GRAND-DUKE CONSTANTINE; HIS SECOND MARRIAGE, AND RENUNCIATION OF HIS RIGHT TO THE THRONE; NICHOLAS VAINLY URGES HIS BROTHER TO RESUME HIS RIGHT; CONSTANTINE IS PROCLAIMED EMPEROR, BUT CONFIRMS HIS RENUNCIATION; AFTER AN INTERREGNUM OF THREE WEEKS NICHOLAS CONSENTS TO ASCEND THE THRONE; OUTBREAK OF THE CONSPIRACY; DECISION OF NICHOLAS; FIERCE CONFLICT IN THE PLACE OF THE SENATE; SUPPRESSION OF THE INSURRECTION; EXECUTION OF THE PRINCIPAL CONSPIRATORS; EXPIATORY CEREMONIAL ON THE THEATRE OF THE REVOLT; NICHOLAS ATTEMPTS TO PURIFY THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE; HIS CORONATION; HIS PERSONAL APPEARANCE.

As the emperor Alexander left no children, his brother, the Grand-duke Constantine, was the legitimate heir to the throne. The second son of Paul, and the grandson of the illustrious Catherine, Constantine was born at St. Petersburg on the 8th of May, 1779. Catherine had bestowed upon him the baptismal name of Constantine, which was generally considered as an indication of her wish that in his person should be fulfilled a prophecy current among the Greeks, that a Constantine should once more reign at Constantinople. Every effort of policy with respect to the East was directed to effect a restoration of the Byzantine empire, as an appendage of the imperial house of Russia. Greek children were placed around the grand-duke even from his cradle, for the purpose of interesting him in their native language; but he never evinced any other feeling than that of dislike to it. As he grew up, his favourite study was military exercises. At the age of seventeen he was united to a lady of fifteen, the Princess Juliana of Saxe-Coburg. The manners of Constantine were savage, and his inclinations fiercely despotic. He possessed scarcely less excitability and eccentricity than his father Paul, whom he resembled in person, and almost surpassed in ugliness. His features had the Tartar cast, and were deeply scarred by the small-pox. Yet, though occasionally brutal in his manners, it is said he sometimes exhibited an air of extreme polish, combined with a winning and attractive manner. This, however, was seldom; for he had nothing mild or gentle in his nature. A distinguished living writer observes—"He rivalled Richard Cœur-de-Lion in his valour in the field; but he surpassed him, also, in the vehemence with which he ruled the cabinet, and the acts of tyranny by which both his public administration and private life were characterised. Violent, capricious, and irritable, he could never brook contradiction; and when inflamed by passion, indulged his vehement

disposition by frightful and disgraceful acts of cruelty. He was an untamed savage, armed with the power, and animated by the imperious disposition of an Eastern sultan, imperfectly veiled over by the chivalrous manners of modern Europe. Yet was the savage not destitute of generous sentiments; he could occasionally do noble things; and though the discipline he maintained among his troops was extremely severe, yet it was redeemed, and their affections won, by frequent acts of kindness."

The manners of Constantine disgusted the lady to whom he had been united; and, four years after their union, they separated by mutual consent. The grand-duke was much attached to, and greatly under the influence of, his brother, the emperor Alexander; during whose reign he won great distinction by his bravery and military qualities, especially at the battle of Austerlitz and on the sanguinary field of Eylau; he was also present in the campaigns of 1812, 1813, and 1814, and accompanied the victorious march of his countrymen from Moscow to Paris.

In the year 1820, the charms of a Polish lady led Constantine to a step which at once changed both his destiny and that of the Russian empire. The Countess Joanna Grudzynska was a fragile beauty, in delicate health, and apparently but little likely to win the regard of a rough and boisterous soldier. Yet the grand-duke became so fascinated with her, that he determined to overcome every obstacle that lay in the way of making her his wife. After some difficulty, he procured a decree of the synod of the Russian church, confirmed by an imperial ukase, by which he was divorced from the Princess of Saxe-Coburg, with liberty to marry again. He immediately afterwards married the Countess Grudzynska, though with the left hand—a ceremony by which, though she became his legal wife, she did not become a grand-duchess; and it was understood that her children could not succeed to the throne. In fact, Constantine had only obtained his brother Alexander's consent to the divorce, by entering into a solemn engagement with him to renounce his right of succession to the crown in favour of his younger brother, Nicholas, as the only means of preventing ultimate confusion and doubt as to the right of succession.

The agreement was, however, a secret one; and some affirm, that even Nicholas himself was ignorant of it. Certainly, the general supposition was, that though Constantine's children by the Polish countess were set aside, the rights of the grand-duke remained intact; and he was always regarded as heir-presumptive to the czar. He had, however, left a written renunciation of his right of succession, which had been deposited by Alexander in a sealed packet, and confided to the care of the president of the imperial council. According to the command of the emperor, this packet was opened immediately after his death, in the presence of the council. Within was found a letter from Constantine to his brother, dated January, 1822. It contained the following strange and humiliating words:—"Conscious that I do not possess either the genius, the talents, or the strength necessary to fit me for the dignity of sovereign, to which my birth would give me a right, I entreat your imperial majesty to transfer that right to him to whom it belongs after me, and thus insure for ever the stability of the empire. As for myself, I shall add, by this renunciation, a new guarantee and a new force to the engagement which I spontaneously and solemnly contracted on the occasion of my divorce from my first wife. All the circumstances in which I find myself, strengthen my determination to adhere to this resolution, which will prove to the empire, and to the whole world, the sincerity of my sentiments." There was a reply by Alexander to this communication, simply without a word of comment, accepting the offer it conveyed; and also a declaration, that, in pursuance of it, the Grand-duke Nicholas was to ascend the throne of Russia.

The council accordingly declared the latter to be emperor, and invited him to attend to receive their homage. This he refused. "I am not emperor," he observed, "and will not become so at my brother's expense. If, maintaining his renunciation, the Grand-duke Constantine persists in the sacrifice of his rights, in that case, but in that only, will I exercise mine by accepting the throne." As the entreaties of the council were unable to move Nicholas from this determination, they obeyed him, saying, with a very equivocal kind of loyalty—"You are our emperor; we owe you an absolute obedience. Since, then, you command us to recognise the Grand-duke Constantine as our legiti-

mate sovereign, we have no alternative but to obey your command." Constantine was therefore proclaimed emperor at St. Petersburg, and the usual oath of fidelity to him administered to the guards in the space in front of the Winter Palace.

The news of Alexander's death reached Warsaw some time before it arrived at St. Petersburg. On the receipt of it, Constantine sent his younger brother, the Grand-duke Michael, to the capital, to confirm his previous renunciation of the crown. Still Nicholas hesitated; for he knew himself to be less popular than his elder brother; and was aware, that in the event of a struggle taking place, Constantine would be almost certain to prevail. He desired, therefore, to have the most convincing proofs of his brother's voluntary renunciation of the imperial sceptre, before he ventured to accept it. He accordingly prevailed on Michael to return to Warsaw, with the intelligence that Constantine had already been proclaimed emperor. Michael, on his journey back, was met by a courier from Constantine, with the answer of the latter to the despatches he had received from St. Petersburg; and an intimation, that the resolution of the grand-duke was inflexible.

It was not, however, until the 24th of December, after an interregnum of three weeks' duration, that Nicholas consented to ascend the throne which was the inheritance of his elder brother. It was time he did so; for the conspiracy, the discovery of which had shortened the life of Alexander, was on the point of breaking out. Since 1817, secret political societies had existed in Russia, with the object of subverting the government, and establishing representative institutions and a constitutional monarchy in its stead. The directing committee of the conspirators was held at St. Petersburg, and presided over by Prince Troubetzkoi. Ryleif, Prince Obolouski, Colonel Pestel, and the brothers Mouravieff, were the most distinguished leaders; while the ordinary members comprised a great number of military officers. The chief conspirators are admitted, by those not favourable to their conduct or principles, to have been amongst the most highly educated and patriotic men in Russia.

The death of Alexander, at the time when the enterprise was about to be put into action, disconcerted the conspirators. The prolongation of the interregnum revived their hopes, and they resolved to take advantage of the strange dispute between the two brothers. They therefore resolved to advocate the cause of Constantine, to win the common soldiers in his name, and, when they had placed him on the throne, to demand an entire change of government, on the representative principle, as their reward. The final refusal of Constantine to accept the throne, and the betrayal of their scheme to Nicholas, decided the conspirators on an instant revolt; and Prince Troubetzkoi was named dictator. "You see," said Ryleif, "we are betrayed; the court is partly aware of our designs, but they do not know the whole. Our forces are sufficient; our scabbards are broken; we can no longer hide our sabres."

The 26th of December had been appointed as the day on which the oath of allegiance to the emperor Nicholas should be administered to the troops. Several regiments took it with the customary docility of Russian soldiers; but this was not the case with the few devoted to the conspirators. The troops comprising them were falsely informed that Constantine had not resigned, but had been placed in irons; that he was their rightful czar, and, if reinstated by their means, would double their pay. To these assurances they responded with loud shouts of "Constantine for ever!" The number of these men, however, was but small; and those who assembled, armed, behind the statue of Peter the Great, in the Place of the Senate, to assert the rights of Constantine, did not exceed 1,800 men; though they were surrounded by a great crowd of armed civilians, who shared their enthusiasm and joined in their shouts.

Nicholas, on receiving information of these proceedings, acted with a courage which probably saved not only his crown but his life. Placing himself at the head of a regiment of the guards, he proceeded towards the scene of insurrection. On his way, he met a column marching to join the rebels. "Good-day, my children," said he to them, using the parental form of address customary with the czars when addressing their troops. "Hurrah! Constantine!" was the answer he received. Though pale as marble, Nicholas exhibited no indication of fear, but addressed the same salute to another detachment of troops which was

following their companions. These men remained silent; and the emperor, with great presence of mind, in a loud voice, gave the command, "Wheel to the right—march!" The instinct of discipline prevailed; and the men turned about, and retraced their steps, as if they had not deviated from their allegiance to him whose voice they now obeyed.

The military insurgents at length numbered upwards of 3,000 men, and continued to fill the air with shouts of "Long live the emperor Constantine!" But at this critical moment the leaders were wanting, and Prince Troubetzkoi had abandoned his post and fled, even leaving his papers undestroyed. Ryleif was there; but he was a civilian, and could not take the command of the troops, and he lost time for action in seeking Troubetzkoi. The emperor had with him no less than 13,000 troops; but he hesitated to command them to act against the rebels. The brave General Milaradovitch, "the Murat of Russia," advanced alone amongst them, in the hope of being able by his personal influence to subdue the mutiny. One of the conspirators immediately fired at him, and he fell mortally wounded from his horse. Nicholas yet hesitated to shed the blood of Russian soldiers by Russian hands; and he sent forward the Archbishop of St. Petersburg, bearing the cross, and followed by a great body of the clergy, to produce submission by working upon the religious emotions of the insurgents. The attempt failed; the voice of the aged prelate was rendered inaudible by the rolling of drums and the shouts of the soldiers. The leaders now set up a cry of "Constantine and the constitution!" The last word, which was a foreign one in Russia, greatly perplexed the ignorant soldiers, who, in fact, had no conception whatever of its real meaning. "What is that?" said the men to each other. "Do you not know?" said one; "it is the empress!" The word has a feminine termination, and was supposed, by the speaker and many of his comrades, to refer to Constantine's Polish wife. Others among these poor men entertained a different opinion, and said, "It is the carriage in which the emperor is to drive at his coronation."

The short winter day was drawing to a close; and Nicholas, having exhausted all pacific means of terminating the revolt, ordered his troops to act against the insurgents. The latter were assailed both in front and flank by cavalry and infantry. They fought with a desperate bravery; and the struggle was prolonged for a considerable period. The cavalry were repulsed; the Grand-duke Michael narrowly escaped being cut down by one of the conspirators; while another eagerly sought out Nicholas, for the purpose of dispatching him, though without effect. As time wore on, and the rebels still remained in possession of their strong position, the emperor ordered the cannon, hitherto concealed by a body of cavalry, to be unmasked. The threatening mouths of the guns were pointed directly against the insurgent square, who were again summoned to surrender. They refused, and the artillery was discharged over their heads, for the purpose of intimidating them. As none of these fearless men were injured, they raised a cheer, and mocked their assailants. Nicholas then ordered a point-blank discharge. The cannoniers hesitated to inflict this butchery upon their comrades; and it was not until the Grand-duke Michael with his own hand discharged the first gun, that they performed their painful duty. The effect was terrible; and the grapeshot did fearful execution on the compact living square through which it ploughed. Yet these unhappy men, with a heroism which deserved success, still bore up bravely, and it was not until the tenth volley that they broke and fled. They were pursued by the cavalry, whose sabres reeked with the blood of their own countrymen. By six o'clock 700 were made prisoners, and the rest slain or dispersed. "What a beginning of a reign!" exclaimed Nicholas, as he returned sadly towards the palace. On his arrival, the empress fell fainting into his arms, and, from that hour, she was afflicted with a nervous disorder which medical art has been unable to subdue.

The regiments implicated in the revolt were politically pardoned by Nicholas, with the exception of the men whom he considered most guilty; these being sent to the Caucasus to combat with the fierce mountaineers of that locality. Towards the leaders of the conspiracy he adopted a very different course. The most active of them were immediately arrested, and a commission of inquiry appointed to investigate the extent and nature of the disaffection. It is generally admitted that this investigation was conducted in a vindictive and minutely

inquisitorial manner. In some instances, persuasion was employed, and in others intimidation, for the purpose of extorting statements which might criminate others. The proceedings of the commissioners were conducted in private, and continued through a period of several months. They resulted in a report, that a conspiracy existed of a far more dangerous and extensive kind than had been supposed.

It is highly probable that such was the case as regards the educated classes of society in Russia, and especially amongst the military. These had returned from their campaigns in France and Germany, for the most part enchanted with the liberal ideas they heard there for the first time. "They had," observes Alison, "stood side by side with the ardent youth of the Teutonic universities, whose feelings had been warmed by the fervour of the Tugenbund,* whose imaginations had been kindled by the poetry of Körner: at the capture of Paris they had seen the world in transports at the magnanimous words of the czar in praise of liberal institutions; many of them had shared in his reception in London, and witnessed the marvellous spectacle of a free people emerging unscathed from a contest from which they themselves had been extricated only by committing their capital to the flames. Immense was the influence which these circumstances came ere long to exercise on the highly educated youth of Russia, speaking French and English as well as natives, associating with the very highest society of these nations, and contrasting the varied excitements and intellectual pleasures at their command, with the stillness and monotony, save from physical sensations, of their own fettered land. They saw civilisation on its bright side only; they had basked in its sunshine; they had not felt its shade. They had returned home, as so many travellers do, to the cold regions of the north, discontented with their own country, and passionately desirous of a change. These sentiments were dangerous; their expression might consign the utterer at once to Siberia: they were shrouded in silence, like a secret passion in the female heart from a jealous husband; but like all other emotions, they only became the more violent from the necessity of being concealed, and came in many noble breasts entirely to absorb the mind, to the exclusion of all objects of pacific interest or ambition."

Such sentiments, stifled beneath a despotic government which had emasculated and neutralised the press, placed education in fetters whose iron was ill-concealed by the thin gilding which they bore, and watched every utterance of original thought with the savage glare of a tiger regarding its destined prey;—the entertainment of such sentiments, under such conditions, could scarcely produce any other result than insurrection or revolution. Had the Russian people, or the masses which in that vast empire stand for a people, been as well prepared as the educated classes, the latter must have taken place. But the peasantry and soldiery were not awakened: it was therefore but an insurrection; and this seldom, if ever, succeeds in the face of a powerful government.

Immediately after the suppression of the insurrection at St. Petersburg, an outbreak took place in the army of the south, and in that stationed on the Polish frontier. Colonel Pestel and the two Mouravieffs, who had adopted the principles of republicanism, were the respective leaders. But the common soldiers, though attached to their officers, had no desire for change, and no idea of effecting a revolution. Sergius Mouravieff succeeded in causing his regiment to revolt, by persuading the men to take up arms for Constantine; but he and other of the leaders made an attempt to introduce the shout of "Long live the Slavonic republic!" The ignorant soldiery had no idea of the meaning of the words. "We are quite willing," remarked an old grenadier, "to call out 'Long live the Slavonic republic!' but who is to be our emperor?" It was in vain that the officers spoke to them of liberty, and that some priests read passages from the Old Testament, to show that democracy was the form of government most agreeable to the Deity. The soldiers only recurred to the question, "Who is to be the emperor? Constantine or Nicholas Paulovitch?"

The result of an insurrection in which the convictions of the mass were adverse to the principles they were presumed to contend for, could not long be doubted. It was suppressed with but little bloodshed, and the leading conspirators were arrested. They were all placed on their trial before the commissioners appointed to examine

* That is, the "League of Virtue;" a name given to a secret society, or rather a number of affiliated societies which spread throughout Germany.

into the details of the affair, and thirty-six of them sentenced to death, and 130 others to imprisonment and lesser penalties. Of these, five only were executed; the punishment of the rest being commuted to exile, accompanied with hard labour, in Siberia. The five victims were Pestel, Ryleif, Sergius Mouravieff, Bestoujif-Rumine, and Kakhofski. These unhappy persons—all men of education, great talents, and benevolent, though perhaps extravagant, views—were condemned to the revolting death of being broken on the wheel. The actual execution of such a sentence was felt to be a barbarity inconsistent with the civilisation and feelings of the age; and Nicholas, prudently bowing to this general impression, changed their doom into that of death by hanging. Even in this, however, there was a refined cruelty, as it was an unusual mode of execution in Russia, and regarded as peculiarly degrading; the more so by men of cultivated minds, who had expected to meet the fate of soldiers. Prior to their execution they were examined by Nicholas in person. "What had your emperor done to you?" said he to one of them. "We had not an emperor," was the reply; "we have had two. One was your brother, and the other Aratcheieff." Proceeding in a similar strain, he was interrupted by the Grand-duke Michael, who brutally exclaimed, "That man should have his mouth stopped with a bayonet." "You asked just now," continued the prisoner, "why we wanted a constitution? It was, that such things might not be said." Nicholas then questioned Bestoujif, who replied, "I repent of nothing I have done; I die satisfied, and soon to be avenged." Struck with the courage of his answers, the emperor said, "I have the power to pardon you; and if I felt assured you would be a faithful subject, I would gladly do so." "Why, sire," responded Bestoujif, "that is precisely what we complain of; the emperor can do anything, and is bound by no law. In the name of God, allow justice to have free course, and let the fate of your subjects no longer depend on your caprice or your impressions for a moment."

The executions took place on the 25th of July, and created a great and painful sensation at St. Petersburg, where no capital punishment had been inflicted for a period of eighty years. The gallows was erected on the edge of the rampart of the citadel; and it was deemed necessary to have a large body of troops on the spot. Great sympathy existed for the victims, and there were few spectators besides the soldiers. With a revolting cruelty, the sufferers were compelled to look on for a whole hour while the preparations were being completed for the execution. The thirty-one conspirators whose sentence of death had been commuted to that of exile to Siberia, were marched round the scaffold, after which their epaulets were torn off, their uniforms taken from them, their swords broken over their heads, and they were dressed in the coarse garb of convicts. The five who were to suffer then ascended the scaffold with firm steps and an undaunted air. The signal was given, and Pestel and Kakhofski died almost immediately. The sufferings of the other three were painfully prolonged; the ropes broke, and they fell into the ditch beneath. Though severely injured, these unhappy gentlemen reascended the scaffold with a calm and composed air. "Nothing succeeds in this country," said Ryleif; "not even death." "Woe to the country," said Sergius Mouravieff, "where they can neither conspire, nor judge, nor hang!" This time the dismal ceremony was effectually performed; and in a few minutes the roll of drums announced that the victims had ceased to exist.

The conspirators who were sent to Siberia included many persons of high rank, and amongst them Prince Troubetzkoi. All who were married were accompanied by their wives: these high-minded women, who had moved in the first circles of society, voluntarily going with their husbands into exile, in spite of the offered protection of the emperor if they would remain at St. Petersburg. Towards these noble and self-denying women, Nicholas then exhibited a resentment as unmanly as it was ungenerous. Regarding the act of following their husbands into exile as an adoption of the principles of the latter, he behaved towards them with an inexorable severity; and even after the lapse of fifteen years, sternly refused a petition addressed to him by the Princess Troubetzkoi, imploring permission to remove to some place where the climate was milder, and where she might obtain the rudiments of education for her children.

On the morning after the execution of the conspirators, Nicholas caused the Place of the Senate, which had been the theatre of the insurrection, to be subjected to a

ceremony which was presumed to act as a purification. "On the spot," said he in a proclamation to the people and the army, "where, seven months ago, the explosion of a sudden revolt revealed the existence of a vast conspiracy which had been going on for ten years, it is meet that a last act of commemoration—an expiatory sacrifice—should consecrate on the same spot the memory of the Russian blood shed for religion, the throne, and the country. We have recognised the hand of the Almighty, when He tore aside the veil which concealed that horrible mystery: it permitted crime to arm itself in order to assure its fall. Like a momentary storm, the revolt only broke forth to annihilate the conspiracy of which it was the consummation." The ceremony was attended by the whole garrison of St. Petersburg, amounting to 60,000 men. An altar was erected in the great square, and a service of thanksgiving performed at it by the metropolitan archbishop. The priests then scattered holy water over the soldiers, the people, and the pavement; after which the bands of all the regiments struck up a hallelujah! and the ceremony concluded with the discharge of a hundred guns.

The strict investigation which had been made into all the details of the conspiracy, brought to light much of the shameless corruption which impeded the course of justice and impaired the service of the state. Nicholas resolved on an attempt to eradicate this wholesale dishonesty; but his success was but slight and partial, because he did not adopt the plan of paying the various officers of the state, either in civil or military departments, sums adequate to the responsibilities they had to discharge, and sufficient to raise them beyond those temptations which beset the needy. He appealed not to the interest, but to the honour and sense of duty of the servants of the state; and to this they were, for the most part, insensible. He caused circulars to be sent to all the judges and governors of the empire, urging them to a faithful discharge of their duties, and threatening the severest penalties in the event of their not doing so. To assist the judges in their labours, and to make the course of the law intelligible to the people, he also ordered the imperial ukases to be collected, printed, and codified; and also caused a uniform code, forming a complete system of law, to be constructed out of these enormous, and frequently heterogeneous, materials.

By a ukase of the 5th of March, Nicholas also abolished a cruel mode of torture which had been long in use among the Cossacks of the Don, and consisted in attaching the feet of a victim to great blocks of stone in a room, while his hands were fastened at extreme tension to the ceiling, and leaving him in that position until death released him from his sufferings. Yet, though putting down cruelty in others, he conducted his own government with great severity. The number of persons exiled to Siberia in 1826 amounted to 12,000, and exceeded, by 3,000, the number banished to that frozen region in the preceding year; a period which the gloomy suspicions of Alexander had caused to be more than usually full of arrests and expatriations for real or suspected political offences.

The coronation of the emperor followed; but, before we speak of this event, it is necessary to mention a few brief biographical facts concerning his career before he came to the throne. Nicholas, the third son of the emperor Paul, was born at St. Petersburg on the 7th of July, 1796. On the assassination of that eccentric tyrant, the young grand-duke was left entirely to the care of his mother. This lady appointed General Lamsdorf to be his governor, and selected the Countess Lieven, and the German philologist, Adelung, as his principal teachers in languages and literature, and counsellor Storch as his instructor in general politics, and in the other sciences and arts regarded as suitable to his rank and station. Nicholas acquired the power of speaking the French and German languages with as much facility as the Russian, and early manifested that attachment for military display and the art of fortification which distinguished him through life.

On the termination, in 1814, of the great European war, Nicholas was sent on his travels, and visited some of the principal battle-fields. In 1816 he came to England, and was received with much cordiality. He afterwards made a tour of the chief provinces of the Russian empire. On the 13th of July, 1817, he was united to Frederica Louisa Charlotte Wilhelmina, the eldest daughter of Frederic William III., the king of Prussia. The lady, born on the 13th of July, 1798, entered the Greek church on the occasion of her marriage, and, according to Russian custom, assumed the names of Alexandra Feodorowna.

The coronation of the emperor and empress took place at Moscow on the 3rd of September, 1826, and was conducted with extraordinary pomp; so much so, as to elicit from a lady of rank the thoughtless expression of "How vexatious it is that such *fêtes* are so rare!" Their imperial majesties were received at Moscow with an enthusiasm which was scarcely to have been expected after the recent insurrection, and its tragical and unpopular results. That ancient city exhibited a splendid spectacle; for those portions of it which had been destroyed by the conflagration of 1812, had been rebuilt in a more elegant and durable manner; noble stone structures having, in many instances, taken the place of wooden palaces and other buildings. One incident, on this occasion, produced a great and joyful sensation amongst the crowds which filled the city. On the evening before the coronation, the Grand-duke Constantine came spontaneously and unexpectedly from Warsaw, to assist in the ceremony, and do honour to his younger brother. When Nicholas and Constantine appeared hand-in-hand on the day of the coronation, the enthusiasm of the people knew no bounds; and the tremendous shouts of "Hurrah! Constantine!" which rent the air, at first startled the emperor, as they recalled a painful recollection of the events of the insurrection at St. Petersburg. It was but for a moment; Nicholas then saw that the shouts were a tribute of admiration to the generous self-denial of Constantine; and the brothers publicly embraced. Constantine, though seventeen years older than Nicholas, had not only surrendered his crown, but was the first to do homage to the new sovereign.

Nicholas was in some respects favoured by nature, and had many qualities which fitted him for the exalted position in which he was placed. His stature was remarkably lofty; his features handsome, though their customary expression was cold and severe; and his demeanour majestic. He united considerable mental powers with an inflexible will, and that subtlety of intellect which is characteristic of educated Russians.

* That is to say, that the improvements and triumphs of Nicholas have been accomplished by a retrograde motion, in opposition to the enlightenment and progressive spirit of the most civilised nations of Europe! This going back into the past, or, at the best, standing still with barbarism, may have been a triumph to the emperor Nicholas; for it certainly appears to have been one of the chief aims of his rule; but how it could be an *improvement* we are at a loss to perceive. As we have stated in a previous note (see *ante*, p. 348), there was more freedom in Russia, and more promise of a better state of society, under the sway of Catherine II., than there has ever been since. Had the empire been governed, since her time, by a succession of monarchs of her intellectual power, its moral and social development, and national progress towards that rational freedom, personal polish, and general

He has been praised as patriotic; but it would be more correct to say that he loved Russia, and laboured incessantly to exalt it, because he identified its greatness with his own. Like Louis XIV., he also might have said what indeed he ever felt—"The state? I am the state." Alison, the worshipper of everything Russian, and, not least, of Russian despotism, writing, during the life of Nicholas, said of him:—"He wishes to improve and elevate his country, and he has done much to effect that noble object; but he desires to do so by developing, not changing, the national spirit; by making it become a first Russia, not a second France or England. He has adopted the maxim of Montesquieu—that no nation ever attained to real greatness but by institutions in conformity with its spirit. He is neither led away by the thirst for sudden mechanical improvement, like Peter, nor the praises of philosophers, like Catherine, nor the visions of inexperienced philanthropy, like Alexander. He has not attempted to erect a capital in a pestilential marsh, and done so at the expense of a hundred thousand lives; nor has he dreamt of mystical regeneration with a visionary sybil, and made sovereigns put their hands to a holy alliance from her influence. He neither corresponds with French atheists nor English democrats; he despises the praises of the first, he braves the hostility of the last. His maxim is to take men as they are, and neither suppose them better nor worse. He is content to let Russia grow up in a Russian garb, animated with a Russian spirit, and moulded by Russian institutions, without the aid either of Parisian communism or British liberalism. The improvements he has effected in the government of his dominions have been vast; the triumphs with which his external policy have been attended, unbounded; but they have all been achieved, not in imitation of, but in opposition to, the ideas of western Europe.* They bespeak, not less than his internal government, the national character of his policy."

While speaking personally of the em-

peror Nicholas, it will be well to introduce the following portraiture of him by the French traveller, the Marquis de Custine, who had frequent opportunities of observing him. The description refers to a later period of the life of the emperor; but it is probable that it applies almost equally as well to the one of which we are now writing:—

"The predominant expression of his countenance is that of a restless severity, which strikes a beholder at the first glance, and, in spite of the regularity of his features, conveys by no means a pleasant impression. Physiognomists pretend, with much reason, that the hardness of the heart injures the beauty of the countenance. Nevertheless, this expression in the emperor Nicholas appears to be the result of experience rather than the work of nature. By what long and cruel sufferings must not a man have been tortured, when his countenance excites fear, notwithstanding the voluntary confidence that noble features inspire!

"A man charged with the management and direction, in its most minute details, of some immense machine, incessantly fears the derangement of one or other of its various parts. He who obeys, suffers only according to the precise measure of the evil inflicted; he who commands, suffers first as other men suffer, and afterwards, that common measure of evil is multiplied a hundred-fold for him by the workings of imagination and self-love. Responsibility is the punishment of absolute power. If he be the *primum mobile* of all minds, he becomes the centre also of all griefs; the more he is dreaded, the more is he to be pitied.*

"He to whom is accorded unlimited rule, sees, even in the common occurrences of life, the spectre of revolt. Persuaded that his rights are sacred, he recognises no bounds to them but those of his own intelligence and will, and he is, therefore, subject to constant annoyance. An unlucky fly, buzzing in the imperial palace during a ceremony, mortifies the emperor; the independence of nature appears to him a bad example; everything which he cannot subject to his arbitrary laws, becomes, in his eyes, as a soldier who, in the heat of battle, revolts against his officer. The emperor of Russia is a military chief, and every day with him is a day of battle.

"Nevertheless, at times some gleams of softness temper the imperious looks of this monarch; and then, the expression of affability reveals all the native beauty of his classic features. In the heart of the husband and the father, humanity triumphs for a moment over the policy of the prince. When the sovereign rests from his task of imposing the yoke upon his subjects, he appears happy. This combat between the primitive dignity of the man and the affected gravity of the sovereign, appears to me worthy the attention of an observer; it occupied mine the greater part of the time I passed in the chapel.

"The emperor is above the usual height by half a head; his figure is noble, although a little stiff; he has practised from his youth the Russian custom of girding the body above the loins, to such a degree as to push up the stomach into the chest, which produces an unnatural swelling or extension about the ribs that is as injurious to health as it is ungraceful in appearance. This voluntary deformity destroys all freedom of movement, impairs the elegance of the shape, and imparts an air of constraint to the whole person. They say that when the emperor loosens his dress, the viscera, suddenly giving way, are disturbed for a moment in their equilibrium, which produces an extraordinary prostration of strength.

"The emperor has a Grecian profile, the forehead high, but receding; the nose straight and perfectly formed; the mouth very finely cut; the face, which in shape is rather a long oval, is noble; the whole air military, and rather German than Slavonic. His carriage and his attitudes are naturally imposing. He expects always to be gazed at, and never for a moment forgets that he is so. It may even be said, that he likes this homage of the eyes.

"He passes the greater part of his existence in the open air, at reviews, or in rapid journeys. During summer, the shade of his military hat draws across his forehead an oblique line, which marks the action of the sun upon the skin. It produces a singular effect, but is not disagreeable, as the cause is at once perceived.

"In examining attentively the fine person of this individual, on whose will hangs the fate of so many others, I have remarked, with involuntary pity, that he cannot smile at the same time with the eyes and the mouth; a want of harmony which denotes perpetual constraint, and which makes one remember, with regret, that easy natural grace so conspicuous in the less regular but more agreeable countenance of his brother, the emperor Alexander. The latter, always pleasing, had yet, at times, an assumed manner. The emperor Nicholas is more sincere; but he has an habitual expression of severity, which sometimes gives the idea of harshness and inflexibility. If, however, he is less fascinating, he is more firm than his late brother; but then, it must be added, that he has also a proportionately greater need of firmness. Graceful courtesy insures authority by removing the desire of resistance. The judicious economy in the exercise of power is a secret of which the emperor Nicholas is ignorant; he is one who desires to be obeyed where others desire to be loved."

education by which serfs and mobs are converted into a people, would have been far more rapid. The eventual attainment of these things by Russia is only a work of time: government cannot always be carried on by repressive means; for progression is a law of nature, whether applied to a tree, a man, or an empire. Men cannot for ever be ruled by a dread of banishment, the knout, the axe, or the bayonet.

* Perhaps so: but the doctrine is a fanciful one. The marquis, in the work from which we quote (De Custine's *Russia*), utters many very questionable opinions, and some rather puerile ones. We prefer his narrative to his reflections.

CHAPTER IX.

WAR WITH PERSIA; DEFEAT AND SUBMISSION OF THAT STATE; THE GREEK INSURRECTION AND WAR OF INDEPENDENCE; RUSSIA AT FIRST DECLINES INTERFERENCE; SUBSEQUENT INTERVENTION OF ENGLAND, FRANCE, AND RUSSIA; DESTRUCTION OF THE TURKISH FLEET AT NAVARINO; EMANCIPATION OF GREECE FROM THE OTTOMAN YOKE; WAR WITH TURKEY; CAMPAIGNS OF 1828 AND 1829; INTERFERENCE OF ENGLAND AND AUSTRIA; PEACE OF ADRIANOPLE; REFLECTIONS UPON THAT EVENT.

The emperor Nicholas, the very month of his coronation, declared war against Persia; an imperial manifesto to that effect appearing on the 28th of September, 1826. The region of the Caucasus was the cause of the quarrel. The Russian government, ever pursuing its policy of intervention in the affairs of weak or divided nations, had, in the year 1801, taken the Georgians into its protection, and annexed their country to the Russian empire.* Even long before that time, the mountains of the Caucasus were the scene of almost incessant contests between the Russians, Turks, and Persians, who contended with each other for the possession of the soil. The various native tribes, or petty nations, also repelled their invaders with great bravery, and made it extremely dangerous for any of them to advance beyond the fortified posts they occupied. The recent wars with Persia and with Turkey had left Russia the predominant power in this locality. Yet her mode of government was not suited to the hardy and independent mountaineers, who soon broke out into hostility against its oppressiveness. This irritation was fomented by the Turkish and Persian courts; and the war which Nicholas now declared against Persia was intended to decide the question, as to which was to become master of the Caucasus.

Persia soon felt her inability to contend against the overshadowing might of Russia. Her troops were utterly defeated by the Russians, under General Paskiewitch, on the 8th of August, at the battle of Elizabethpol. In the campaign of the following year the Persians were equally unfortunate. Several towns were taken; and the shah, threatened with destruction, had no resource but in submission. Peace was concluded between the two courts on the 28th of February, 1828. By this treaty, that of Turkmantchai, Russia (though she disclaimed all desire of conquest, and repelled as injurious every imputation of an ambitious desire to aggrandise her territory) declared, that her anxiety to prevent any future collision with Persia, compelled her to establish a frontier line, so well defined as to leave no room for doubt or discussion. The river Araxes was therefore adopted as this boundary—an arrangement by which the Russian dominions in Asia were con-

* See *ante*, p. 384.

siderably increased. The Khanat of Talish, the province and fortress of Erivan, were thus ceded to Russia; together with the important harbour of Anapa, on the Black Sea. The sacrifices made by Persia were immense; for, in addition to the territorial concessions, she was compelled to pay the whole expenses of the war. She had, however, no alternative, not being in a condition to renew the struggle.

It is necessary to say a few words with respect to the Greek insurrection against the power of Sultan Mahmoud—a struggle which, at this period, occupied the attention of nearly the whole of Europe. Four centuries of national subjection beneath the barbarous government of the Turks, had not extinguished in the Greeks their ancient love of liberty, or bowed their spirit to their abject condition.

Debased as the national character was by ages of a grinding political servitude, although the Greeks mostly retained only the vices of their brave and beauty-loving ancestors, yet were there many of them who remembered that they were the descendants of a noble race—

> "Whose land, from plain to mountain cave,
> Was Freedom's home or Glory's grave!"

and, in their enthusiastic bosoms, the spark of liberty, once implanted, was soon fanned into a quenchless flame.

The numerous troubles in which the Ottoman empire was involved, had encouraged in the Greeks a hope of throwing off its oppressive yoke. A powerful secret society was formed, with a well-organised agency, which extended throughout the whole of European Turkey. It was rumoured, in whispers, that some of the most distinguished persons in Europe were members of the society of the Hetairists. Count Capo d'Istria, a Greek by birth, but a Russian by adoption, who held the important situation of private secretary to the emperor Alexander, was known to be one—an incident which gave rise to the rumour, that even the czar himself was amongst the number. This circumstance, combined with the fact of identity in religion, and the well-known desires of the Russian government, caused all the Greeks to cast their eyes towards that country, with not only the hope, but the almost confident expectation of assistance.

In the war between the Porte and Ali Pasha (the powerful ruler of Janina), the Greeks thought they saw the long-desired opportunity. A general rising was therefore proclaimed on the 6th of April, 1821, by the Archbishop of Patros, and universally responded to. The Greeks were at first successful; but Mahmoud, having obtained the assistance of Mehemet Ali, the pasha of Egypt, and his warlike son, Ibrahim, made such fierce efforts to crush the insurrection, that it seemed that submission must be eventually inevitable. The struggle was, however, continued with great heroism and endurance on the part of the Greeks, and with a revolting barbarity on that of the Turks. The Greeks confidently expected assistance from Russia; but, as we have shown in a preceding chapter, the emperor Alexander held aloof, from a morbid fear of all revolutionary proceedings. Notwithstanding the brilliant opportunity thus offered him of reconstituting a Greek empire which should ultimately reconquer Constantinople, his dread of revolutionary measures and doctrines induced him to proclaim a strict neutrality in the war between the Turks and the Greek subjects. The last check to the Ottoman fury was thus removed: a religious enthusiasm seized the Turks, who demanded to be led against the infidels, whom they declared they would exterminate to the last man. Such was the fury of the Turkish government and people, that the whole of the Greeks in Constantinople were only saved from massacre in consequence of the earnest remonstrance of the Russian, French, and English ambassadors. The Greek patriarch and many of the Christian dignitaries were, however, ruthlessly murdered, and the churches broken into, plundered, and profaned.

Such were the atrocities and massacres committed by the Turks, and so unyielding was the attitude of the Greeks, that the Russian government expostulated with the sultan, and demanded reparation for the insults offered to the Greek religion, and the adoption of a more humane system of warfare in the contest with its Christian subjects. The divan deigned no answer to an expostulation which was accompanied with a threat of hostile proceedings in the event of refusal; and the Russian ambassador left Constantinople, having narrowly escaped being sent to the Seven Towers. The sultan then sent a message to St. Petersburg, justifying his own conduct, and stating, that the Christian churches which

had been destroyed by the Turkish populace should be rebuilt.

In the year 1822, the Greeks proclaimed their independence of the sultan, and achieved several heroic successes, which only drove their enemies to fresh barbarities. The vindictive struggle was prolonged over several years. The awful massacre in the island of Chios, created a thrill of horror throughout Europe. The feeling of the Christian nations was at length fairly aroused; and England, France, and Russia resolved to put a stop to this sanguinary war of extermination. Mahmoud, however, bent upon crushing all rebellion within his dominions, and making himself obeyed both by his Mohammedan and Christian subjects, declined any interference. The three powers, therefore, entered into an alliance on the 7th of July, 1827, for the protection of the Greeks. Alexander had been succeeded by his brother Nicholas, who was more disposed to turn the Greek revolution to political account than his cautious predecessor had been.

In consequence of this celebrated treaty, which has been aptly called "the cornerstone of Greek independence," the united powers proposed to the sultan that Greece should be a vassal state of Turkey, and acknowledge his suzerainty by paying an annual tribute. The Greeks, on their part, promised to submit to these conditions; but Mahmoud rejected them with disdain, and declared his fixed determination to persevere to the last in his endeavours to reduce his rebellious subjects to submission. In a manifesto issued upon the occasion, he said—"The Sublime Porte being engaged in punishing, and, in conformity with its sacred law, such of its turbulent subjects as have revolted, can never admit the right of any other power to interfere with it. The Ottoman government must consider those who address such proposals to it as intending to give consequence to a troop of brigands. A Greek government is spoken of, which is to be recognised in case the Sublime Porte does not consent to some arrangement; and it has even been proposed to conclude a treaty with the rebels. Has not the Sublime Porte great reason to be struck with astonishment at hearing such language from friendly powers? for history offers no example of conduct in all respects so opposite to the principles and duties of government. The Sublime Porte, therefore, can never listen to such propositions, which it will neither hear nor understand, so long as the country inhabited by Greeks forms part of the Ottoman dominions; and they are tributary subjects to the Porte, which will never renounce its rights. If, with the aid of the Almighty, the Sublime Porte resumes full possession of that country, it will then act, as well for the present as the future, in conformity with the ordinances which its holy law prescribes with respect to its subjects."

This haughty answer provoked the allied powers to have recourse to menace in another form than words. They sent a fleet consisting of four English men-of-war, together with the same number of French and Russian ships of the line. A final note was then addressed to the sultan, who again decidedly refused to admit of any foreign interference in the contest pending between him and his Greek subjects. He was then informed, that the allied sovereigns would take such steps as they considered necessary to put an end to the struggle, though without interrupting the amity existing between them and the Porte. The persevering atrocities of Ibrahim Pasha hurried on the collision which such a state of affairs threatened; and on the 20th of October, 1827, the Turko-Egyptian fleet was, after a furious battle, which lasted for four hours, almost annihilated at Navarino. No less than fifty-two vessels, including four line-of-battle ships, nineteen frigates, and twenty-nine corvettes, were destroyed, together with their crews, amounting to about 7,000 men. Of the allies, the severest loss was sustained by the British, upon whom the brunt of the action fell; it amounted to 75 killed, and 197 wounded. The loss of the French was 43 killed, and 117 wounded; while that of the Russians was very trivial; for though that power had the greatest interest in the quarrel, yet it contrived to let its allies fight the battle.

Sultan Mahmoud bore this calamity with more calmness than was expected. He replied to a communication from the allied ministers—"My positive, absolute, definitive, unchangeable, eternal answer is, that the Sublime Porte does not accept any proposition regarding the Greeks, and will persist in its own will regarding them, even to the day of the last judgment." The sultan also demanded compensation for the destruction of his fleet, and declared that, until he received it, he would hold no inter-

course with the ambassadors of the three powers; who accordingly found it necessary to withdraw from Constantinople, which they did on the 8th of December, 1827. The withdrawal of the Ottoman forces, and the emancipation of Greece from the Turkish yoke, was the immediate consequence of the battle of Navarino; the promotion of the designs of Russia upon the territory of the sultan the remote result. Some grave fears were at the time entertained, in this country, respecting the increase which it gave to the preponderance of Russia in the East.

It has been correctly observed, that peace between Russia and Turkey is never anything more than a truce. To the ceaseless aggression of the first power must be added a fierce national antipathy between the Russians and the Turks, arising from difference of race and religion. These motives produce incessant animosity of so malignant a kind, that its fever is only to be cooled by frequent bloodshed. Prior to the battle of Navarino, Nicholas had been preparing for a renewal of war with Turkey, and, in the September of 1827, had ordered a military levy of two males in every 500 throughout the empire. At the same time an imperial ukase subjected the Jews resident in Russia to the military conscription. It may be presumed that the angry feeling existing between the Porte and the court of St. Petersburg was greatly aggravated by the catastrophe of Navarino; the more so, as the Turks, perhaps incorrectly, attributed the insurrection in Greece in a great measure to the secret machinations of the czar. Violent recriminations accordingly took place, and it soon appeared that both nations had resolved on war. The sultan accused the Russians of secretly encouraging the insurgent Greeks; with having assisted in the destruction of his fleet at Navarino, and violated the treaty of Bucharest. Nicholas replied by a manifesto, accusing the Porte of having excited the Circassians to revolt, and invited them to adopt Mohammedanism; with the violation of all treaties made in favour of its Christian subjects; with having arbitrarily fettered the commerce of the Black Sea, violated the amnesty granted to the Servians, and supported the Persians in their recent war with Russia.

For some months each empire was occupied with extensive military preparations. Hostilities commenced in May, 1828, when General Wittgenstein crossed the Pruth at the head of 150,000 men, and in a short time took possession of Jassy and Bucharest, the capitals of Moldavia and Wallachia. Turkey was fearfully weakened, in a military point of view, by the breaking-up and destruction of the Janissaries—an act which Mahmoud had considered as inevitable, on account of their insolent and mutinous behaviour. The energetic sultan believed that his new troops, organised after the European system, would at once behave as well as European armies, and make up their numerical loss by their superior efficiency in the field. In this, however, he was mistaken; in exterminating the Janissaries he had crushed the military strength of his empire: his military reforms were extremely unpopular; and the fanatical Mussulman held aloof from the service of the state rather than adopt the costume and military tactics of the hated Christians.

Still the sultan proclaimed a holy war in defence of the religion of the prophet, and thus succeeded in collecting a very formidable force, amounting to scarcely less than 100,000 men, on the banks of the Danube, and as many more in Asia Minor, where General Paskiewitch was in the command of a Russian army.

The Russians forced the passage of the Danube in the month of June; and, on the 20th of that month, took the fortress of Kustendji, by which means they acquired a fortified harbour on the Black Sea, from which they could obtain supplies for their troops. They, however, suffered great loss while prosecuting the siege of Brahilov. On the first assault the Russians were repulsed with great slaughter, no less than 3,000 of them being killed or wounded around the breach. The following day, the 18th of June, the Turkish governor capitulated, and the Turks were allowed to retire from the town with the honours of war. The captors found 270 guns on the ramparts, and 17,000 pounds of powder in the magazines, together with immense stores of wood and provisions. The Russians also obtained further successes; and several fortresses, in the neighbourhood of the Danube, surrendered to them with a rapidity which engendered a suspicion of treachery on the part of those entrusted with the defence of them.

The sultan was, nevertheless, indefatigable in his efforts to defend his empire, and occupied himself constantly in organising troops,

and sending reinforcements to the theatre of war. A reserve was formed at Adrianople to relieve any point that might be threatened in the line of defence, and orders were issued to harass the enemy in every way, and at the same time to avoid general actions. Yet success favoured the Russians, who, in consequence of the result of the battle of Navarino, had acquired the superiority at sea. To this they owed the capture, on the 11th of June, of Anapa—a fortress on the Asiatic shore of the Black Sea, and regarded as valuable as being a safe and convenient harbour on that dangerous coast. On the 8th of July the first engagement of the campaign in the open field took place at Bazardjik, where the Russians experienced a defeat, and sustained a loss of 1,200 men. This check induced the emperor Nicholas, who had accompanied his troops, to wait for reinforcements before he resumed the struggle.

The Russians resumed their march on the 15th of July, and their advanced guard was again engaged and worsted by the Turkish cavalry. In another cavalry action, which took place before Shumla, the Turks, after effecting several brilliant charges, were compelled to retire before the Russian artillery. Nicholas intended to attack Shumla, which is a place of great strength, and regarded as the key to the Balkan; but a nearer acquaintance with the difficulties inseparable from such an attempt, induced him to abandon the design. Leaving, therefore, a corps of 30,000 men to watch Shumla, he directed his efforts to the reduction of Varna, in which proceeding he could be assisted by his fleet. It was necessary to accomplish some success to sustain the *prestige* of the Russian arms; for the result of the campaign had not been very favourable to them. Its issue was doubtful; pestilential fevers had made their appearance amongst the troops; the hospitals were crowded with sick, and cases of the plague had occurred. The invading army had lost about half its number; for sickness had, as is always the case in campaigns conducted in an enemy's country, proved far more fatal than the sword. The siege of Varna proceeded slowly, for the Turkish garrison made constant sallies, and fought with an intrepidity that cost the Russians a vast number of men. A Turkish detachment from the reserve at Adrianople, also attempted to relieve the town; and though they did not succeed in doing so, they yet inflicted some severe reverses on the Russians. The siege was still pressed forward; and although the defence was heroically maintained, the governor became at length sensible that eventual surrender was inevitable. It capitulated on the 11th of October, the garrison, amounting to 6,800 men, becoming prisoners of war. No less than 162 pieces of cannon were taken by the victors, besides great stores of ammunition and provisions. The capitulation was conducted by Jussuf Pasha, the second in command, without the consent of his superior. The rumours of treachery which this man's conduct occasioned, were soon confirmed by the fact of his sailing away in a Russian frigate to Odessa, where he shortly afterwards received a grant of lands in the Crimea from the emperor Nicholas, on the pretence of compensating him for the loss of his Turkish estates, which had been confiscated at the command of the sultan.

Varna had fallen; but the important fortress of Silistria, which had been for some time blockaded by the Russians, successfully defied its enemies. An attempt to invest it, in the hope of compelling it to surrender before the coming on of winter, was frustrated by the autumnal storms. The Russians then found it necessary to raise the blockade, and to retreat behind the Danube. This chequered campaign, in fact, terminated with the capitulation of Varna, and the emperor Nicholas embarked, on the 14th of October, on board a vessel named the *Empress-mother*, for Odessa. During the voyage the ship was overtaken by a tempest; and the peril was so great, that all on board gave themselves up for lost. Nicholas alone, it is said, preserved a dignified demeanour; and on the captain proposing to run the vessel ashore, declared, that he would sooner die than fall into the hands of the sultan. A change in the wind saved him from either fate; and the vessel at length reached Odessa, after the crew had sustained great toil and sufferings. The retreat of the main Russian army towards the Danube was, in consequence of the severity of the weather, the bad roads, and the harassing attacks of the fierce Turkish cavalry, attended with so many disasters, and so great a loss of life, that eye-witnesses of both instituted comparisons between it and the terrible retreat of the French from Moscow in 1812. After suffering fearful hardships, the miserable Russian columns reached the

Danube, which they crossed, and took up their winter quarters in Wallachia.

In Asia the Russians, under the able General Paskiewitch, were more successful, though their force did not exceed 26,000 men. Paskiewitch laid siege to the strongly-fortified town of Kars, and captured it, despite its reputation for impregnability. The garrison, numbering 7,000 men, were made prisoners; while 129 pieces of cannon, 22 mortars, 33 standards, and immense stores of ammunition, became the spoil of the victors. Akhalzikh, a strong fortress between Kars and the Black Sea, next succumbed to the Russians; and during the progress of the siege, a severe conflict, or rather battle, took place, in which the Turks suffered a decided defeat. The forts Alskhur and Ardagan were also reduced, and preparations made for an advance on Erzeroum, the capital of Asia Minor, in the next campaign; the present one terminating with some comparatively unimportant though successful operations.

Before the resumption of hostilities in the following year, the Russian ambassador to Persia was assassinated at Teheran—a circumstance which created great excitement, and seemed to promise a renewal of war with that country. Reports were circulated, that an offensive and defensive alliance had been made between Turkey and Persia. The Asiatic provinces, which, from prudential motives, had courted the alliance of the Russian general, now exhibited signs of hostility; and the Turks were encouraged to make an attempt to recover the town and fortress of Akhalzikh. In the spring of 1829 the Russians were besieged there by the Turks. The garrison suffered severely from the fire of their assailants, and was reduced to a state of extreme peril. They, however, rejected every summons to surrender, and were saved by the arrival of a relieving force, which succeeded in compelling the Turks to raise the siege. This event induced the Persian government to change its policy. Abandoning its threatening attitude, and disbanding its armaments, it sought and obtained the restoration of amicable relations with Russia.

We must now turn from the hostilities between the Turks and Russians in Asia, to those which took place between them in Europe, during the memorable campaign of 1829. Each side had made great efforts, during the winter, to recruit its forces; but a spirit of disaffection prevailed amongst the Turks, who soon suffered severely for this want of loyalty towards their sultan, and of union among themselves. Not more than 100,000 Ottomans could be collected to defend the line of the Balkan, and of these about half were required to garrison the various fortresses on the Danube. On the other hand, the Russians commenced the campaign with an army which reinforcements had restored to its original strength of 150,000 men, who had with them 540 guns, and enormous stores of every requisite. The command was now given to General Diebitch, who had long acquired a great reputation for military talent. The Russians had a far greater superiority at sea; and while with one fleet they blockaded the Bosphorus, with another they shut in the Dardanelles. Constantinople itself was thus threatened with famine, from the loss of great part of its supplies; and as the Turks had no maritime power of sufficient strength to meet their foes, the latter had the entire command of the sea during the whole of the war.

The plan of the Russians was, to besiege Silistria, Roudschuck, and Shumla; and, after taking those places, to cross the range of the Balkans, and direct their march towards Constantinople. After some fierce but undecisive actions had taken place between detachments of the contending armies, Silistria was again invested with a force of 35,000 men; while its garrison consisted of less than 10,000. To relate the particulars of the siege, is neither possible nor necessary in a work of this limit. During its continuance, the battle of Kouleftscha was fought, on the 11th of June. Victory, which at first favoured the Turks, finally remained with the Russians, who slew 5,000 of the Moslems, and captured 1,500, though at a great cost of life to themselves. By the 30th of the same month, the ramparts of Silistria were breached; and, as further resistance was regarded as hopeless, the pashas who commanded surrendered the town to the enemy, and the garrison as prisoners of war.

Possessed of Silistria, Diebitch made instant preparations for passing the Balkan; at the same time diverting the attention of the Turks by apparent preparations for an attack on Shumla. The Aidos Pass, through the chain of the Balkans, is regarded as the easiest, as a chasm at that

spot renders the ascent but slight: yet the Porte had been so negligent as to leave this pass comparatively undefended. The Turks were compelled to retire after some slight encounters; and the famous mountain barrier, which defends Constantinople from its European foes, was passed in triumph. The grand vizier, on learning what was going forward, detached 10,000 men from Shumla, to oppose the passage of the Russians; but they arrived too late, and returned with the exaggerated intelligence, that the Russian force which had entered Roumelia was more numerous than the leaves of the forest and the sand of the sea. In point of fact, Diebitch and the Russians who had penetrated so far into Turkey, were in great danger; and had the Turks shown the energy which they occasionally displayed, they might have cut their adventurous foes to pieces. Diebitch, however, concealed his weakness by adhering to offensive measures; and, on the 11th of August, he attacked a body of Turks at Sliwno, and put them to flight. The Ottoman army retired before the invaders, who succeeded in reaching Adrianople, the ancient capital of the empire, which at once surrendered to them.

Great was the consternation, not only at Constantinople, but at the capitals of all the great powers of Europe, where statesmen were both astonished and alarmed at the progress of the Russian arms. England and Austria especially interfered to bring about an accommodation between the belligerents, and to prevent that destruction of the balance of power which must have resulted from the conquest of Turkey. They even entered into a secret convention to prevent such a catastrophe by the power of the sword; and the English admiral in the Mediterranean was ordered, in the event of the Russians proving obdurate, to attack their fleet in the Greek waters, and carry it as a security to Malta. The efforts of European diplomatists, combined with exaggerated accounts of the force of Diebitch at Adrianople, together with the Turkish reverses in Asia, induced Sultan Mahmoud to consent to the treaty of peace, which was signed on the 14th of September, 1829. This peace—one of the most disastrous recorded in Turkish history—is known as the "Treaty of Adrianople."

The emperor Nicholas, in deference to the opinion of Europe, publicly disclaimed all intention to aggrandise his dominions; and he restored to the sultan the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, together with all his conquests in Bulgaria and Roumelia, with the exception of the islands at the mouth of the Danube. Many of the conquests in Asia Minor were likewise restored to Turkey; but Russia retained the fortresses of Anapa, Poli, Akhalzikh, Alzkow, and Akhalkalski. The territorial losses of Turkey were thus far smaller than might have been anticipated under the circumstances; but Russia obtained many advantages at the expense of her recent foe. Amongst these, were liberty to trade in all parts of the Turkish empire; a free passage of the Dardanelles for all Russian merchant vessels; and the undisturbed navigation of the Black Sea. Turkey was also to pay the sum of upwards of £5,000,000 for the expenses of the war; nor were the Turkish territories to be abandoned by the Russian troops until the debt was fully discharged. Arrangements were also made with respect to Wallachia and Moldavia, which abrogated the sovereignty of the Porte with respect to these principalities, and gave to Russia a protectorate power over them. The hospodars were in future to be elected for life, and not, as hitherto, for seven years only; and no Turkish pasha or officer was to be allowed to interfere, in any respect, in their affairs. "The better to secure"—so ran the terms of the treaty—"the future inviolability of Moldavia and Wallachia, the Sublime Porte engaged not to maintain any fortified post, or any Mussulman establishment, on the north bank of the Danube; that the towns situated on the left bank, including Giurgevo, should be restored to Wallachia, and their fortifications never restored; and all Mussulmans holding possessions on the left bank, were to be bound to sell them to the natives in the space of eighteen months. The government of the hospodars was to be entirely independent of Turkey; and they were to be liberated from the quota of provisions they had hitherto been bound to furnish to Constantinople and the fortresses on the Danube. They were to be occupied by the Russian troops till the indemnity was fully paid up, for which ten years were allowed; and to be relieved of all tribute to the Porte during their occupation, and for two years after it had ceased."

This treaty, which stabbed the pride of Turkey, saved Diebitch and the Russian forces at Adrianople from destruction.

Emaciated by sickness, dwindled in numbers, they might have been destroyed to a man, and doubtless would have been so, had the Turks but known their condition. By the treaty of Adrianople, Greece was definitively separated from Turkey, and the Porte induced to acknowledge its independence. Russia, with that subtle policy which ever characterises its proceedings, also obtained by this treaty a right of interference on behalf of the Christian subjects of Turkey, which was utterly inconsistent with the dignity of a proud and independent state.

Lord Aberdeen, then secretary of foreign affairs in the British ministry, expostulated on its behalf with the Russian government respecting the treaty of Adrianople, which was viewed in this country and elsewhere with feelings of dissatisfaction and suspicion. "His imperial majesty," said Lord Aberdeen in a communication to Lord Heytesbury, British ambassador at Russia, "in carrying into execution his threatened invasion of the Ottoman dominions, declared his adherence to that disinterested principle which had characterised the protocol of St. Petersburg and the treaty of London. He renounced all projects of conquest and ambition. His imperial majesty frequently repeated that, so far from desiring the destruction of the Turkish empire, he was most anxious for its preservation. He promised that no amount of indemnity should be exacted which could affect its political existence; and he declared that this policy was not the result of romantic notions of generosity, or of the vain desire of glory, but that it originated in the true interests of the Russian empire, in which interests, well understood, and in his own solemn promises, would be found the best pledges of his moderation.

"His imperial majesty added, that his thoughts would undergo no change, even if, contrary to his intentions and his endeavours, Divine Providence had decreed that we should now behold the termination of the Ottoman power. His imperial majesty was still determined not to extend the limits of his own dominions; and he only demanded from his allies the same absence of all selfish and ambitious views, of which he would himself give the first example. Does the treaty of Adrianople place the Porte in a situation corresponding with the expectations raised by these assurances? The answer must be left to the judgment of Europe: it might be left to the dispassionate judgment of the cabinet of St. Petersburg. Undoubtedly, if we look only at the relative position of the two belligerents, the fortune of the war might have enabled the emperor to exact still harder terms. The sultan, threatened by a formidable insurrection in Constantinople, having lost his army, and having ordered the remaining Asiatic troops to retire to their homes, was unable to offer any effectual opposition, and threw himself under the mercy of the Russian commander. It may not be easy to accuse of want of generosity the conqueror who checks the unresisted progress of success,* and who spares the defenceless capital of his enemy. Nevertheless, the treaty in question, certainly not in conformity with the expectations held out by preceding declarations and assurances, appears vitally to affect the interests, the strength, the dignity, the present safety, and future independence of the Ottoman empire."

Reflecting on the chequered events which led to the disastrous treaty of Adrianople, the historian Alison, taking a more favourable and, we believe, more accurate view of the past than had been done by Lord Aberdeen, as well as a better hope for the future than had been expressed by that statesman, observes—"The campaigns of 1828 and 1829, though they terminated to the disadvantage of Turkey, are yet eminently calculated to modify the ideas generally entertained as to the great power of Russia in aggressive warfare, as well as to evince the means of defence, in a military point of view, which the Ottoman dominions possess. The Turks began the war under the greatest possible disadvantages. Their land forces had been exhausted by seven bloody campaigns with the Greeks; their marine ruined in the battle of Navarino; their enemies had the command of the Euxine and the Ægean, the interior lines of communication in their empire; the Janissaries, the military strength of the state, had been in part destroyed, in part alienated; and only 20,000 of the regular troops, intended to replace them, were as yet clustered round the standards of the prophet. On the other hand, the Russians had been making their preparations for six years; they had enjoyed fourteen years of European peace; and 120,000 armed men awaited on the Pruth the signal to march to Constantinople. Yet with all these disadvantages, the scales hung all but even between the contending parties. Varna was only taken in the first campaign in consequence of the Russians having the command of the sea; the Balkan passed in the second, from the grand vizier having been out-generaled by the superior skill of Diebitch. Even as it was, it was owing to treachery and disaffection that the daring march to Adrianople did not terminate in a disaster second only to the Moscow retreat. * * * It is not to be supposed, however, that these startling results are to be ascribed to any weakness, in a military point, on the part of Russia, or any extraordinary warlike resources which the Turks possess, independent of their geographical position. The strength which Russia put forth in the war was immense. A hundred and sixty thousand men crossed the Danube in the course of the first campaign; 140,000 were brought up to reinforce them in the course of the second. Yet, with all this, they could only produce 31,000 men at the battle of Kouleftscha; and when their victorious march was stopped, only 15,000 were assembled at Adrianople. At least 150,000 men had perished in the two campaigns; and that, accordingly, is the estimate formed by the ablest military historian of the war. A very small part of this immense force perished by the sword; fatigue, sickness, desertion, produced the greatest part of the dreadful chasm. The long march of 1,200 miles from Moscow to Poland, the pestilential plains of Wallachia, the hardships of two campaigns in the inhospitable hills or valleys of Bulgaria, did the rest. As Turkey is the portion of Europe most exposed to the incursions of the Asiatics, so is it the one to which Providence has given the most ample means of defence; for the plains of Wallachia and Moldavia present a perilous glacis, which must be passed before the body of the fortress is reached; the Danube is a vast and wet ditch, which covers the interior defences; the Balkan, a rampart impassable when defended by gallant and faithful soldiers. Sterility and desolation, the work of human tyranny, add to the defences of nature. Of no country may it be so truly said, in the words of Henry IV., 'If you make war with a small army you are beaten, if with a large one, starved.'"

* This is the language of diplomacy, not of historic truth. The reader of the preceding pages will have seen, that the progress of the Russian arms was not only resisted, but frequently arrested with a sanguinary severity which, had the Turks conducted the war with more judgment, and a more uniform and sustained energy, might, and indeed must, have led to very different results.

CHAPTER X.

NICHOLAS IS CROWNED KING OF POLAND; THE VICEROY CONSTANTINE; HIS DESPOTIC AND IRRITABLE TEMPER; THE OPPRESSIVE CONDUCT OF THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT PREPARES POLAND FOR REVOLT; INSURRECTION AT WARSAW, AND FLIGHT OF CONSTANTINE; APPOINTMENT OF A PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT; GENERAL CHLOPICKI; DEPUTATION FROM THE POLES TO THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS; HE REFUSES CONCESSION; CONDUCT OF AUSTRIA AND PRUSSIA; POLISH MANIFESTO TO THE NATIONS OF EUROPE; THE POLES PASS A RESOLUTION OF DETHRONEMENT AGAINST NICHOLAS; THE APPEAL TO THE SWORD; BATTLES OF GROCHOW AND PRAGA; SURPRISE AND DEFEAT OF THE RUSSIANS NEAR WARSAW, AND AGAIN AT IGANIE; THE CHOLERA APPEARS IN THE POLISH ARMY; TERRIBLE BATTLE OF OSTROLENKA; DEATHS OF GENERAL DIEBITCH AND OF THE GRAND-DUKE CONSTANTINE; PASKIEWITCH APPOINTED TO THE COMMAND OF THE RUSSIAN ARMY IN POLAND; REVERSES AND DESPERATE CONDITION OF THE POLES; SURRENDER OF WARSAW, AND SUBMISSION OF THE POLES; IMPLACABLE SEVERITY OF NICHOLAS; POLAND IS DECLARED AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE; REFLECTIONS ON THIS SUBJECT.

THE emperor Nicholas also succeeded his brother Alexander as king of Poland, and was crowned as such at Warsaw on the 24th of May, 1829. Animated by the policy which influenced his predecessor—namely, that of attempting to hide the spirit of despotism beneath the garb of religion—he, on that occasion, pronounced a prayer containing these words:—"O, my Lord and my God, may my heart be always in Thy hand; and may I reign for the happiness of my people, and to the glory of Thy holy name, *according to the charter granted by my august predecessor*, and already sworn to by me; in

order that I may not dread to appear before Thee on the day of the last judgment." We shall speedily see how Nicholas endeavoured to conform to this false prayer, in which he promised to govern according to the constitutional charter granted to Poland.

Since the settlement of Europe, in 1815, Poland, though it had lost its independence, had experienced a period of repose, and enjoyed an approach to prosperity. The emperor Alexander had endeavoured to conciliate the Poles; and it would have been well if the Grand-duke Constantine—who, during his reign, and also since the accession of Nicholas to the imperial throne of Russia, had held the dignity of viceroy of Poland—had followed his example. Constantine, however, was irritable, capricious, passionate, and despotic. Both in features and in mind he bore a considerable resemblance to his father Paul; and even his sanity has been questioned. After his marriage with the beautiful Polish countess, Joanna Grudzynski (afterwards known as the Princess Lowicz), his savage nature appeared to be somewhat softened; but his good temper could not be counted on for a moment. Often, while reviewing his troops, he would fly into a fit of furious passion at any trifling matter which was not exactly to his mind; and, for the venial offence of an individual, inflict some annoying punishment on a body of 40,000 men. Thoroughly penetrated with the precepts of the despotic school in which he had been reared, he had no feelings of mercy towards those who forgot what he regarded as the duty of unconditional obedience to the sovereign. He was sometimes deliberately cruel himself; and he suffered deliberate cruelty in others, to those who had thus put themselves, as he considered, beyond the bounds of pardon. The proud and spirited Poles, who, in their own opinion, owed no allegiance at all to the Russian emperor, endured all this with far more patience than might have been expected from them; but, at the same time, the whole of Poland was ready for some violent outbreak at the first opportunity that appeared to promise even a remote chance of a favourable result. This feeling was the more powerful in consequence of the romantic and passionate love which the upper and educated classes in Poland entertained for the principles of democracy, and their thirst for national independence. Secret societies, for the promotion of the latter object, had existed for several years in Poland; and so extensive was their organisation, that they embraced in their numbers the most enlightened and patriotic men of the country.

"If," it has been observed by a writer on Polish history, "men have no opportunity of expressing their opinions publicly, they will do so privately. When the journals—the legitimate outlets of popular feeling—were thus arbitrarily and impoliticly closed, secret societies began to multiply. A sort of political freemasonry connected the leaders of the meditated movement; and its ramifications extended as far as Wilna. Their avowed object was not merely to free their country and the grand-duchy from the Russian yoke, but to invoke their brethren of Galicia and Posen in one common cause, and thus openly to strike a blow for their dearest rights. But, however secret their meetings and purposes, neither could long escape the vigilance of the police, which, since the arrival of Constantine as commander-in-chief of the Polish army, had acquired alarming activity. Why this personage should have interfered in a branch of administration beyond his province—why he should have stepped out of his own peculiar sphere to hire spies, to collect information, and to influence the proceedings of the tribunals against the suspected or the accused—has been matter of much conjecture. Perhaps he proposed to render himself necessary to his imperial brother; perhaps he could not live without some bustle to excite him; perhaps his mind was congenially occupied in the discovery and punishment of treason. However this be, he acted with amazing impolicy. His wisest course—and the Poles themselves once hoped that he would adopt it—was to cultivate the attachment of the people among whom he resided, and thereby prepare their minds for one day seconding his views on the crown.* Instead of this, he conducted himself towards all whom he suspected of liberal opinions (and few there were who did not entertain them), with violence—often with brutality. At his instigation, the secret police pursued its fatal career; arbitrary arrests, hidden condemnations, the banishment of many, the imprisonment of more, signalised his bane-

* Constantine does not appear to have entertained any such views; we have shown that he certainly had no ambition in the direction of the Russian sceptre.

ful activity. That amidst so many sentences, some should be passed on individuals wholly innocent, need not surprise us. Where spies are hired to mix with society for the purpose of detecting the disaffected, if they do not find treason, they will make it; private malignity and a desire of being thought useful, if not indispensable, to their employers, and of enjoying the rewards due to success in procuring information, would make them vigilant enough. As this is a profession which none but the basest and most unprincipled of men would follow, we cannot expect that they would always exercise it with much regard to justice. In such men, revenge or avarice would be all-powerful.

"The university of Wilna was visited with some severity by the agents of this dreaded institution. Twenty of its students were seized, and sentenced to different punishments; none, however, very rigorous. Those of Warsaw were not used more indulgently. A state prison was erected in the capital, and its dungeons were soon crowded with inmates; many, no doubt, not undeserving their fate, but not a few the victims of an execrable system. The proceedings, however, which are dark, must always be suspected: of the hundreds who were dragged from the bosom of their families, and consigned to various fortresses, all would be thought innocent, since none had been legally convicted.

"By Article 10 of the constitutional charter, the Russian troops, when required to pass through Poland, were to be at the entire charge of the treasury of the czar: for years, however, they were stationed at Warsaw—evidently to overawe the population—at the expense of the inhabitants. Then the violation of individual liberty; the difficulty of procuring passports; the misapplication of the revenue to objects other than those for which it was raised (to the reimbursement of the secret police, for instance); the nomination of men as senators without the necessary qualifications, and who had no other merit than that of being creatures of the government—were infractions of the charter, as wanton as they were intended to be humiliating.

"The army was as much dissatisfied as the nation. The ungovernable temper, and the consequent excesses of Constantine; the vexatious manœuvres which he introduced; his rigorous mode of exercise, fitted for no other than frames of adamant; and, above all, his overbearing manner towards the best and highest officers in the service, raised him enemies on every side. His good qualities—and he had many—were wholly overlooked amidst his ebullitions of fury, and the unjustifiable, often cruel, acts he committed while under their influence. On ordinary occasions, when his temper was not ruffled, no man could make himself more agreeable; no man could exhibit more—not of courtesy, for he was too rough for it—but of warm-heartedness; and his generosity in pecuniary matters was almost boundless.

"But the worst yet remains to be told. Russian money and influence were unblushingly employed in the dietines, and to procure the return to the diet of such members only as were known to care less for their country than for their own fortunes. Then, instead of a diet being held every two years (in accordance with Art. 87), none was convoked from 1820 to 1825, and only one after the accession of Nicholas. Finally, an ordinance (issued in 1825) abolished the publicity of the debates in the two chambers; and the most distinguished members of opposition were forcibly removed from Warsaw the night preceding the opening of the diet."*

The revolution which, in 1830, drove the weak and despotic Charles X. from the throne of France, excited the enthusiasm of the Poles, and appeared, to their ardent hopes, to form the desired opportunity to strike the blow which they trusted would free them from the yoke of Russia. Nicholas, regarding himself as the champion of legitimacy, was furious at an event so subversive of its principles; and he even contemplated a war with France, which was suspected of inciting the Poles to resistance against him, when his attention was arrested by insurrectionary proceedings in Poland itself. Meetings were held at Warsaw, and the patriots, or conspirators, as they were called (according to the bias of the narrator), resolved upon proceeding at once to extremities. It was at first proposed to include the whole extent of ancient Poland in the insurrection; but this scheme was abandoned, because it would elicit the hostility not only of Russia, but also of Austria and Prussia. The outbreak, there-

* Dunham's *History of Poland.*

fore, was to be confined to Poland Proper, with which Russia only was concerned.

A scheme for the assassination of Constantine, and the proclamation of a provincial government, was disconcerted in consequence of some suspicions of the police, and the consequent arrest of some of the conspirators. The viceroy was incredulous, and disregarded the warnings conveyed to him. He relied on his supposed popularity with the troops, and persisted in declaring that there was no danger.

The activity of the police, and the numerous arrests they made, precipitated the outbreak of the insurrection, which took place at Warsaw on the 29th of November, 1830, a day when the Polish guards were to be on service at the palace and in the city. At seven in the evening, a man made his appearance at the gate of the barrack of the military school, and proclaimed that the "hour of liberty had struck." The guard instantly turned out, and, together with the scholars, marched in silence to the Belvidère palace, the residence of the viceroy. They experienced but little difficulty in entering it; for many of the soldiers on duty there were aware of their object, and favourable to it; while those who opposed them were instantly sabred. The chief of the police, and the aide-de-camp on service, then fell victims to the wrath of the conspirators as they pressed forward to the chamber of Constantine, who with difficulty made his escape, together with his wife, by a private staircase.

A call "to arms" resounded through the city, and the insurgents were speedily joined by other regiments; while the arsenal was seized, and 40,000 muskets in store there, distributed among the people. All the Russian troops remained faithful to Constantine, and so did a portion of the Polish soldiers. Several nocturnal combats took place; but morning displayed the inequality of the struggle; and Constantine retired in despair with the troops who adhered to him, amounting to about 9,000 men, to the village of Wirzba, about a mile and a-half from Warsaw. The conspirators thus remained in possession of the capital, and, to check the rising disorder, appointed a provisional government, which numbered amongst its members Prince Adam Czartoryski, Prince Michael Radzitvil, the senator Kochanowski, General Lewis Pac, M. Julian Niemcewicz, and General Chlopicki. The high character which these patriotic men bore amongst the people, enabled them to preserve a degree of order, and to prevent revolution from degenerating into anarchy.

The provisional government appears to have been undecided as to how it should proceed. This might well be, as it included amongst its numbers the members of a council which, in the absence of the viceroy, had been intrusted with the executive power; and its opinions were therefore necessarily divided. Its first act was to issue a proclamation, counselling order and abstinence from bloodshed, and it then sent messengers to Constantine, with proposals for an accommodation. General Chlopicki, though a man of undoubted patriotism and personal courage, was in favour of this course, from a fear that the attempt to cast off the Russian yoke by force must certainly fail. At the outbreak of the insurrection, it is said that he took his compasses, and, measuring the extent of the Russian empire, shook his head, observing, "If Poland dares to resist, she is lost."

The deputation sent to arrange matters with the Grand-duke Constantine, desired to obtain a just observance of the constitution established on the settlement of Europe in 1815, and the fulfilment of a promise made by the emperor Alexander, that Lithuania, Volhynia, and Podolia should be incorporated with the kingdom of Poland, and detached from the Russian empire. Constantine, though unable to conclude terms with the insurgents (a matter which rested with the emperor), received the deputation with a courtesy which, it is presumed, was dictated by apprehensions as to his personal safety. In fact, he found the Polish troops who remained with him were rapidly catching the revolutionary enthusiasm; and he issued a proclamation, permitting those who desired it, to retire and join their comrades in Warsaw. This act was as prudent as it appeared generous; for it enabled the viceroy to ascertain who were really his friends, and saved him from the chance of being made a prisoner by his own troops. All the Poles availed themselves of this permission; and Constantine, with his Russians, was permitted to leave Poland unmolested and retire towards the frontier of Volhynia. This was an error on the part of the provisional government, who should have retained the grand-duke as a hostage.

At Warsaw, the people were in a state of

the wildest enthusiasm, which was increased by the arrival of additional Polish troops from other quarters. Soldiers and citizens embraced each other in the streets, elegantly dressed women waved their handkerchiefs from their open windows to the troops, and the church bells rang forth in joyous peals. Steps were taken for the formation of a powerful national army; the provisional government resigned, and General Chlopicki assumed the command of the army, and the title of dictator, which latter he promised readily to relinquish on the meeting of the diet. Chlopicki was not fitted by nature and education for the position into which circumstances had thrust him, though great reliance was placed upon his military talents, which were considered of a high order; yet he was deficient in that audacity and enthusiasm which alone can carry men successfully through great revolutions, and would probably have been better fitted to assist in crushing than creating one. "Accustomed to military rules and subordination," says a living writer, who has ably sketched his character, "Chlopicki had a perfect horror for conspiracies and the domination of clubs. Accordingly he kept himself clear of the great conspiracies of 1825 and 1826 (connected with the insurrection in Russia in those years), and lived in retirement down to 1830. He was inspired with a thorough contempt for levies *en masse*, and all those devices by which the ardent but inexperienced in all ages endeavour to supply the want of regular soldiers. He dreaded the clubs of Warsaw even more than the Muscovite bayonets. It was his great object to achieve the liberation of his country, and the establishment of its rights, by other means than democratic fervour, which he considered as alike short-lived and perilous. Thus he was the man of all others least calculated to retain the suffrages of the clubs of Warsaw, which early acquired so great a weight in the revolution; and one of his first steps, after he became dictator, was to close them by a general military order. But he possessed an immense military reputation, and was known to have military talents of the very highest order, which rendered his sway over the soldiers unbounded; and as his patriotism was undoubted, and his character elevated and disinterested, his rule was for some time unresisted even by the burning democrats of the capital. He despised and detested them as much as Napoleon did the '*avocats et idéologues*' of Paris; and it was his great object, without their aid, and while retaining the direction of their movements, to work out the independence of Poland by negotiation with the czar, and without coming to open rupture with his authority. But to achieve this object, he was well aware that military preparations were indispensable; and his measures to attain this end, though not of the sweeping kind which the clubs demanded, were energetic and successful."

From this sketch it will be seen, that General Chlopicki was strangely misplaced as the leader of a revolution; for notwithstanding his patriotism, it is clear that his nature was aristocratic and conservative, and that his lot should have been cast in other places. Indeed, to his repression of the republican spirit at the outset of the insurrection, are attributed many of the misfortunes which subsequently befel his compeers. Clinging to the hope of an accommodation, he sent a body of 800 Russian soldiers, who had been seized near Warsaw by the Poles, back to Constantine without exchange, and the grand-duke reciprocated these civilities. But it was to the emperor Nicholas that Chlopicki was compelled to address himself, if he would terminate the revolution by the pen instead of the sword; and Nicholas possessed far more decision than Constantine, who, indeed, had just shown himself very deficient in that quality so essential to a ruler over a turbulent or discontented people.

Chlopicki, accordingly, sent a deputation to the emperor Nicholas at St. Petersburg, to explain the concessions required by the Poles. The envoys (Prince Lubecki and Count Jezierski) were received by him with great sternness. After reproaches for their treasonable conduct, and what he was pleased to term their ungrateful forgetfulness of all his benefits, he warned them that the first cannon-shot fired by the insurgents would be the signal of the ruin of Poland. He, however, offered an unconditional amnesty to all except the leaders of the revolt; but he would make no further concession. This, in effect, amounted to a refusal of all accommodation; and on the return of the envoys to Warsaw, all parties prepared for an appeal to the power of the sword. Nicholas inquired of the courts of Austria and Prussia what part they designed to take in the event of the

Polish revolution leading to a war; and received answers from each expressive of sympathy with him as a sovereign, and promising to give no assistance to the insurgents; to permit no correspondence to pass from Poland through their dominions; and to keep the harbours of Dantzic and Königsberg closed against all convoys of ammunition or provisions, even though they should come from England or France. In addition to this, Prussia dishonestly consented to sequestrate the funds belonging to the kingdom of Poland in the bank of Berlin, and to place them at the disposal of the emperor Nicholas. At the same time, however, that the court of Vienna was making assurances of assistance to Russia, it—animated by a jealousy of that power—made a secret communication to the Poles, that it would not offer any impediment to the restoration of their nationality, providing they would accept as king a prince of the house of Austria, and that the consent of England and France could be obtained to this sinister transaction. A Polish envoy was even sent to Paris and to London upon the subject; but France would do nothing without England; and the English cabinet, with Lord Palmerston as minister for foreign affairs, declined to interfere on behalf of Poland. France afterwards sent M. de Mortemart to St. Petersburg, to see if favourable terms could not be obtained for the Poles; but that envoy found Nicholas altogether inexorable.

As might have been anticipated, the Russian emperor was making immense efforts to crush the insurrection. On the 24th of December, 1830, he issued a proclamation to the Russian people, in which he endeavoured to excite them against the Poles, whom he described as their ancient enemies, who had returned kindness with treachery and treason. At the same time, he collected an army of 110,000 men, under the command of General Diebitch, and stationed them along the road from St. Petersburg to Warsaw. In reply to Nicholas, the Polish diet (which had now assembled) addressed, on the 10th of January, 1831, a manifesto to the nations of Europe. In it the enthusiastic Poles thus poured forth their wrongs and their hopes, in the hearing of the continent:—"The world knows too well the infamous machinations, the vile calumnies, the open violence, and secret treasons, which have accompanied the three dismemberments of ancient Poland. History, of which they have become the property, has stigmatised them as political crimes of the deepest dye. The solemn grief which that violence has spread through the whole country, has caused the feelings of nationality to be preserved without interruption. The Polish standard has never ceased to wave at the head of the Polish legions; and in their military emigration, the Poles, transporting from country to country their household gods, have never ceased to cry aloud against this violation; and yielding to the noble illusion, which, like every noble thought, has not been deceived, they trusted that, in combating for the cause of liberty, they were combating also for their own country.

"That country has risen from its ashes; and though restrained within narrow limits, Poland has received from the hero of the last age, its language, its rights, its liberties—gifts in themselves precious, but rendered doubly so by the hope with which they were accompanied. From that moment his cause has become ours, our blood become his inheritance; and when our allies, and Heaven itself, seemed to have abandoned him, the Poles shared the disasters of the hero; and the fall together of a great man and an unfortunate nation, extorted the involuntary esteem of the conquerors themselves. That sentiment produced a deep impression; the sovereigns of Europe, in a moment of danger, promised to the world a durable peace; and the congress of Vienna in some sort softened the evils of our unhappy country. A nationality, and entire freedom of internal commerce, were guaranteed to all parts of ancient Poland; and that portion of it which the strife of Europe had left independent, though mutilated on three sides, received the name of a kingdom, and was put under the guardianship of the emperor Alexander, with a constitutional charter, and the hope of future extension. In performance of these stipulations he gave a liberal constitution to the kingdom, and held out to the Poles under his immediate government the hope of being, ere long, reunited to their severed brethren. These were not gratuitous promises; he had contracted anterior obligations to us; and we, on our side, had made corresponding sacrifices. In proclaiming himself *king of Poland*, the emperor of Russia was only faithful to his promises.

"But the hopes implied by these circumstances proved as short-lived as they were fallacious. The Poles were ere long convinced, by dearly-bought experience, that the vain title of Poland, given to the kingdom by the emperor of Russia, was nothing but a lure thrown out to their brothers, and an offensive arm against the other states. They saw that, under cover of the sacred names of liberty and independence, he was resolved to reduce the nation to the lowest point of degradation and servitude. The measure pursued in regard to the army first revealed this infamous design. Punishments the most excruciating, pains the most degrading, were, under pretence of keeping up military discipline, inflicted—not for faults of commission, but mere omission. The arbitrary disposition of the commander-in-chief, his absolute control over the courts-martial, soon rendered him the absolute master of the life and honour of every soldier. Numbers in every grade have sent in their resignations, and committed suicide in despair at the degrading punishments to which they had been subjected. The deliberative assembly, from which so much was expected, has remedied none of these evils; it has rather aggravated them; for it has brought, in a sensible form, the reality of servitude home to the nation. The liberty of the press, the publication of debates, was tolerated only so long as they resounded with strains of adulation; but the moment that the real discussion of affairs commenced, the most rigid censorship of the press was introduced; and after the sittings of the diet closed, they prosecuted the members of it for the opinions they had expressed in it.

"The union, on one head, of the crown of the autocrat and of the constitutional king of Poland, is one of those political monstrosities which could not by possibility long endure. Every one foresaw that the kingdom of Poland must be to Russia the germ of liberal institutions, or itself perish under the iron hand of its despot. That question was soon resolved. If Alexander ever entertained the idea of reconciling the extent of his despotic power with the popularity of liberal institutions amongst us, it was but for a moment. He soon showed by his acts, that the moment he discovered that liberty would not become the blind instrument of slavery, he was to be its most violent persecutor. That system was soon put in execution. Public instruction was first corrupted; it was made the mere instrument of despotism. An entire palatinate was next deprived of its representatives in the council; the chambers of the power of voting on the budget; new taxes were imposed without their authority; monopolies destructive of industry were created; and the treasury became a mere fountain of corruption, from whence, in lieu of the retrenchment which the nation had so often solicited, pensions and gratuities were distributed with the most scandalous profusion amongst the supporters of government. Calumny and espionage soon invaded the privacy, and destroyed the happiness, of domestic life; the ancient hospitality of the Poles was converted into a snare for innocence. Individual liberty, so solemnly guaranteed, was every day violated; the prisons were filled; and courts-martial, proceeding to take cognizance of civil offences, inflicted infamous and degrading punishments on citizens whose only fault was to have endeavoured to stem the torrent of corruption which overspread the country.

"In the ancient provinces of Poland, now incorporated with Russia, matters have been still worse. Not only have they not been incorporated with Poland, in violation of the promise to that effect made by the emperor Alexander to the congress of Vienna, but, on the contrary, everything has been systematically done which could eradicate in them any sentiment or recollection of nationality. The youths at school have been, in an especial manner, the object of persecution. All who were suspected of a leaning towards liberal or patriotic sentiments, were torn from their mothers' arms, and sent off to Siberia, or compelled to enter the army as private soldiers, though belonging to the first families in the country. In all administrative or public acts, the Polish language was suppressed, as well as in the common schools; imperial ukases annihilated alike the Polish rights and tribunals; the abuses of administration reduced the landed proprietors to despair. Since the accession of the emperor Nicholas, all these evils have rapidly increased; and intolerance, coming to the aid of despotism, has left nothing undone to extirpate the catholic worship, and force the Greek ritual in its stead."

We have quoted this manifesto thus fully, in order to present the reader with a Polish

view of the wrongs of that country. They were indeed heavy ones, and such as were highly calculated to excite desperation and resistance in a spirited and liberty-loving people. Unhappily, also, the character of the Russian government gives but little ground for the hope, that this recital of oppression was darkened in colour by a spirit of exaggeration. It is, in fact, generally admitted, that the Polish insurrection was the natural and inevitable result of the unjust and irritating proceedings of the Russian government.

Notwithstanding the issue of this manifesto, General Chlopicki still strove to bring about an accommodation with the czar, and sent the most earnest addresses to Nicholas, in the hope of obtaining from his moderation or compassion, that which he feared could not be extorted from him by force. When we regard the nature of the Russian government, we must at once perceive, that hopes of this kind were mere infatuation. It is not to be supposed, that it could be moved by entreaties to surrender a large and valuable territory, or to modify its course of action so largely, that the real, if not nominal, emancipation of Poland from its control would be the result. When, in addition, we contemplate the despotic and unbending character of the emperor Nicholas, the hopes of Chlopicki assume an air of baseless romance utterly inconsistent with the sober and practical views of a statesman and a soldier. Nicholas was not only inflexible, but irritated; and, in this instance, he was backed by the public feeling of the whole Russian people, who regarded the Poles with emotions of jealousy and enmity. The czar insisted on an unconditional surrender. "I am king of Poland, and I will drive her," said he; and this galling observation is an index to his entire bearing towards the patriots whom, disregarding the bitter provocations they had received, and the peculiar position they occupied, he never stooped to regard otherwise than as revolted subjects.

The Polish diet would not listen to the arrogant terms of Nicholas; and they held themselves in readiness for the inevitable war. The irresolute Chlopicki then resigned his dictatorship, which he ought never to have been permitted to occupy; his delays and frequent communications with the autocrat had given the latter the requisite time to assemble a force which would eventually overwhelm the resources of the Poles; while the only chance of a favourable result on the part of the latter, lay in some rapid and immediate success before the czar could concentrate his scattered forces.

Disembarrassed of the influence of Chlopicki, the diet assembled on the 19th of January, 1831, to decide upon what step was to be taken by the nation. "Poles," said the president, Prince Adam Czartoryski, "our cause is sacred; our fate depends on the Most High; but we owe it to ourselves to transmit intact to posterity the honour of the nation enshrined in our hearts. 'Concord, courage, perseverance!' such is the sacred motto which can alone insure the glory of our country. Let us put forth all our strength, in order to found for ever our liberty and national independence." He was responded to by a shout of "There is no longer a Nicholas;" and then, amidst enthusiastic cheers and a frenzy of patriotic excitement, the diet voted the dethronement of the czar, and absolved the Polish nation from its oath of fidelity to him. A national government was then organised, under the presidency of Prince Czartoryski; a vigorous defence was resolved on, and General Chlopicki again accepted the command of the army; saying, with a modesty which betrayed an inward sense of his incompetence for such a post at such a time, "I only accept the command in order to hold it till the war has raised one of those great men who save nations." Alas for Poland! it had no man of towering genius to help it in its extremity; no Cromwell, Washington, or Napoleon arose at the eleventh hour to save it from the crushing despotism of its oppressor; the hour, indeed, had struck; but the man who should have been equal to the terrible emergency was not to be found. Nature is often a niggard of genius, especially of that genius which fits men for great deeds on the battle-field, and profound thoughts in the cabinets of statesmen.

The Polish army consisted altogether of 58,000 men, independent of the expected reserve which it was presumed that national enthusiasm would supply. About 14,000 of the regular army, however, was occupied as garrisons in fortresses, and were therefore unavailable for active service in the field. On the other hand, the Russian army, collected on the frontiers under the command of Marshal Diebitch, consisted

of 110,000 men, and had with it 396 pieces of artillery.

The campaign was opened, on the 5th of February, by the march of Diebitch towards Warsaw. The Polish army retreated before him to the village of Grochow, within a league of the capital, which it now became necessary to defend. On the 19th of February a battle took place at Grochow, which lasted the whole day; and, though it inflicted great loss on both sides, did not confer victory on either. Though the Poles were driven back some few hundred yards from the position they held in the morning, yet they felt that they had gained something of reputation by sustaining so desperate an engagement with the Russian forces, and coming out of the struggle unvanquished. The Grand-duke Constantine was present in the battle, though not in command; and it is said, that he could not avoid expressing some satisfaction at the conduct of the Polish army, which, under his severe training, had become one of the best disciplined in Europe.

A truce of three hours, entered into by the opposing forces for the purpose of burying their dead, was prolonged for a period of three days. On the 25th, both armies were again arrayed before each other, in order of battle, and 45,000 Poles were confronted by more than 100,000 Russians. Chlopicki betrayed his weakness by shedding tears of passionate grief, in despair of the salvation of his country. Happily, the army had other leaders, who knew the worthlessness of tears on such an occasion, and the value of resolution. The Polish spirit was high; and notwithstanding the great disparity of forces, the patriots were resolved on braving the struggle. At daybreak the battle of Praga commenced, and again the conflict was prolonged with great fury, and with various success, throughout the whole day. The object of the Russians was to take possession of the Alder wood, the retention of which conferred immense advantages, in a military point, upon the holders of it. Diebitch was successful; and, after a sanguinary struggle, drove out the Poles with his artillery; but they retired in good order, and the Russian cavalry suffered terribly in an attempt to throw them into confusion. During the night the Poles retired from Praga into Warsaw, so that the advantages of this action remained with the Russians; though the latter were still unable to claim a victory. In fact, they had lost 10,000 men in these two battles—a greater number than the loss experienced by the Poles; but this mattered little, as they were so much better able to bear it, on account of their great numerical superiority. While these proceedings were taking place between the main armies of the contending nations, a body of Russian cavalry, amounting to nearly 10,000 men, was defeated and put to flight at Sieroczyn by a body of 2,800 Polish horse and foot. This circumstance, however, though it necessarily elated the victors, added little or nothing to their slender chance of ultimate success. Some further triumphs were obtained by this small division of the Polish forces; but it is needless here to chronicle petty engagements which could not lead to decisive results.

The Poles were, in fact, much alarmed at the dangerous proximity of the Russian army, under Diebitch, to their capital. That unfortunate nation saw that it was beset with dangers of the most menacing character; and the command of the army, which had recently been entrusted to Prince Radzitvil, was conferred upon General Skrzynecki, whose military talents were regarded as of a higher order. As to Chlopicki, he was rendered incapable of active service by a severe wound, which confined him to his bed. Skrzynecki was in the prime of life—an important, if not essential, qualification in one who would lead a revolutionary army. Having been personally ill-treated by the Grand-duke Constantine, he had long acquired a popularity in the army, which his energy, and the courage and military capacity exhibited by him at the battles of Grochow and Praga, had much increased.

Skrzynecki has been described as "a pertinacious negotiator;" and his first exercise of power was an endeavour to negotiate a peace with Marshal Diebitch; but this he soon discovered to be a very useless proceeding. Diebitch had no power to do otherwise than execute the commands of the emperor, and persevere in hostilities until the Poles purchased a cessation of bloodshed by the acceptance of the galling terms of unconditional surrender. Preparations were then made for a renewal of active warfare: the Russians spread over a great extent of ground, in order that they might procure supplies of provisions with greater facility; while the Poles were en-

gaged in throwing up fresh intrenchments around Warsaw, at which the inhabitants, both male and female, laboured heroically both night and day. The Polish forces were also reinforced by ardent recruits; and the activity of the new commander kept up the spirits and enthusiasm of his troops.

Hostilities were first resumed by the Polish general. Having assembled his troops in silence, he left Warsaw at midnight on the 30th of March, having previously had the Praga bridge over the Vistula, and the road in the vicinity, covered with straw, to prevent the enemy from hearing his approach. His operations were favoured by a thick fog; and the Russians, not suspecting an attack, were for the most part sound asleep. So ably was the expedition conducted, that the surprise was complete, and the startled Russians were roused from their slumbers by the musketry of the foe. Their advanced posts, under Geismar, were assailed both in front and flank, thrown into confusion, and slaughtered in heaps. As they fled, they were attacked by another body of Poles, who charged the fugitives with the bayonet, and killed and captured great numbers of them. Those who escaped fled through a wood to Dembewilkie, where General Rosen was posted with 15,000 of their countrymen, in a position of great advantage, as the soft nature of the ground rendered it impracticable for cavalry or artillery.

These advantages, however, did not save the Russians from defeat, though they fought with great perseverance, and prolonged the battle during the whole day—the 31st of March. By the evening, however, the Poles obtained a decided victory; and the Russians fled in a state of panic, leaving 2,000 men dead upon the field, together with 6,000 prisoners, and nine pieces of cannon, in the hands of the enemy. The following day, the Russian force, which resembled rather a military mob than an army, was pursued by Lubienski, with his brigade of cavalry, for the space of twenty miles. Whole battalions of the terror-stricken Russians threw down their arms at his approach; and during the day he captured upwards of 5,000 more prisoners, many of whom, being Lithuanians, gladly entered the Polish ranks.

Fortune seemed disposed to smile upon the cause of the patriots; but Skrzynecki wanted either the skill or the audacity to turn his advantages to account. He was urged to advance and attack the rear of the troops commanded by Diebitch in person; but he replied—"The roads are impracticable for artillery; I am chained to the great road of Siedlece, and I cannot profit by my victory." All movements calculated (in the event of their being successful) to lead to decisive results, were attended with great hazards, and these he feared to encounter, because he had no reserve; and, therefore, if his army was destroyed, the Polish cause was lost. For some days he remained in a state of inactivity, after which he assumed the offensive, and marched against Rosen, who was posted with 25,000 men on the Kostrzyn, covering the approaches to Siedlece. Again the Poles obtained a victory, on the 10th of April, at Iganie; and the Russians, disheartened by their previous defeats, fled tumultuously, and left half their cannon in the hands of the enemy. The troops defeated on this occasion were the Russian veterans on whom, since the recent Turkish war, the emperor Nicholas had bestowed the vain-glorious title of "the Lions of Varna." But a sad calamity awaited the victors; the terrible cholera had been advancing from India into Europe; it had already infected the Russian army, and the Poles took it from the prisoners whom they captured on that occasion. This circumstance prevented the Poles from following up their successes, and the Russian army was thus saved from destruction.

Yet the Poles were not uniformly successful. Their right wing, under Sierawiki and Pac, amounting to 15,000 men, which had advanced against the Russians at Lublin, experienced a reverse, and were driven back with the loss of 1,500 men. The brave and gifted Dwernecki, after achieving many triumphs, was defeated in Volhynia, and compelled to take refuge within the Austrian frontier, where he and his men were immediately disarmed and made prisoners. But Austria was not anxious for any overwhelming success on the part of Russia; and the Poles were mostly permitted to escape and return to the patriotic army. A partial rising in favour of the Poles, in Podolia and the Ukraine, was also crushed by the Russian forces; and, by its misfortune, helped to bind the chains it had striven to break.

While these operations were proceeding,

the main Polish army, under Skrzynecki, remained in inaction; while Diebitch, from whose military talents the emperor Nicholas had expected a speedy termination of the war, was waiting for reinforcements to fill the gaps which had been made in his ranks by Polish sabres. He had not fulfilled the expectations formed of him in consequence of his previous exploits, and especially his passage of the Balkan, in the recent war with the Turks; and it became evident that his powers were failing. The irresolution of the Polish general at this period has been both regretted and condemned, for a vigorous blow struck at this moment might have annihilated the Russian army, and inclined the emperor to grant the terms demanded by the Poles.

This time Diebitch, having received the reinforcements he had been waiting for, commenced offensive operations. Towards the end of April he advanced with 40,000 men to Jerusalem, while 15,000 more marched on Kaluckzyn; but he was soon compelled to retire, on account of the wasted state of the country, which precluded the possibility of obtaining supplies. Skrzynecki then conceived the plan of attacking the Russian head-quarters at Ostrolenka, and, by forcing back the Russian army, open a communication with Lithuania, where an insurrection in favour of the Poles was making considerable progress. This movement he succeeded in effecting, at the same time attacking and defeating the Russian rear-guard at Tykoczyn. Skrzynecki, however, in accomplishing it, laid himself open to attack—a circumstance of which Diebitch was not slow to take advantage. The result was a general battle, which took place at Ostrolenka on the 26th of May. The conflict was a furious and terrible one; both sides exhibited the most obstinate courage, and victory appeared to hang undecided between them. In many cases the combatants fought man to man and foot to foot; while Polish officers were seen, sword in hand, rushing to the front, singing the Warsaw hymn. At nightfall the fury of the fight slackened, and the Russians, retiring from the field, withdrew to the opposite side of the river Narew, leaving 10,000 dead or wounded men upon the ensanguined field. The Poles had gained an equivocal victory; but it was of a kind so fatal as to carry with it nearly all the consequences of defeat. They had lost no less than 7,000 men, including 270 officers—a much heavier calamity to them than the loss of 10,000 men was to their foes. A detachment of 8,000 men, also, had been separated from the main army of the Poles, and left in a dangerous position in the forests of Lithuania. Skrzynecki summoned a council of war, and his officers strenuously advised a retreat—a decision which he unwillingly adopted. The Polish army, therefore, retired leisurely towards Warsaw, and gloomy forebodings filled the minds of many of the patriot leaders.

The sanguinary battle of Ostrolenka was the last fought by Diebitch. Knowing that he had incurred the serious displeasure of the emperor, and mentally pained by his own want of success, he sought relief from the melancholy which oppressed him in an immoderate use of the bottle. This probably subjected him to an attack of the cholera, which was then raging in the Russian army. He sunk rapidly beneath the disorder, and died at Pultusk, on the 10th of June. Nicholas, who had resolved to dismiss the living general, looked with a softened glance on the dead one, and the corpse of the once famous soldier was conveyed to St. Petersburg, where it was interred with much pomp. On the 27th of the same month in which Diebitch breathed his last, the Grand-duke Constantine died at Witepsk, in the arms of the much-loved wife for whom he had sacrificed the throne of Russia. Suspicions of poison were at first entertained, but it appears groundlessly, and his death is now generally attributed to cholera. Dr. Granville, an English physician of distinction, attributed the death of the grand-duke to the result of mental irritability, which terminated in apoplexy. "Constantine," observed that gentleman, "eccentric always, tyrannical, cruel, died at Warsaw, suddenly, in July, 1831, aged fifty-two years, after having caused rebellion in the country by his harsh treatment of the cadet officers. I saw and conversed with him on the parade and in his palace at Warsaw in December, 1828. His looks and demeanour sufficiently denoted to a medical man what he was, and what his fate would be. It has been said that he died of cholera; again, that he had been dispatched like his father. The physician-in-chief of the Polish military hospitals assured me, some years after, that he died apoplectic and in a rage."*

* For a remarkable letter by Dr. Granville, published on the occasion of the death of the emperor Nicholas, in which the severities and eccentricities

General Paskiewitch succeeded Diebitch in the command of the Russian army in Poland; but the combatants on both sides had suffered too much by the battle of Ostrolenka, to permit the immediate renewal of hostilities. Nearly a month was suffered to pass in inaction, during which the Polish general busied himself in recruiting his shattered ranks and preparing for a renewal of the struggle. Gloom, fear, and discontent prevailed in Warsaw, and the republicans of that city lost all their confidence in Skrzynecki, whom they suspected either of incompetence, or of treason to the national cause.

The resumption of hostilities led to results unfavourable to the Poles. The division which had been separated from their army after the battle of Ostrolenka, had thrown itself into Lithuania, where it met with considerable success in promoting the insurrection there; so much so, that it was joined by some thousand volunteers, including 340 young men from the university of Wilna. But there was no time to organise these recruits, and not even arms for them all; therefore, though this division of the Polish army proved successful in an engagement with a small body of Russian troops which endeavoured to arrest its progress, it suffered a defeat at the battle of Wilna of so serious a kind as to prove fatal to the Polish cause in Lithuania. The defeat was followed by another disaster; for most of the troops who retreated from the field of battle, were compelled to take refuge in the Prussian territory, where they were arrested and disarmed.

As the Poles were constantly weakened, the Russians were as constantly reinforced, and their relative strength became more disproportionate. The state of the Poles, which had never been too promising, became desperate; and eventual submission, with its accompanying degradation and severities, stared them in the face. Paskiewitch adopted a different plan to the one which had been pursued with so little advantage by his predecessor. It was to renounce the idea of attacking Warsaw on the right bank of the Vistula, where it was defended by the fortifications of Praga, and, instead, to march towards the Prussian frontier, where additional succours of every description awaited him, to cross the Vistula at Oziek, and to return and attack Warsaw on the left bank. This plan was favoured by the dishonourable and mean attitude of Prussia, which, sinking the dignity of an independent state into the insignificance of a cringing vassal of Russia, openly assisted the latter power, and permitted provisions and munitions of war to be forwarded across its territory to the Russian head-quarters. "Time will show," observes a political writer, "whether, in so doing, Prussia has not put the seal to her own ultimate subjugation." In reply to repeated expostulations both from Poland and France, the Prussian cabinet answered, with a despicable quibble, that it had never professed to be neutral, but only inactive.

General Paskiewitch had 60,000 men and 300 pieces of cannon with him at Pultusk, and a reserve of 23,000 behind the Bug and the Wieprz. To oppose this force Skrzynecki had not 25,000 men. The Polish government made an eloquent appeal to the people for assistance, commencing—"In the name of God; in the name of the liberty of the nation, now placed between life and death; in the name of the kings and heroes who have combated in former days for its religion and independence; in the name of justice and of the deliverance of Europe; in the name of future generations who will else demand a terrible account of your abashed shades for their servitude, we call on all classes to come forward to defend their country." This appeal was generously responded to; but the hopeful enthusiasm which animated the people at the outbreak of the insurrection, now scarcely existed: it had sunk into a state not far removed from despair, in the presence of obstacles which proved insurmountable, and of difficulties which appeared endless.

The crossing of the Vistula by Paskiewitch, and the approach of the Russian army upon Warsaw, on its comparatively undefended side, created both consternation and fury in that city. Such was the outcry against Skrzynecki, that he was deprived of the command of the army, which was given to Dembinski, who had the courage to undertake it under circumstances which held out a promise of little else than martyrdom. But popular discontent was not alleviated by the removal of Skrzynecki, whose inactivity had led to suspicions of his fidelity. Furious riots

of the various members of the imperial family of Russia are attributed to the action of hereditary insanity, *see* Tyrrell's *History of the recent War with Russia*, vol. ii., p. 85.

broke out in Warsaw, and armed and excited mobs paraded the streets, rending the air with shouts of treason. Breaking into the prisons, they murdered the state prisoners, together with several Russians who were confined there. They also forced their way into the palace; and the following day the government, finding themselves unable to restrain the fury of a people by whom they were not respected, resigned. One of a more republican character succeeded, and General Krukowiecki, a man of considerable energy and talent, was appointed dictator.

It became evident, that the termination of this sad struggle could not long be averted. With the hope of avoiding the terrible loss of life which must necessarily ensue from the assault of Warsaw, Paskiewitch gave the Polish government till the 5th of September to surrender at discretion, assuring it that these were the only terms he was authorised to make. His offer was still indignantly rejected, and the Poles, in reply, dispatched 20,000 men to threaten the Russian communications, and to collect provisions in the surrounding provinces. This was an error, which left only 34,000 men to guard the intrenched camp at Warsaw. The city was defended on the left bank by three semicircular lines of vallations, the most extended of which did not embrace less than five leagues. The principal sallies were Wola, Pariz, and Marymont, connected together by lunettes. This immense development, to be adequately maintained, required an army three times as large as that of the Poles. Certain points, of necessity insufficiently manned, must, as a matter of course, fall into the hands of Paskiewitch; so that they had built forts for the enemy; and the very works which were intended to stop the besieger, became to him an additional element of success. To complete this misfortune, the points then best fortified were precisely those which the Russians could not attack.

At daybreak on the 6th of September, the Russians commenced their assault on the intrenched camp of the Poles at Warsaw, Paskiewitch having previously ordered large rations of brandy to be distributed to his troops. The attack began with a fire from 200 cannons, and the storm of destructive missiles was continued all day, and responded to by the Polish artillery. The fighting also was carried on with the most determined fury, and on each side the slaughter was terrible. But the force of the Russians was overwhelming, and Krukowiecki lost courage, and informed the council of government that all was lost, and that nothing remained but to surrender. During the night he attempted to open a negotiation with Paskiewitch; but the Poles could not be induced to purchase a cessation of the horrors of a sanguinary and hopeless struggle at the price of an unconditional surrender. The next day, therefore, the battle was resumed, and the Poles fought with the fury of despair; but their bravery was unavailing against the crushing fire of the Russian guns, which established such a superiority over that of the Poles, as to induce Paskiewitch to order the assault. Again the Russians were indebted to the immense superiority of their artillery for their success. After a bloody resistance, several of the intrenchments were taken, and Krukowiecki agreed to a surrender, on condition that the Polish army was allowed to retire to Plock. This was granted, and Krukowiecki addressed the following communication to the emperor Nicholas:—"Sire,—Commissioned at this moment to speak to your imperial and royal majesty in the name of the Polish nation, I address myself, through his excellency Count Paskiewitch d'Erivan, to your paternal heart. In submitting unconditionally to your majesty our king, the Polish nation knows that your majesty alone is competent to make the past forgotten, and to heal the deep wounds that have rent my country."

The following day the Russian troops marched triumphantly into Warsaw by the northern gates, and the Polish soldiers left it by the southern. They were followed by the members of the diet, and by many persons who had distinguished themselves during the insurrectionary war, and who chose a voluntary banishment rather than a dependence on the hoped-for mercy of the emperor. During this last struggle, in a noble but most unhappy cause, in which the natural rights of humanity were arrayed against the overwhelming legions of a cruel and unyielding despotism, 5,000 Poles had perished, and 4,000 more were taken prisoners. The Russians did not purchase their tarnished triumph except at a fearful price of blood: their loss, during these two days of terror, was admitted by their general to have amounted to 5,378 in killed

and wounded; while it is asserted by other authorities to have reached the startling number of 20,000 men!

The Polish army, which had retired from Warsaw, was followed by the Russians, and summoned to surrender, which it indignantly refused to do. The struggle was resumed for a few days; but the Poles were almost without ammunition, and in a miserable and almost destitute state. They were soon compelled to cross the Prussian frontier, and lay down their arms; and thus the struggle terminated, after having lasted nearly eight months, and cost Russia the astounding loss of 180,000 men. The Poles had displayed a patriotism and courage which elicited the admiration of Europe; and the failure of their cause produced sorrow in many of the capitals of the continent, and passionate excitement in others. In Paris the public grief was so intense, that for some days the city remained in a state of stupor, and the theatres were all closed.

The emperor Nicholas was unmoved either by the prostrate and unhappy condition of the Poles, or by the sympathy manifested for them, and the execration poured out against Russia in the most free and enlightened states of the continent. He exhibited the most implacable resentment and relentless severity against the unfortunate people whom the harshness of his government had driven into insurrection. Many members of the noblest families in Warsaw were seized, and sent to labour for life in the mines of Siberia, or drag out a wretched existence in its miserable deserts. More were sent to serve as common soldiers in the Caucasus and other Asiatic provinces, and thus became instrumental in inflicting upon others that loss of liberty and nationality, for the assertion of which they themselves were paying so terrible a penalty. As to the Polish soldiers, the oath of allegiance to the emperor was forced upon them by threats of death beneath the agony of the knout. No gleam of generosity, no touch of mercy, irradiated or softened the harsh nature of the czar; the victim was at his feet, and he resolved that it should rise no more. He determined on the utter extinction of that feeling of nationality in the Polish breast, which, from its intensity, seems destined to survive all misfortunes. To effect this purpose, the constitution granted to Poland was formally abrogated, and another form of government, called the "Organic Statute," introduced. The universities of Wilna and Warsaw, as well as many minor schools, were abolished, and the public libraries and museums carried away to St. Petersburg and other parts of Russia. Various other measures were taken to destroy the nationality of Poland, to abolish its language, and to overthrow its religion*—measures which have ever since been steadily persisted in. A great number of the patriots left their fatherland, and emigrated to foreign countries. But the seal was yet to be placed to the misfortunes of Poland, the stone yet to be laid on the grave of its nationality. This was done in 1832, when it was declared *an integral part of the Russian empire.*

From this state of national and political death, we fear that there is no resurrection for the Poles.† Sad as their fate is, they

* Ivan Golovin, a Russian exile who has written much concerning his country, observes—"If the Russo-Greek church was tolerant under Catherine II., it has ceased to be so under Nicholas. He has forced the united Greeks to separate themselves from the pope, and to re-enter the bosom of the Russian church. *In Poland he has erected a Russian altar by the side of every catholic altar.* The Armenians of the Gregorian sect are under process of conversion. The patriarch of Echmiadzin, by way of paying court to the czar, has gradually obliterated, one after another, the differences that used to exist between the Greco-Russian form of worship and the Armenian. There is not a single sect, down even to the Lutheran peasants of Esthonia, that has not been tried to be converted to the Greek faith by the bait of grants of land and enlarged privileges. This bait has led to some ridiculous results in the Caucasus among the Ossetinians, who, receiving a shirt and a silver rouble for each conversion, have managed to get the reward three or four times over, by being converted over and over again, in different localities. The consequence is, that the official list of baptisms is greater than the whole number of inhabitants, which does not, however, prevent them from still belonging to their old faith. Not a single Ossetinian has ever been seen in the Christian church of Kasbek!"

† "Is there a Poland or is there none?" inquires Golovin; who thus replies:—"That is the question first put when one treats of that country. *Finis* Poloniæ! exclaimed Kosciusko on the field of battle, throwing away his sword, on being made prisoner by the Russians; since which time those words have been repeated by less distinguished generals or patriots; and so it is not lost, but still lives, or if politically lost, it lives in the hearts of millions; and there is indeed something very noble in the feeling of those Poles who, notwithstanding all their sufferings and their privations, believe in the rising again of their country. 'A nation,' say they, 'which has a literature and a history, does not perish.' But the history of a nation closes with it, and the Roman empire also has its literature, and that of no mean kind. Nations die like individuals; and the absorption of smaller nationalities by larger is doubtless the goal to which mankind are irremediably advancing."

have suffered extinction as a separate nation in Europe in consequence of their own errors. Poland had a selfish, turbulent, and proud nobility; a superstitious and domineering priesthood, and a serf population. These were its faults, or rather its crimes; and for national crimes there is, in the inexorable march of events, no forgiveness. Thus it fell at last to be absorbed into the gigantic territories of a neighbour to whom, at one period, it was an object of dread. Let us trust that the other nations of Europe may profit by the tragic lesson; that nobles may remember, that a too selfish adherence to their own interests may eventually cause the destruction of their order; that priesthoods may understand, that a rigid enforcement of the practices of a blind and decrepid superstition crushes out the spirit of a people;* and that the latter may comprehend, that those who are content to live in a state of serfdom under a native government, deserve their fate, and have no security that they may not become serfs under a foreign yoke. On the tomb of Polish nationality might justly be inscribed the words—"Slain by the vices of the Polish nobles and priesthood, and by the apathy of a people who knew not liberty."

Poland perished by its crimes; and the western nations of Europe have been punished ever since, for their connivance at its spoliation, by their dread of Russian preponderance. Had they firmly resisted the first partition of Poland in 1772,† the second and the third partition would never have taken place. These reduced Poland to the state of weakness which eventually caused her to fall prostrate and helpless beneath the iron foot of Russia. In 1772, England did not even utter a word of expostulation when Catherine II. and Frederic the Great bribed Austria to assist them in the first partition of Poland, by which it lost more than one-third of its whole extent. England and France stood aloof, and beheld, with apparent indifference, this inexcusable breach of those laws which are presumed to regulate the intercourse between civilised nations: they suffered the balance of power not only to be disturbed, but to be rudely overthrown. It is true that the time of the imperial and royal bandits had been well chosen. England was tired of its long contests with France; it was already engaged in that quarrel with America which led to the great war of independence; and the attention of the English people was engaged in political struggles at home, where they feared that the bigotry and despotic character of an ignorant and obstinate young king, assisted by a tory ministry, would, if not resisted, force on them that political servitude to which so many of the continental nations were the prey. On the other hand, France, exhausted by the wars into which it had been plunged by the restless ambition of Louis XIV., and its people irritated and nearly maddened by an accumulation of misery, and by the corruption and heartlessness of the mass of the privileged orders both in church and state, was hurrying onward to that terrible revolution, when the sins of a blind aristocracy, and the selfishness of a corrupt priesthood, were, together with the wrongs of an outraged and despairing people, to be washed out in a deluge of blood!

Oh! the time was well chosen: France was half mad with her own miseries, and the hands of England were filled with her own immediate affairs. There never was a period when our exercise of the doctrine of non-intervention in the proceedings of other countries, seemed to be more profitable. What, it might be urged, could these two countries do, when Russia, Prussia, and Austria, each armed to the teeth, were leagued together for a deed of wrong? Assuredly the question constitutes a difficulty: to this the western powers closed their eyes; but that is not the manner in which difficulties are overcome. They must be met, and met with daring and resolution; and it is better when they are met at once. They are commonly increased by delay, as this has been. If Poland had not fallen, Turkey would not be in danger from the overshadowing might of Russia; nor would Prussia be her vassal, or the Baltic states look towards her with furtive and uneasy glances. The difficulties of the Eastern question, as well as others in connection with the pretensions of Russia, may almost be said to have arisen out of the fall of Poland: the

* A fact of which Spain is a prominent and most extraordinary instance. The priesthood of Poland were bitterly fanatical in their adherence to the tenets and forms of catholicism; that of Spain was superstitiously and savagely mad.

† See *ante*, pp. 288, 289.

strength she lost, Russia gained; and the acquisition of that territory opened to her a highway into the heart of Europe, and made her influence predominant throughout a great part of Germany. Starting from Warsaw, the battalions of Russia could soon thunder at the gates of Berlin; and in that circumstance lies the clue to the Prussian subservience to Russian claims, and Prussian complicity with Russian guilt. Since Poland has been absorbed by Russia, Prussia has ceased to be one of the great powers of Europe, and has, we repeat, become merely a vassal of the czar; a fact which time will make increasingly evident. Austria cannot maintain herself against Russia, for her vast standing army is required to play the part of police at home, and to force upon disaffected nations the hateful yoke of a cruel, intolerant, and despotic government. Russia well knows that now she has but little to fear from either of her great German neighbours. What power, then, remains to check those aggressions which she has from time to time perpetrated in the east, north, and west of Europe? That of France and England, whose arms would, in such contests, ever have been aided by the dauntless battalions of Poland, had they interfered to save her from partition in the hour of her trial and desolation. Now the sabres and bayonets of Poland follow the imperial standard of the czar, and the revenues of Poland assist in filling his treasury: but yet it is France and England who have to resist the encroachments of Russia; alone they have to oppose the hydra which the might of Poland would have enabled them to smite.

> "The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
> Make instruments to scourge us."

England and France were deedless, and even silent, in 1772, and passive during the subsequent partitions of Poland in 1793 and 1795. The punishment of this apathetic complicity was remote, certainly, but it was inevitable. For more than half a century the "Eastern difficulty" has been the spectre which disturbs the tranquillity of their statesmen; and in 1853 and 1854 both countries were compelled to tax their resources to the utmost—to pour out their troops incessantly upon the shores of Russia—to keep mighty fleets in the Baltic and the Euxine—to add millions upon millions to their national debt—to bedew the soil of Russia with the blood of their best and bravest troops; and all merely with the result of administering a temporary check to the designs of Russia. Surely, whatever the condition of England and France in 1772, they gained nothing by their connivance in the first deep gash inflicted upon Poland, and their silence respecting it. Certainly the western nations were not then what they are now, neither was Russia; in fact, had her internal, social, and political development been progressively equal to theirs, she would now be irresistible. Happily, despotism in some measure disarms itself, for it emasculates its subjects.

In closing this chapter, we may return to our narrative to mention that, in 1833, the liberal and gifted English statesman, Lord Durham, was dispatched from this country on a special mission to Russia, principally with the object of inducing the emperor to soften the severity of his proceedings towards the unhappy persons who had been engaged in the recent Polish insurrection. The effort was altogether without success. Nicholas was not to be moved; and observed, that all Poland was not worth the Russian officers killed at Warsaw. In fact, the statesman found that the language which our national poet has used respecting one of the most haughty heroes of republican Rome, was also true of the czar—that "there was no more mercy in him than there is milk in a male tiger." Regarding the stern, pitiless haughtiness of the unforgiving autocrat, and his domineering pride, we may continue the quotation, and add—"He wanted nothing of a god but eternity, and a heaven to throne in."

The emperor Nicholas has, however, had his apologists for his conduct with regard to the Poles: they affirm, that his vindictiveness arose rather from policy than from cruelty of disposition. A Russian nobleman, while conversing with the Marquis Custine, observed—"You can have no adequate idea of the intense intolerance of the Russians; those whose minds are cultivated, and whom business brings into intercourse with western Europe, take the utmost pains to conceal the predominant national sentiment, which is the triumph of the *Greek orthodoxy**—with them synonymous with the policy of Russia. Without keeping this in view, nothing can be explained either in our manners or our politics. You must not believe, for example, that the persecutions in Poland were the effect of the personal resentment of the emperor: they were the result of a profound and deliberate calculation. These acts of cruelty are meritorious in the eyes of true believers; it is the Holy Spirit who so enlightens the sovereign, as to elevate him above all human feelings; and it is God who blesses him, as the executor of his high designs. By this manner of viewing things, judges and executioners become so much the greater saints in proportion as they are greater barbarians. Your legitimate journals little know what they are doing when they seek for allies among schismatics. Depend upon it, we shall see a European revolution before we shall see the emperor of Russia acting in good faith with a catholic power; the protestants are at least open adversaries; besides, they will more readily reunite with the pope than with the chief of the Russian autocracy; for the protestants, having beheld all their creeds degenerate into systems, and their religious faith transformed into philosophic doubt, have nothing left but their sectarian pride to sacrifice to Rome; (?) whereas the emperor possesses a real and positive spiritual power, which assuredly he will never voluntarily relinquish. Rome, and all that can be connected with the Romish church, has no more dangerous enemy than the autocrat of Moscow, visible head of his own church; and I am astonished that Italian penetration has not discovered the danger that threatens from that quarter."

* Ivan Golovin, while admitting the intolerance of his countrymen, yet is not disposed to believe them fanatical. He observes—"As regards the fanaticism of the Russian, I do not believe in it. He observes fast days; he goes to church, where he hears mass; but he does not believe in the priest, whose hand he finds so often in his pocket. The noble himself is a Voltairian, and an unbeliever. As to the Russian soldier, he dies pressing the cross, which is suspended from his neck, to his expiring lips; but he fights only because he has a taste for a military life, and therefore does not much care, when once in for it, how or when it ends; and to the priest who says to him, 'My children, you suffer here, but in another world the nobles will burn on a huge pile of fire, and you will have to throw on the faggots:' he replies, 'We shall be sent a long way, then, to fetch the wood.'"

CHAPTER XI.

WAR BETWEEN MEHEMET ALI AND THE SULTAN; PROSTRATION OF THE POWER OF THE LATTER; MAHMOUD APPLIES TO ENGLAND FOR ASSISTANCE, AND IS REFUSED; HE SOLICITS HELP FROM THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS, WHO EAGERLY EMBRACES THE OPPORTUNITY THUS GIVEN HIM OF INTERVENTION IN THE AFFAIRS OF THE PORTE; RUSSIA SENDS A FLEET TO THE BOSPHORUS, AND LANDS AN ARMY WITHIN SIGHT OF CONSTANTINOPLE; SETTLEMENT OF THE QUARREL BETWEEN MEHEMET ALI AND THE SULTAN; NICHOLAS OBTAINS FROM THE PORTE THE TREATY OF UNKIAR-SKELESSI, AS A RECOMPENSE FOR HIS SERVICES; CONSEQUENT CLOSING OF THE DARDANELLES TO ALL FOREIGN SHIPS OF WAR, EXCEPT THOSE OF RUSSIA; HOSTILITIES ARE RECOMMENCED BETWEEN THE SULTAN AND THE PASHA OF EGYPT; DEATH OF SULTAN MAHMOUD, AND INTERFERENCE OF AUSTRIA, FRANCE, AND ENGLAND; BOMBARDMENT OF BEYROUT, AND CAPTURE OF SIDON AND ACRE; SUBMISSION OF MEHEMET ALI; MODIFICATION OF THE TREATY OF UNKIAR-SKELESSI; THE CAUCASUS; RUSSIA, BY VIRTUE OF THE TREATY OF ADRIANOPLE, ASSUMES TO REGARD IT AS A PROVINCE OF THE EMPIRE; NICHOLAS IS UNABLE TO INDUCE THE MOUNTAINEERS TO SUBMIT TO HIS RULE; BLOCKADE OF THE CIRCASSIAN COAST; SEIZURE OF THE ENGLISH MERCHANTMAN, VIXEN; NICHOLAS VISITS THE CAUCASUS; FORMAL DECLARATION OF WAR BY RUSSIA; SERIOUS REVERSES OF THAT POWER, AND ITS FAILURE TO SUBDUE THE MOUNTAINEERS.

Turkey had been much weakened by the war that terminated with the treaty of Adrianople, and its progress towards probable dismemberment seemed to be greatly accelerated. Sultan Mahmoud, with unabated perseverance, was actively employed in endeavouring to create a new army and a new navy, and in improving his ruined finances. Yet powerful and distant pashas speculated on the ruin of the Ottoman empire, and debated with themselves whether they were able to set the sultan at defiance, and to make themselves independent rulers.

For some time Mehemet Ali—an extraordinary man, who had raised himself from the position of a small shopkeeper—had been pasha of Egypt. Not satisfied with this amount of power and distinction, he, in 1831, obtained possession of the island

of Candia, and then aimed at acquiring Syria. Pleading, as an excuse, his desire to recover some Egyptians who, being discontented with the exactions of his government, had settled in that country, he sent his son, Ibrahim Pasha, against it with a large army. Syria, as well as Egypt, was an integral part of the Ottoman empire; a firman was therefore issued by the sultan, declaring Mehemet a traitor, and a considerable Turkish force was sent against him. An active campaign followed, and terminated in favour of Ibrahim Pasha, who obtained several victories over the Turks, gained the command of the whole sea-coast of Syria, captured the fortresses of Acre, Tripoli, and Aleppo, and took great numbers of prisoners, and many trophies of war. So remarkable were the successes of Ibrahim, who possessed great military genius, and was well versed in the strategy of modern Europe, that to his Egyptian and Arab followers (who recognise a fatality in all things), he appeared an instrument in the hand of God, to reinstate the true faith, and punish the degenerate Turks who had strayed from the precepts of the prophet. A similar feeling prevailed among the forces of the sultan, who, in the December of 1832, were utterly overthrown at the decisive battle of Konieh. The strength of the Porte, exhausted by previous efforts, was almost annihilated. Even Constantinople was in danger from the ambition of Mehemet and the valour of Ibrahim. Such was the fame of the latter throughout the East, that all the warlike tribes in Asia Minor regarded him as the Man of Destiny, who was to restore the faith of the prophet in its purity—were prepared to join his standard, and endeavour to establish a new dynasty on the throne of Constantinople.

In this hour of peril the Porte applied for assistance to England; but that power answered, that however much inclined they were to assist Turkey, they had not at that moment the means of affording the required assistance.* The foreign policy of this country is a strange enigma, or a series of almost unpardonable errors. Had Ibrahim Pasha crushed the might of the sultan, how long would it have been before the two-headed eagle of Russia had waved over the palaces of the Ottoman and the mosque of St. Sophia? Could the resources of such a petty state as Egypt long have contended with the countless battalions and the subtle arts of the autocrat of the north? The apathy of England might have proved the easy triumph of Russia. "Never," observes Alison, with zealous truth, "was such an opportunity afforded for the establishment of a powerful and efficacious barrier against Russia in the East; imagination itself could not have conceived anything more favourable. The British government was applied to by an ancient ally for succour against a rebellious vassal, and an opportunity was afforded of rendering a service to the Ottoman rulers of so essential a kind as to insure future gratitude and dependence, and counteract, in a great degree, the growing influence of the Muscovites at the court of Constantinople. Incalculable would have been the effects of such aid, if promptly rendered; it would probably have restored the balance of power in the East, and averted, if not altogether prevented, the terrible war of 1854 in the Black Sea. Unhappily, England was not at this period in a condition to take advantage of the extraordinary good fortune thus thrown in her way. So great had been the reduction of her land and sea forces, in consequence of the growing passion for economy which had prevailed ever since the peace, and which the contraction of the currency had now rendered a matter of necessity, that Great Britain had no forces at her disposal adequate for an Eastern war; and the few which she had were absorbed in propping up a rickety and unpopular government against the feelings of the Portuguese at Lisbon."

* The apathy and perplexing policy of England has alienated Turkey from it, and caused it to lose its character for integrity and impartiality with that state. Miss Pardoe, in her interesting book on *The City of the Sultan*, remarks:—"A Turk of high rank and considerable abilities, who had an understanding to observe, and a heart to feel the position of his country, was one day conversing with me on her foreign political relations, when he exclaimed, with a sudden burst of unaffected energy—'France has beguiled us, it is true; but France has been at least comparatively honest in her supineness. She has never affected a wish to become the foster-mother of the world; but England—England, madam, which has boasted of her universal philanthropy—which has knocked away the fetters of millions of the blacks—England, not contented while among her nobles, in her House of Commons, and even at the very meetings of her lower classes, she was making a vaunt of her all-embracing love, and of her sympathy with the oppressed—not contented with seeing Poland weep tears of blood, and only cease to exist when the last nerves of her heart had been wrung asunder—your own happy England, secure in her prosperity and her power, is now standing tamely by, while the vast Ottoman empire—the gorgeous East, which seems to have been made for glory and for greatness—is trampled by a power like Russia! She might have saved us—she might save us yet. Where is her gallant navy? Where are her floating fortresses? But above all, where is the heart which has so many hands to work its will? Is it the expense of a war from which she shrinks? Surely her policy is not so shallow, for she cannot require to be told how deeply her commercial interests must be compromised by the success of Russia. But I will not pursue so painful a subject. As individuals we respect the English; but their political character is lost in the East. We have no longer faith in England.'

The power of France, at this period, to assist the sultan was scarcely greater than that of England; and had it been applied to, a response of regretful denial would probably have been sustained in that quarter also. But assistance was not applied for, as the conduct of Napoleon, and of the French government since his fall, had been such as to create in the Porte a jealousy and distrust of it.

Where was Turkey to turn for help? The mediation of the European powers had effected a truce; but, in spite of it, Ibrahim pushed on and occupied Brousa, the ancient Asiatic capital of the Ottoman empire. The ruin of the sultan appeared to be inevitable; and in this almost hopeless condition, he resolved to appeal for assistance to his natural enemy, and to throw himself into the arms of Russia. Mahmoud, therefore, addressed an autograph letter to the emperor Nicholas, soliciting help against his rebellious vassal, whose conduct he represented as a part of the general system of revolution which had recently been so prominent in Europe, and which all its monarchs were interested in subduing. Nicholas saw the latent advantages of the opportunity thus afforded him of establishing an exclusive protectorate over the sultan and his dominions. The autocrat gave an immediate and favourable response, and tendered the assistance of a Russian fleet under Admiral Greig, and a body of 25,000 men, to act on the banks of the Danube. By the 20th of January, 1833, a Russian squadron of four sail-of-the-line and six frigates, with 6,000 troops on board, took up its station in the Bay of Bourgas, near the mouth of the Bosphorus. In the meantime, the interference of France had produced a settlement of the quarrel, and the sultan had consented to the cession of Syria and Egypt, in perpetuity, to Mehemet Ali.

The sultan, who dreaded his new Russian friends, hastened to inform them that their assistance was no longer needed, and that their force might be recalled. This was not what the latter desired, and they hesitated. At this point, a renewal of hostilities was threatened, by the refusal of Mehemet Ali to ratify the proposed treaty. The Russian government no sooner received this intelligence than they hurried a fresh squadron laden with troops from Odessa, which, effecting a junction with the former one in the Bay of Bourgas, they both immediately sailed for the Bosphorus. Arriving on the 5th of June, they passed the Straits, and landed their troops on the Asiatic shore, within sight of Constantinople.

Startled at this new phase of the "Eastern difficulty," the English government sent Lord Durham to St. Petersburg, partly, as we have already related, to induce the emperor Nicholas to temper his severity against the Poles, but also to bring about a pacification of the quarrel between the sultan and Mehemet Ali, and thus render the prolonged interference of Russia unnecessary. The English diplomatist was received with great distinction, but he was unable to affect the conduct of the czar either with regard to Poland or Turkey. Nicholas had no intention of withdrawing his troops from the Turkish soil, or recalling his armed ships from the waters of the Bosphorus, until he had obtained a contemplated advantage at the expense of the sultan, which, it will be seen, could scarcely have been extorted from the latter even after an unsuccessful campaign.

The adherence of Russia to the cause of Turkey, induced Mehemet Ali to change his mind, and a treaty was therefore concluded between him and the sultan, on the 6th of May, 1833, by which Ali was recognised as an independent sovereign, and received the governments of Jerusalem, Tripoli, Aleppo, Damascus, and Adana, in addition to that of Egypt. Delivered from the danger which threatened his destruction, the sultan now addressed himself to the onerous task of getting rid of his officious friends the Russians, whose friendship, he began to fear, might be as dangerous as their enmity. Before the czar consented to withdraw his forces from the Turkish territory, he obtained from the Porte, in presumed recompense of his services, the since much-talked-of treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi, which was signed on the 8th of July,

and provided, that during a period of eight years, there should be an offensive and defensive alliance between the two powers, by virtue of which, Russia consented to place her whole fleets and armies at the disposal of the Porte. For this wonderful generosity, the Porte was of course to make some acknowledgment and return. This was the insertion of a secret article in the treaty, to the effect that "the Ottoman Porte should be bound, in virtue of its obligations towards Russia, to close the Straits of the Dardanelles; that is to say, *not to permit any ship of war of a foreign power, to enter those straits under any pretence whatever.* This separate and secret article shall have the same force and effect as if it had been inserted, word for word, in the public and patent treaty."

An agreement of this nature could not possibly long remain a secret, and must, necessarily, have become known as soon as it was reduced to practice. The closing of the Dardanelles to all foreign vessels of war, except those of Russia, was a measure affecting every European nation possessed of a naval power. A French vessel was the first refused a passage. England and France took the alarm, and explanations were demanded. The Turkish cabinet was embarrassed, and denied the existence of the secret article. It produced the public treaty, and added, that as an independent state, it was at liberty to contract alliances with any power that it might deem proper, and was under no obligation to justify its conduct to any foreign government. England and France were neither inclined nor prepared to proceed to extremities, and therefore the Dardanelles remained closed to all ships of war except those of Turkey and Russia. This circumstance greatly complicated the difficulties of the Eastern question, which, it became evident, must one day—and that, probably, no very distant one—be brought to a violent settlement of such a kind as no one could foretel its termination. The closing of the Dardanelles to all European ships of war save those of the czar, in fact went far to convert the Black Sea into a Russian lake. The emperor Nicholas had triumphed completely for the time, but, happily, the END was not yet.

The peace concluded between Mehemet Ali and the sultan was soon to be interrupted. Jealousies had long existed between England and France respecting Egypt. Since the time of Napoleon, the French had endeavoured to establish their influence on the shores of the Nile; while the importance of Egypt to England, as a rapid means of communication with India, had rendered it necessary that she should have such a preponderance in that country, as would lead at least to a secure transit through it. On this point a coldness arose between the governments of France and England, and led to a divergence of policy. France adopted the cause of Mehemet Ali, and obtained a considerable ascendancy at Cairo; while England strove to regain her influence with the Porte by supporting it against the Egyptians. The British cabinet, also, were desirous of neutralising the preponderating influence which Russia, by her offers of assistance to the Porte, had acquired over it; and success so far attended its efforts, that it obtained a commercial treaty from the sultan, by which the Dardanelles was open to English *merchant* ships.

Mutual recriminations passed between the sultan and Mehemet Ali, who aimed at the subjection of all Arabia to his authority, and, counting upon the support of France, adopted a very haughty tone. Each side again prepared for war; and in the June of 1839 hostilities were recommenced by the sultan. England and France both took the alarm, and united their efforts to promote peace, as they feared to give the Russians a pretext for making another military excursion to the neighbourhood of Constantinople, and of further increasing their sinister influence over the Porte. The efforts of the French and English cabinets were unable to prevent the outbreak of war; and, on the 24th of June, the power of the sultan was laid prostrate by the battle of Nezib. The victory of Ibrahim and his Egyptians was decisive; and a Turkish fleet, which had been sent to Alexandria to act against that of Mehemet, treacherously joined the foe which it was to have engaged. Turkey was exhausted; she had not another fleet or army ready, and must have fallen before the sword of the powerful Mehemet and his gifted son but for the intervention of the European powers. The impetuous Sultan Mahmoud was spared from the pain of hearing of this defeat. For some time his health had been failing, and he expired a few days before the news of the battle reached Constantinople, and threw both the seraglio and capital into

consternation. Notwithstanding his great talents and energy, the Turkish empire declined rapidly during the latter years of his reign, partly from having been subjected to a series of severe trials, and partly in consequence of his own irascible and imprudent conduct. Under his reforming system the Turks had ceased to be exclusively Asiatic, and had failed in becoming European. He was succeeded by his son Abdul-Medjid, the present sultan, then but a youth of sixteen.

On the death of Mahmoud, the Porte made proposals of peace to Mehemet Ali, offering him the hereditary government of Egypt, and the government, during his life, of that portion of Syria which extended from the Red Sea to the Sea of Tiberias, together with the fortress of St. Jean d'Acre. Mehemet, in reply, demanded the absolute and hereditary possession of all these territories. Austria, France, and England again interfered; for they all dreaded that Russia should again interpose alone in the affairs of Turkey, and take military possession of Constantinople, under pretence of defending it against the Egyptians.

After much diplomacy, a treaty was signed between Turkey, England, Russia, Austria, and Prussia, with the object of bringing the Eastern troubles to a termination. France, unfortunately, instigated by a jealousy of England, stood aloof, and countenanced the victorious pasha of Egypt. This, however, did not prevent the other powers from presenting terms for the acceptance of Mehemet, which, if he rejected, it was arranged that ulterior measures should be resorted to. The adoption of this proceeding without the concurrence of France, so irritated the government and people of that country, that the most intemperate invectives were uttered against the allied powers, and more particularly against England. So great, indeed, was the anger exhibited towards this country, that serious apprehensions were entertained of the outbreak of war between it and France. As Mehemet Ali remained inflexible, the allies resolved to strike a decisive blow in the Levant, before any steps could be taken by the French fleet, then lying in the Bay of Besika, to prevent it. An English fleet, under Admirals Stopford and Napier, was sent to the coast of Syria, where it was to be joined by a few Austrian ships of war. The Egyptian generals were summoned, in the name of the allied powers, to evacuate Syria; and on their disregard of this intimation, Beyrout was bombarded (August 20th, 1840) for nine successive days, and, after a gallant resistance, reduced to ashes, and abandoned by the troops of Mehemet. The British fleet then sailed for Acre. Sidon was first stormed, and taken; and Tripoli, Tortosa, and Latakia, dissatisfied with the Egyptian government, opened their gates. Then the famous fortress of Acre, which had resisted the arms of Napoleon, and was deemed impregnable throughout the East, was bombarded and taken. This was decisive; the Syrian tribes declared in favour of the sultan; the forces of Ibrahim were deprived of resources, cut off from Egypt, and surrounded by enemies. Mehemet Ali, seeing that further resistance would be ruinous, if not impossible, wisely submitted (December, 1840) to the terms of the allies. To save Alexandria from bombardment, he also restored the Turkish fleet, which had been treacherously surrendered to him, and withdrew his troops from Syria and Candia, remaining content with the hereditary possession of Egypt. Thus Turkey was saved from destruction by the arms of one who had been a vassal of the sultan, and delivered from the treacherous kindness of the czar. These facts, which we have run very hastily over, though no part of the internal history of Russia, are yet indispensable to the understanding of the relative position of that empire to the other great powers of Europe, and especially to the comprehension of the causes of the great war of 1853-'4.

Happily, the hostile feeling of France towards the allies, and this country in particular, had yielded to the representations of the British cabinet; and a uniformity of opinion and action on the question of Eastern affairs was restored. To compliment France, the allies left to its government the proposal of the terms of pacification to be agreed to by them all. These were—1. That the Straits of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles should be closed against ships of war of all nations, without distinction. 2. That the pashalic of Egypt, in hereditary right, should be secured to Mehemet Ali and his descendants. 3. That guarantees should be given for ameliorating the condition of the Christian inhabitants of Syria.

An additional and highly important treaty, regarding the vital subject of the

navigation of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, was entered into between Turkey and the whole of the five great European powers, on the 13th of March, 1841. By this convention, which regulated the affairs of European nations in connection with the East, until the breaking out of the war of 1853-'4, it was stipulated—"1. That the Straits of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, in conformity with the ancient usage of the Ottoman empire, shall remain permanently closed against all foreign vessels of war, as long as the Ottoman Porte shall enjoy peace. 2. The sultan declares, on his side, that he is firmly resolved to maintain immovably the ancient rule of the empire, in virtue of which, it is forbidden to vessels of war of all nations to enter the Dardanelles or the Bosphorus; and in virtue of which these Straits remain for ever closed, as long as the Ottoman Porte shall be at peace. 3. His majesty the emperor of Austria, and their majesties the king of the French, the queen of Great Britain, the king of Prussia, and the emperor of Russia, on their part, engage to respect that resolution of the sultan, and to act in conformity with the principle there expressed. 4. The ancient rule of the Ottoman empire being thus established and recognised, the sultan reserves to himself the right to grant firmans of passage to small vessels of war, which, in conformity with usage, are employed in the service of ambassadors of friendly powers. 5. The sultan reserves to himself the right to notify the terms of this treaty to all the powers with which he is on terms of amity, and to invite their accession to it."

We must glance backward for a few years, and take a rapid glance at the historical conduct of Russia with respect to the Caucasus. This extensive mountain chain extends between the Black and Caspian seas, and forms part of the boundary between Asia and Europe. The name "Caucasus," is said to be derived from a Scythian word, signifying *whitened by the snow*. The length of the range is about 700 miles; the width varies from 60 to 150 miles; and the area covered by it, is about 56,000 square miles, or nearly the surface of England and Wales taken together. Some of the mountains rise to a greater height than the Alps, while the extremities of the range subside into mere hills. The highest summit is formed by the rocky masses of the cloven-peaked Mount Elbruz, on which a tradition says that Noah's ark stopped before reaching Ararat. The mountain has a mystic, or sacred character, according to the various faiths of the neighbouring inhabitants: some tribes give it the name of Dshin-Padischah; that is, "King of the Spirits." It rises to about 17,000 feet above the sea, and stands quite isolated. Kasbek is the mountain which ranks next in height; and here again superstition has stepped in, to cast around it something of a mysterious character. The mountaineers relate, that the cradle of Christ is found on the Kasbek, standing above the tent of Abraham, which is itself suspended in the air. The same tradition relates, that there is a treasure which has tempted several persons, whose curiosity and avarice have always been punished by the loss of their sight. Some of the tribes regard all the mountains as deities, and pay them divine honours.

"The Caucasus," observes a Russian writer,* "is, in general, one of the finest countries in the world. It vies with Switzerland for the imposing majesty of its sites, and with Italy for the beauty of its climate. It no doubt will attract as many tourists as those two countries do, when war has ceased to devastate it, and safety has succeeded the alarm from which even bathers are not free, and which imposes on travellers the necessity of having an escort on the most-frequented roads.

"The emperor Nicholas, on visiting that country in 1837, exclaimed—'I now understand better than ever the words in Genesis—'God said, Let there be light, and there was light.' In fact, the sun shines on the Caucasus more splendidly than it does in any other part of the Russian empire. If there be a country where men may be seized with an enthusiastic adoration of the Creator, it is undoubtedly the Caucasus; yet the indigenous worship mountains, and do not open their minds to the light of true religion. Vegetation displays there extraordinary richness and beauty. Antediluvian woods inspire you with a profound respect for the greatness of that nature. There are, in Daghestan, walnut-trees under the foliage of which two companies of soldiers may encamp; and there stands near Erivan, a plane-tree, hollow inside, offering a room, the dimensions of which is seven feet and a-half.

* *The Caucasus;* by Ivan Golovin.

People go there to play at cards, or to take tea. The most beautiful and rare flowers enamel the meadows, and the most esteemed plants grow along the rivers. Wines and silk are the two productions of the Caucasus, which are destined to acquire the greatest importance.

"Heaths, underwoods, and plains, are filled with exquisite game, such as pheasants and red partridges. The mountaineers, who are not acquainted with small shot, and make use only of balls, are necessarily bad huntsmen, and often wonder at the nicety with which the Russians hit the game. So the vultures and eagles, that find on those high mountains a dwelling worthy of them, are, in consequence of the mountaineers being bad shots, left with ample prey. Black swans, which are erroneously believed to be found but in Australia, exist also in the Caucasus. Carnivorous beasts are there likewise rather plentiful, especially jackals and wolves. Bears are often found eating the grapes of the inhabitants, and the Cossacks cut off their paws, with which they make an excellent dish. Hyenas are met in the neighbourhood of Persia; and even tigers advance from India as far as that region. The Caspian Sea is rich in fish, especially in sturgeons and caviar. But the Kuban is the most plentiful of all rivers. Salmon trout, and ordinary trout, abound in the torrents of the mountains.

"The Caucasus offers very opposite climates. A winter of Sweden prevails on the summits, while a summer of Naples is enjoyed at Bakou. The spring is very short in Georgia, and the climate of Mingrelia is pernicious to the indigenous. While travelling, you meet, on the same day, both the beginning of vegetation on the top of the mountains, and the harvest in the valleys. The Georgians manufacture silk stuffs, which, under the name of Tarmalama, are highly valued, and are employed to make morning gowns for ladies, and dressing-gowns for rich men. The carpets, after the Oriental taste, increase also in sale in proportion as they are made of a superior quality. The richest and best-tempered arms are manufactured amongst the Circassians, and their daggers are held in high estimation."

In addition to the natural advantages thus described, the Caucasus is rich in mineral wealth. Traces of gold are found, and silver and copper mines exist near Tiflis. Iron abounds in many places, and is worked by the natives in a rude manner. There is, probably, no country in the world of so small an extent, which contains such a number of different nations, as the valleys of this chain of mountains. The natives speak at least seven different languages: but the Tartar is understood by most of the tribes, except the Lesghis. Strabo states, that in his time, at least seventy languages were spoken in the Caucasus. The Abhasians, who, with their numerous tribes, are in possession of the southern declivity of the range between the Black Sea and Mount Elbruz, differ from the other tribes of the Caucasus in features, and in their peaceful disposition, which has made them willingly submit to the Russians, with the exception of two tribes—the Oubikhs and the Tchigates—who form the confederation of the Chapsouks. The Abhasians were partially converted to Christianity in the time of Justinian; they are now chiefly pagans, and pay particular veneration to the oak. They are the most ancient inhabitants of the Caucasus. The northern side of the range, with its numerous valleys, is occupied by the Circassians, or Tcherkesses, among whom the tribe of Adighe holds the first rank, as being the purest in race. The Adighe are pagans, with the exception of the chiefs, who profess Islamism. Anapa is their chief town. Blood-feuds are indulged in among all the Circassian tribes, to an extent, and with a ferocity, unknown even in Corsica; families exist who have been at feud from time immemorial. The Circassians are estimated at 700,000 persons, but no certainty exists on this point. The centre of the range, on both sides of the Pass of Dariel,* is in possession of the Ossetes, who are said to be the descendants of the Alani. The Lesghians, or Lesghis, the most powerful of the Caucasian mountaineers, occupy the greatest portion of the range east of the Pass of Dariel, and approach the peninsula of Apsheron. They are a warlike people, the terror of all their neighbours, and the most determined enemies of Russia. Their number is about 400,000. The Tchechenes inhabit the country between the lower Terek and the Kuma. They number only about 25,000, but are in a state of almost constant revolt against Russia. The extensive mountain tract bordering on the

* A pass or road between the mountains, which takes its name from the fortress of Dariel.

north of Mount Tersh, is inhabited by the numerous tribes of the Kisti, or Misheghes. The country about the sources of the Terek, to the east of Mount Elbruz, is called Kabardah, and is subject to Russia. In the plains south of the Caucasus, live the Mingrelians, Imeritians, and Georgians. All these nations differ in their language. As great perfection of form, and an ancient origin, have been attributed to the inhabitants of this region, the highest rank in ethnological classification has been termed "the Caucasian race." Besides these aboriginal tribes, many others of foreign origin are met with in the valleys of the range. The most numerous are the Tartars. There are also Cossacks and Magyars; and on the south of the Caucasus, about Tiflis, there are several German colonies.

The range of the Caucasus forms the natural boundary, in this direction, of the vast empire of Russia. Nature herself seems here to have established a barrier against Russian acquisitiveness, and to have forbidden its advance. The Caucasus appears almost designed as a wall to arrest the advance of the hordes of the north upon Turkey and Persia, and in like manner to protect them against invasion. But the policy of the Russian cabinet takes no account of the presumed designs of Providence. It has resolved on conquest and annexation, so far as it can march its battalions and enforce its edicts. The Caucasus subdued and rendered obedient to its iron sceptre, and then Persia would lie at its feet, and Asiatic Turkey exist independently only by its forbearance. It is only by such a gradual extension of the Russian empire, that India could—if it ever could—be reached by the Russian armies; and even in that case, we more than doubt that the troops brought such distances over tracts abounding in natural obstacles, could ever be collected in such numbers as to be formidable to the British power on that vast peninsula. Moreover, no sooner would the designs of Russia in such a direction be perceived in Europe, than her trade would be arrested and her coasts insulted by a blockade of the Baltic by a British fleet. Russia is formidable to the weak; but the equivocating genius of her empire stands rebuked in the presence of the strong. The warlike Swede, and the gifted imperial general who threatened to control Europe, dashed themselves in vain into the sterile regions of Russia, and met merely their own ruin: yet the aggressive force of that empire has been overrated. She was powerful against divided and distracted Poland; she filched Finland from Sweden in the days of its decadence; she robbed Persia of provinces too remote for it to protect; she annexed the vast and forlorn territories of Siberia, because no one disputed a prize considered worthless; and she planted her flag on a portion of the extreme north of America without opposition; but she was unable to take the Danubian provinces from the Porte, though she had arrogantly proclaimed them to be annexed to her dominions. In all aggressive measures against great powers, Russia has shown herself to be unequal to her pretensions.

This has been the case even with respect to the Caucasus, which, after many years of almost incessant warfare, she has failed to subdue. Even prior to the time of Peter the Great, Russia had intervened in the affairs of some of the nations of the Caucasus. That monarch marched against the Lesghians, and defeated them in his unsatisfactory crusade against Persia. Since that period, other Russian monarchs have taken possession of portions of the isthmus; and, as we have related, Georgia, by the consent of the people, was annexed to Russia in the early part of the reign of Alexander. At length, the treaty of Adrianople, in 1829, gave Russia a pretext for regarding the whole of the Caucasus as a province of its empire, as soon as it should be able to take possession of it. The mountaineers, animated by a passionate love of liberty, and neither understanding, nor caring to understand, how a piece of sealed parchment could make them subject to any monarch without their consent, rejected all the advances of Russia, and sternly repudiated the clauses of the convention of Adrianople. They would not surrender the political independence of their country, or enter into any treaty in which that was not regarded as a sacred and unalterable principle. On the other hand, the emperor Nicholas would not brook any opposition to his designs, and he resolved on the settlement of the question by bayonets and grapeshot.

Accordingly, in 1830, he sent General Paskiewitch—who had, in 1828, so distinguished himself in the Asiatic campaign against the Turks—to the Caucasus, and appointed him governor-general of it. He found the "pacification" of his province a

matter of extraordinary difficulty. A mountainous country scarcely admits of military operations, and races of hardy and well-armed mountaineers are proverbially difficult to subdue. An expedition, which Paskiewitch undertook to Abhasia, was sterile in results, but fertile in loss of men. After a rough experience of Caucasian warfare, he submitted a plan of operations to the imperial government. It revealed the only way which, in his opinion, and in that of his most distinguished officers, promised ultimately, though at a great expense of blood and treasure, to bring about the tranquillisation of the Caucasus. It consisted in confining the refractory mountaineers within an encircling and intersecting chain of forts, which would require to be garrisoned by not less than 80,000 men. The chief points of this plan, as adopted by the military council of St. Petersburg, were as follows:—First, premising that forts were to be erected along the Black Sea line of coast to complete the encircling chain of Russian posts, the marshal proposed that four new military routes across the mountains should be constructed, and planted throughout with fortresses. One road was to run from Gelendshik on the Black Sea, south of Anapa, through the mountains to the lower Kuban; one from a still more southerly point on the Black Sea shore, through and over the mountain range to the Russian forts on the north, in the vicinity of Elbruz; another from Nucha to the east of Georgia, over the Lesghian chain, to the country of the Tchetchentzes; and the fourth and last, from a point eastward of Nucha, over the same Lesghian chain, to the fortress of Derbend on the Caspian. Other details referred to the securing and facilitating the intercommunication of the Russian lines and fortresses.

Marshal Paskiewitch did not remain to carry his elaborate scheme into execution, as, in 1831, he was recalled to take the command in the war against the Poles, as we have already related. General Williaminoff succeeded Paskiewitch as governor in the Caucasus. In a proclamation addressed to the Circassians, inviting them to submit, he, in order to give that people an idea of the power of the czar, arrogantly observed—"If heaven were to fall, it would be supported by Russian bayonets." He soon, however, experienced the effects of the bravery and wild independence of the mountaineers. In his advance with 20,000 men from the Kuban, across the mountains towards Gelendshik, on the coast of the Black Sea, to carry out the first of the routes proposed by Paskiewitch, his troops fell into an ambush of the Circassians, and were subjected to such a tempest of rifle-fire from every ledge of rock or other point that commanded the line of march, that the attempt was not only baffled, but cost him between three and four thousand men in killed, wounded, and prisoners.

This was but a small matter to the Russian government, which continually sent reinforcements to the Caucasus, with the hope of overawing the mountaineers into submission. Three of the contemplated forts were erected on the route from the Kuban to Gelendshik, and others were erected on the western shore of the Caucasus, with the object of increasing the efficiency of a blockade established there. This blockade, though but imperfectly preserved, was more oppressive to the Circassians than the presence of large bodies of Russian troops. It rendered it difficult for the mountaineers to obtain supplies of gunpowder, and threatened to ruin the trade they carried on in their daughters by sending them for sale to Constantinople. With respect to this practice the Circassians are little better than savages; but as it is the custom amongst them for fathers to sell their daughters for the purposes of prostitution, they appear to be unconscious of the shame and heartlessness of such proceedings. Russia is indifferent on this point; and perhaps she does wisely in not interfering with the social practices, or mispractices, of a people whom she desires to win to submission to her sway. "The slave-trade," observes Golovin, in allusion to the poor girls who are converted into articles of commerce, "was sanctioned by a treaty of 1847, between the Russians and the Circassians. During part of the year it is carried on openly on the Black Sea. Every year more than 1,000 young girls are carried from Circassia to Turkey; and the obstacles opposed to that trade have had no other result than to quadruple the price of slaves. Even Austrian steam-boats are employed for carrying Circassian girls; and whenever the Russians capture any of these slave-boats, they either give the girls in marriage to the Cossacks, or they allow them to be violated by the soldiers of the regiments garrisoned in the neighbouring forts."

The Circassian chiefs, oppressed by the

Russian blockade of their coast, and startled by the reports in circulation as to the enormous forces Russia was about to pour out for their subjugation, looked for assistance to the other European states, and especially to England, of whose power and supposed sympathy with the oppressed, they entertained rather extravagant notions. These impressions were strengthened by the language of several enthusiastic English travellers, whom the simple mountaineers regarded as ambassadors from this country. A curious circumstance also occurred at this time (in 1837), by which the English government ran some risk of taking the cause of the Circassians upon its shoulders, without exactly intending to do so. An impression prevailed in this country, and was actively disseminated by a portion of the press, that neither the treaty of Adrianople, nor any other treaty, gave Russia the *right* of establishing a blockade of the Circassian coast. This view of the matter was so confidently held by a Mr. James Stanislaus Bell, that he resolved on putting it to a public test by a deliberate and ostentatious defiance of the Russian blockade. He proceeded to the Caucasus in the *Vixen*, an English merchant vessel, which he had loaded with munitions of war for disposal among the mountaineers. Before the vessel sailed, Mr. Bell addressed a letter to Viscount Palmerston, then foreign secretary, to inquire whether the Russian blockade in the Black Sea was recognised by the English government. In reply, he was informed that "no blockade was recognised by Great Britain, a notification of which had not been published in the *London Gazette*." As no such notification had been given, Mr. Bell set sail in the *Vixen*, and trusted that either one of two supposed results must follow from the execution of his daring scheme. He trusted that the blockading force would seize the *Vixen*, and thus induce the British government to send a fleet to the Black Sea to avenge the outrage by destroying the Russian armament and arsenals there; or that if his vessel successfully set the blockade at defiance, its illegality or its impotence would become notorious, and the Circassians be well supplied for the future with powder and weapons.

Neither of these results occurred; for, though the *Vixen* was seized while attempting to land her contraband cargo, the British fleet in the Mediterranean did not take any notice of a proceeding concerning which it was both ignorant and unauthorised to act in the event of its being informed. News of the seizure first reached this country through the medium of the *St. Petersburg Gazette*, in which the narrative was accompanied by an anxious vindication of the legality of the act, and a statement, that in consequence of the emperor's high respect for the flag (the privileges of which the captain of the *Vixen* had so grossly attempted to abuse), the officers and crew, and the ship herself, had been liberated, and only the war material she contained confiscated. A considerable sensation was produced in this country, and warm discussions took place in parliament. In answer to a question from Sir Robert Peel, Lord Palmerston went so far as to declare, that the question of peace or war with Russia entirely depended upon the opinion that might be given by the law-officers of the crown, to whom the whole case had been formally submitted, as to the right of Russia to institute the blockade. Their decision was in favour of the Russian government, and the affair blew over; but not without the expenditure of a great deal of abuse against Lord Palmerston for what was termed "base truckling" to the czar; a reproach which, in this instance at least, we cannot conceive he merited.

In the course of the same year (1837), the emperor Nicholas paid a visit to the Caucasus; but he quite failed in producing that impression on the Circassian chiefs which he trusted his presence would effect. He travelled with great rapidity, but remained at Tiflis, the capital of Georgia, from the 20th to the 24th of October; during which time he reviewed the Russian troops, gave dinners and a grand ball, and invited the chiefs of the country to various conferences, to which they repaired on the faith of the Russian parole. This language, instead of conciliating these proud mountaineers, only had the effect of irritating them. He was at that time disfigured by an eruption in the face, which took much from the majesty of his personal appearance; and when, to give them a rude conception of his power, he told them that he had sufficient powder to blow up all their mountains, they did not form a high opinion of his intellect.

Hitherto a series of desultory conflicts only had taken place between the Circassians and the Russians; but in 1839, the latter made a formal declaration of war,

and hostilities have continued, with but little intermission, ever since. During that year, three Russian armies were landed on the Circassian shore, and an active campaign followed. It was, for the most part, a disastrous one for the Russians, who, during it, had seventeen ships of war driven on shore or foundered in the Black Sea. So resolute, also, was the conduct of the Circassians, and so fatal were the effects of their constant ambushes and unexpected attacks, that General Golovin, who had succeeded to the command, attempted to win by negotiation what he was unable to obtain by arms. In an address to the mountaineers, he told them—"The most mighty of all earthly potentates and great monarchs, the emperor, condescended to visit the Caucasus; and in his unbounded clemency, his imperial majesty deigned personally to inform himself, from the deputies of the different nations, of circumstances respecting the position and the wants of the tribes which they represented; and in this manner, having learned that the previous conditions were too onerous, the magnanimous monarch has changed them for the gracious conditions upon which, in future, the submission of the mountaineers will be accepted—namely, 'Cease from all hostilities against us; give the hostages we shall name; and surrender all the deserters and all the prisoners you have taken.'" The address also contained some bitter remarks upon the English, from whom the Circassians yet confidently expected assistance. The Circassians were not more readily ensnared by Russian promises, than they were to be defeated by Russian arms; and they replied—"We know you well; you are men without faith, without honour, without religion; and we would as soon place confidence in the pigs which roam our forests, and which we esteem just as much as we do so many Muscovites. Thank God, we know our friends from our enemies, and are not to be so grossly imposed upon as you imagine. You will next assert, that the steamers and other ships, whose wrecks bestrew our coast, were not Russian. Spare us your assurances; proceed with your war, and do your worst!"

The war was accordingly renewed in 1840; but the Russians experienced even still more serious reverses. Most of the new forts they had erected on the coast were taken and demolished by the Circassians. The line of forts, from the Kuban to Gelendshik, was swept away, and the garrisons dispersed or massacred. A great prophet-leader, a devout Mussulman, also arose on the eastern side of the mountains; and the Russians were fain to conclude a truce with the Circassians, that they might recover from their losses, and prepare to turn their arms against this new foe.

Schamyl, the pupil and successor of Kasi Mullah, was the patriot and presumed prophet who had arisen on the eastern side of the Caucasus. Brave, eloquent, devout, enthusiastic, and convinced that his actions were the result of direct inspirations from God, Schamyl was just the chieftain required for so hardy and bold a race as the inhabitants of this wild region. He would not permit any of the neighbouring tribes to submit to the Russians; but compelled those who were inclined to do so, to take up their rifles in defence of their fatherland. "If," said he to some who hesitated, "ye continue to give more belief to the deceitful words of the infidels than ye do to my speech, I will do that which Kasi Mullah formerly had it in his mind to do. My bands will overwhelm your villages like a storm-cloud, to compel that which you deny to my friendly assurances. I will come with bloody footsteps; desolation and fear shall follow and precede my hosts; for what the might of eloquence may not do, shall be effected with the edge of the sword." His words produced this response:—"Mohammed was Allah's first prophet; Schamyl is his second!" But the inhabitants of Kabardah fearing Russia more than the warrior-prophet, he kept his word, and burnt more than sixty of their villages.

General Grabbe was sent with 12,000 veteran troops against Akhoulgo, the stronghold of Schamyl—a kind of castle, shut up on every side by masses of rock, and fortified with the resources of modern art; a labour in which he had been assisted by foreigners. Akhoulgo was taken by Grabbe at a terrible cost of life; a murderous battle, of a desultory kind, being fought, which extended over five days. Schamyl escaped with his life only by a stratagem; and so imminent was his danger, that the mountaineers more than ever believed him to be under the especial protection of heaven. His fame was undiminished; and for three or four years he carried on an incessant and merciless guerilla warfare against the Russian forces. Such was the rapidity of his movements, and so unex-

pectedly did he and his fierce followers burst upon their foes, that the latter feared that he possessed the power of ubiquity. At length General Grabbe, at the head of a body of 20,000 men, pursued him to a retreat in the mountains called Dargo, with the hope of capturing or destroying so dangerous a chief. The mountaineers retired before their foes, and lured them on through deserted valleys and rugged mountain-passes, until they were completely exhausted through fatigue and hardship. Nothing was left for them but to retrace their weary steps; which they no sooner did, than the followers of Schamyl rushed upon them with tremendous impetuosity, and assailed them at every difficult spot on their march. Having captured a Russian drummer, the troops of Schamyl compelled him to beat the drum; and many Russian soldiers, attracted by the sound, fell into the snare. Discipline was forgotten during the retreat; and more than half the officers were killed. When General Grabbe regained the encampment, he had lost a fourth part of his army, several cannon, a quantity of baggage, and other material of war. The emperor, vexed at this result, recalled him; at the same time acknowledging that the rout was more attributable to the country and the elements than to the commanding officer. He was replaced by General Neidhart who, not proving more fortunate than his predecessor, and being unable to arrest the ravages of Schamyl, was also recalled; and, unable to bear his disgrace, died of grief.

Count Woronzoff was then sent from St. Petersburg to assume the chief command in the Caucasus, and the troops there were raised to the number of 150,000 men. The emperor reserved to himself the right of giving orders, and commanded everything to be sacrificed for the purpose of taking Dargo. Woronzoff undertook an expedition against it; and Schamyl, unable to defend a place of no strategical importance, allowed it to be taken; but while the army was retiring, he attacked it so successfully in the forest of Itcherki, that the Russian force was nearly destroyed. It would have been totally so, but that two Circassian prisoners, who turned traitors to their country, succeeded in carrying to General Freytag an order to come to the help of his chief. The mountaineers, perched on fragments of inaccessible rocks, shot down the Russian officers almost with impunity, and every step of the retreat was disputed with a ferocious obstinacy. Barricades, formed of trunks of trees, fragments of rock, and double rows of strong stakes, had been thrown across the narrow passes; and at each of these positions, which were commanded by Schamyl's marksmen, the carnage was terrible. Such was the terror created by these incessant assaults, that a panic arose in the Russian ranks; and when the foe burst upon them, they offered but little resistance, but, falling into disorder, broke and fled, and were pursued and cut down for miles. In this terrible rout the Russians lost 4,000 men; and more than 200 officers, including three generals, were among the slain. Russia has since chiefly occupied herself with retaining her position in the Caucasus, and acting on the defensive. Schamyl has not ceased to be a terror to the invaders; and it is supposed that he has recently devoted himself towards bringing about a federal defensive union between all the tribes of the Caucasus; an event which, if effected, would render Russian conquest very remote, if not altogether impossible. Hitherto, it is certain that Russia has sustained a defeat, or rather series of defeats, though she will not acknowledge that such is the fact.

The spirit of the mountaineers was reanimated by the war of 1854-'5; and Sultan Abdul-Medjid, perceiving the fault of his predecessors (who had determined the fate of the Circassians by ceding to the Russians the coast of the Black Sea without the consent of the former), concluded an offensive and defensive alliance with Schamyl; which, however, did not lead to any important result.

"When is, then, an end to be put to the war? The *aouls* (villages) just subdued rebel as soon as the Russians have withdrawn, or the Murids come there. Peace, say the Russian military men, cannot be obtained *unless all the inhabitants are slaughtered*. That measure has always been rejected by the Russian government,* which plumes itself on its humanity, but which shows so little concern for the chronic effusion of blood caused by this protracted war. There might be colonisation, it is true; but the population of Russia is not sufficiently numerous to colonise the Caucasus; besides, the inhabitants of the plain are not willing to leave their fertile fields to go and cultivate rocks in the mountains. The Russian forts are too isolated to afford timely assistance to one which is threatened; while the Circassians, by uniting forces superior to those of the garrisons, will have more chance of attacking them successively in detail, when they have improved in the art of carrying on a siege, or have artillery at their service. In the meantime, they undertake sanguinary irruptions among the Russian colonists, execute razzias, carry away the cattle, and sometimes the wives, of the Cossacks—a thing which does not occur in the war of Algiers. Moreover, the Russian forts, though very numerous, have been found to be insufficient. The system of forts was abandoned in Africa by General Bugeau, and replaced with advantage by mobile columns. It is true, that movements are more difficult in the Caucasus than in Africa; and the Russians have still a great deal to learn from the French in the art of war."*

* For the conclusive reason, that it has shown itself unable to put it into execution; besides, the Russians do not want a desert which they have not the means of populating: they desire to make the Caucasus a Russian province, and the Caucasians Russian serfs.

CHAPTER XII.

FAILURE OF A RUSSIAN EXPEDITION AGAINST KHIVA; THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS VISITS ENGLAND, AND BECOMES THE GUEST OF QUEEN VICTORIA; HE TRANSMITS A MEMORANDUM ON THE AFFAIRS OF TURKEY TO THE ENGLISH CABINET; OPINION OF NICHOLAS ON THE ENGLISH FORM OF GOVERNMENT; SUPPRESSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CRACOW; FUTILE EXPOSTULATIONS OF THE CABINETS OF LONDON AND PARIS; DICTATORIAL ATTITUDE OF AUSTRIA AND RUSSIA TOWARDS SWITZERLAND; THE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION; MILITARY INTERVENTION OF RUSSIA, AND SUPPRESSION OF THE REVOLUTION; TRIUMPHANT MANIFESTO OF THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS, WHO ASSUMES TO BE THE PROTECTOR OF THE CONTINENTAL DESPOTISMS AGAINST ANY INSURRECTIONARY MOVEMENTS OF THEIR SUBJECTS.

THE irritation which existed in this country against Russia, on account of the seizure of the British merchantman, the *Vixen*, on the Circassian shore of the Black Sea, was much increased by the march, in 1838, of a Persian army, directed by Russian officers, against Herat. This proceeding was regarded, both by the government and people of this country, as a preliminary to the invasion of the Anglo-Indian empire; and a rupture of amicable relations between Great Britain and Russia appeared extremely probable. Fortunately the apprehensions of the English cabinet were tranquillised by the repulse of the Persians, and the subsequent conquest of Affghanistan by an army from India.

Russian acquisitiveness in this direction received a further check from the failure of a formidable expedition sent by the czar, in 1840, against the predatory state of Khiva—an Asiatic country, forming a part of that natural division which goes by the name of Turan, or Turkestan. The inhabitants of Khiva consist of the Uzbecks and the Sartes; the former being a branch of the Turks, and the latter Persians. The authority of the khan of Khiva is supposed to extend over a country containing about 150,000 square miles. Russia has frequently been accused of attempting to extend her frontier in this direction; but apparently insurmountable obstacles stand in the way of the accomplishment of her desire. Between the Russian town of Orenburg and the territory of Khiva, lie 400 miles of salt desert. The Russian general, though provided with 10,000 baggage camels, was unable even to reach Khiva. So terrible were the hardships encountered by his troops, that on reaching the last Russian outpost, they were compelled to retrace their steps. The expedition had been undertaken during the winter, merely that the troops might be enabled to obtain fresh water, which is dried up by the parching heats of the summer. The consequence was, the men suffered terribly from the cold, which was 40° below zero of the centigrade thermometer. Thus it will be seen, that from whatever point Russia endeavours to advance upon India,

* *The Caucasus;* by Ivan Golovin.

she will meet the stern, unbending opposition of nature.

These matters passed over without disturbing the peaceful relations between Russia and England, which it was the interest of both countries to maintain. In the June of the year 1844, the emperor Nicholas visited England. He arrived off Woolwich on the 1st of June, in the *Cyclops*, a Dutch government steamer, attended by Count Orloff, General d'Adlerberg, Prince Wassiltschikoff, and Prince Radzitvil. On landing, the distinguished visitors at once proceeded to the Russian embassy, where they took up their abode. On the following day, Prince Albert arrived, and escorted the emperor and the principal persons of his suite to Buckingham Palace. The emperor was received by her majesty in the grand hall, where a splendid *déjeuner* was served. Nicholas afterwards visited the Queen-dowager, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, the Duchess of Gloucester, the Princess Sophia, and the Duke of Wellington. The second day of his stay he visited Sir Robert Peel, and purchased £5,000 worth of jewellery at Messrs. Mortimer's and Hunt's. Her majesty and her distinguished visitors, including the king of Saxony, then proceeded to Windsor by the Great Western railway. For eight days Nicholas was entertained by her majesty, during which period he went to Ascot races; was present at a grand review in the Great Park at Windsor; inspected Prince Albert's farm; went to see the Virginia Water; returned to town, and paid an almost innumerable amount of visits to distinguished people; besides inspecting the United Service Club, the new houses of parliament, and attending a *fête* given by the Duke of Devonshire at Chiswick, at which seven or eight hundred distinguished noblemen and gentlemen were present. On returning to Woolwich, he visited the dockyard and the works, and then embarked on board the *Black Eagle* steamer on his return home.

During the stay of the czar, he had some interviews with the ministers of her majesty on the vexed subject of the Eastern question. The observations of Nicholas on this topic were embodied, by his direction, in a memorandum, which was forwarded to the English cabinet by Count Nesselrode, and confided to Lord Aberdeen, then minister for foreign affairs. That memorandum throws some light upon the events which led to the great war of 1854-'5, and shows both how the mind of the emperor dwelt constantly on the enfeebled state of Turkey, and the profound duplicity with which he masked his views. Read by the light afforded by later events, it will be seen that Nicholas desired to establish a close relationship with England, and then to use her naval power to assist in his sinister designs on the Ottoman territory. As he observed upon another occasion—"All I want is a good understanding with England. This point arrived at, the English government and I—I and the English government—having entire confidence in one another's views, I care nothing about the rest." We append the imperial memorandum, as a valuable historical document.

"Russia and England are mutually penetrated with the conviction that it is for their common interest that the Ottoman Porte should maintain itself in the state of independence and of territorial possession which at present constitute that empire, as that political combination is the one which is most compatible with the general interest of the maintenance of peace. Being agreed on this principle, Russia and England have an equal interest in uniting their efforts in order to keep up the existence of the Ottoman empire, and to avert all the dangers which can place in jeopardy its safety. With this object, the essential point is to suffer the Porte to live in repose, without needlessly disturbing it by diplomatic bickerings, and without interfering, unless with absolute necessity, in its internal affairs. In order to carry out skilfully this system of forbearance, with a view to the well-understood interest of the Porte, two things must not be lost sight of. They are these:—

"In the first place, the Porte has a constant tendency to extricate itself from the engagements imposed upon it by the treaties which it has concluded with other powers. It hopes to do so with impunity, because it reckons on the mutual jealousy of the cabinets. It thinks that if it fails in its engagements towards one of them, the rest will espouse its quarrel, and will screen it from all responsibility. It is essential not to confirm the Porte in this delusion. Every time that it fails in its obligations towards one of the great powers, it is the interest of all the rest to make it sensible of its error, and seriously to exhort it to act rightly towards the cabinet which demands just reparation. As soon as the

Porte shall perceive that it is not supported by the other cabinets, it will give way, and the differences which have arisen will be arranged in a conciliatory manner, without any conflict resulting from them.

"There is a second cause of complication which is inherent in the situation of the Porte; it is the difficulty which exists in reconciling the respect due to the sovereign authority of the sultan, founded on the Mussulman law, with the forbearance required by the interests of the Christian population of that empire. This difficulty is real. In the present state of feeling in Europe, the cabinets cannot see with indifference the Christian populations in Turkey exposed to flagrant acts of oppression and intolerance. It is necessary constantly to make the Ottoman ministers sensible of this truth, and to persuade them that they can only reckon on the friendship and on the support of the great powers on the condition that they treat the Christian subjects of the Porte with toleration and with mildness. While insisting on this truth, it will be the duty of the foreign representatives, on the other hand, to exert all their influence to maintain the Christian subjects of the Porte in submission to the sovereign authority. It will be the duty of the foreign representatives, guided by these principles, to act among themselves in a perfect spirit of agreement. If they address remonstrances to the Porte, those remonstrances must bear a real character of unanimity, though divested of one of exclusive dictation. By persevering in this system with calmness and moderation, the representatives of the great cabinets of Europe will have the best chance of succeeding in the steps which they may take, without giving occasion for complications which might affect the tranquillity of the Ottoman empire. If all the great powers frankly adopt this line of conduct, they will have a well-founded expectation of preserving the existence of Turkey. However, they must not conceal from themselves how many elements of dissolution that empire contains within itself. Unforeseen circumstances may hasten its fall, without its being in the power of the friendly cabinets to prevent it. As it is not given to human foresight to settle beforehand a plan of action for such or such unlooked-for case, it would be premature to discuss eventualities which may never be realised. In the uncertainty which hovers over the future, a single fundamental idea seems to admit of a really practical application; it is that the danger which may result from a catastrophe in Turkey, will be much diminished if, in the event of its occurring, Russia and England have come to an understanding as to the course to be taken by them in common.

"That understanding will be the more beneficial, inasmuch as it will have the full assent of Austria. Between her and Russia there exists already an entire conformity of principles in regard to the affairs of Turkey, in a common interest of conservatism and of peace. In order to render their union more efficacious, there would remain nothing to be desired but that England should be seen to associate herself thereto with the same view. The reason which recommends the establishment of this agreement is very simple. On land Russia exercises in regard to Turkey a preponderant action. On sea England occupies the same position. Isolated, the action of these two powers might do much mischief. United, it can produce a real benefit; thence the advantage of coming to a previous understanding before having recourse to action.

"This notion was in principle agreed upon during the emperor's last residence in London. The result was the eventual engagement, that if anything unforeseen occurred in Turkey, Russia and England should previously concert together as to the course which they should pursue in common. The object for which Russia and England will have to come to an understanding may be expressed in the following manner:—

"1. To seek to maintain the existence of the Ottoman empire in its present state so long as that political combination shall be possible.

"2. If we foresee that it must crumble to pieces, to enter into previous concert as to everything relating to the establishment of a new order of things, intended to replace that which now exists, and, in conjunction with each other, to see that the change which may have occurred in the internal situation of that empire shall not injuriously affect either the security of their own states and the rights which the treaties assure to them respectively, or the maintenance of the balance of power in Europe.

"For the purpose thus stated, the policy

of Russia and of Austria, as we have already said, is closely united by the principle of perfect identity. If England, as the principal maritime power, acts in concert with them, it is to be supposed that France will find herself obliged to act in conformity with the course agreed upon between St. Petersburg, London, and Vienna. Conflict between the great powers being thus obviated, it is to be hoped that the peace of Europe will be maintained even in the midst of such serious circumstances. It is to secure this object of common interest, if the case occurs, that, as the emperor agreed with her Britannic majesty's ministers during his residence in England, the previous understanding which Russia and England shall establish between themselves must be directed."

However amicable might be the feelings of the emperor Nicholas towards England and its fair sovereign, it is certain that he viewed the form of government existing in this country with extreme aversion. The Marquis Custine records an interesting conversation he had with the emperor, in which the latter expressed his opinion concerning the English and other forms of government. We quote it as throwing some light on the intellectual character of Nicholas.

"'I can truly say, sire, that one of the chief motives of my curiosity in visiting Russia, was the desire of approaching a prince who exercises such power over men.'—'The Russians are amiable, but he must render himself worthy who would govern such a people.'—'Your majesty has better appreciated the wants and the position of this country than any of your predecessors.'—'Despotism still exists in Russia: *it is the essence of my government;* but it accords with the genius of the nation.'—'Sire, by stopping Russia on the road of imitation, you are restoring her to herself.'—'I love my country, and I believe I understand it. I assure you, that when I feel heartily weary of all the miseries of the times, I endeavour to forget the rest of Europe by retiring towards the interior of Russia.'—'In order to refresh yourself at your fountain-head.'—'Precisely so. No one is more from his heart a Russian than I am. I am going to say to you what I would not say to another; but I feel that you will comprehend me.'

"Here the emperor interrupted himself, and looked at me attentively. I continued to listen without replying, and he proceeded—'I can understand republicanism; it is a plain and straightforward form of government, or, at least, it might be so; I can understand absolute monarchy, for I am myself the head of such an order of things; *but I cannot understand a representative monarchy: it is the government of lies, fraud, and corruption;* and I would rather fall back even upon China than ever adopt it.'—'Sire, I have always regarded representative government as a compact inevitable in certain communities at certain epochs; but, like all other compacts, it does not solve questions—it only adjourns difficulties.'

"The emperor seemed to say, 'Go on.' I continued—'It is a truce signed between democracy and monarchy, under the auspices of two very mean tyrants, fear and interest; and it is prolonged by that pride of intellect which takes pleasure in talking, and that popular vanity which satisfies itself on words. In short, it is the aristocracy of oratory, substituted for the aristocracy of birth; it is the government of the lawyer.'—'Sir, you speak the truth,' said the emperor, pressing my hand; 'I have been a representative sovereign,* and the world knows what it has cost me to have been unwilling to submit to the exigencies of this *infamous* government. To buy votes, to corrupt consciences, to seduce some in order to deceive others; all these means I disdained, as degrading those who obey as much as those who command, and I have dearly paid the penalty of my straightforwardness; but, God be praised, I have done for ever with this detestable political machine. I shall never more be a constitutional king. I have too much need of saying all that I think ever to consent to reign over any people by means of stratagem and intrigue.'"

Russia never lost sight of her policy to extend her influence both throughout Europe and Asia. At this period she was actively but secretly employed in consolidating her power, fortifying her ports, and strengthening her frontier fortresses. She also assumed to be the protectress of the continental monarchies against any effort for constitutional government made by their subjects. Alexander had dreaded revolutionary principles; but Nicholas made it the labour of his life to crush and utterly extirpate them. He converted St. Petersburg into the head-quarters of despotism, and endeavoured to propagandise in its behalf by means of intimidation.

* In Poland.

The little state of Cracow had been formed, by the treaties of 1815, into a free republic, under the sanction of all the allied powers. In the February of 1846, a feeble and foolish attempt at revolution, for the purpose of establishing a kind of socialistic communism in conjunction with Polish independence, broke out at Cracow. A provisional government was formed, and a manifesto of its principles published. "Let us endeavour," said this document, "to establish a community in which every man will enjoy the fruits of the earth according to his deserts and capacity; let all privileges cease; let those who are inferior in birth, intelligence, or physical strength, obtain, without humiliation, the unfailing assistance of communism, which will divide among all the absolute proprietorship of the soil, now enjoyed by a small minority. Let all imposts, whether paid in labour or in money, cease; and let all who have fought for their country have an indemnity in land taken from the national property."

This imprudent language was not unnaturally regarded as a proclamation of war against property, and the peasants of Galicia proceeded to outrages against the neighbouring nobility, whom they had long detested. The troops of Austria, Russia, and Prussia successively entered Cracow, and the revolutionary movement was speedily suppressed. In the following November, a joint decree of Russia, Austria, and Prussia revoked and annulled the articles of the treaty, and Cracow was made over to Austria! This arbitrary conduct elicited expostulations from the cabinets of London and Paris, both of which, as parties to the treaty of 1815, had guaranteed the independence of the little republic. Lord Palmerston observed—"I have too high an opinion of the sentiments which must animate the three powers, to doubt of their acting towards Cracow in any other spirit than that of the treaty of Vienna. Those governments are too intelligent not to perceive that the treaty of Vienna must be considered in its integrity, and that no government is permitted to make a choice of those articles which it may wish to preserve or violate. I must add, that if there are any powers who have signed the treaty of Vienna who are specially interested in its faithful execution, they are the German powers; and I am sure that it cannot have escaped the perspicacity of those powers, that if the treaty of Vienna is not good on the Vistula, it must be equally bad on the Rhine and the Po." M. Guizot also, in the name of France, forwarded his protest to Vienna against the incorporation of Cracow with the Austrian empire. "Nothing," he observed, "more compromises a government than an avowal of its inability to fulfil, even slowly, its own promises, and the hopes which it has excited. The destruction of the small state of Cracow may deprive Polish conspirators and insurgents of some means of action, but it must also foster and irritate the feelings in which these deplorable enterprises have so frequently and so obstinately originated, and, moreover, weaken the influences by which they might be prevented. It enfeebles, throughout Europe, the principles of order and conservatism, and strengthens blind passions and violent designs." These expostulations were unavailing, for Austria defended its seizure of Cracow by the assertion that that state had, by its conduct since 1815, and especially in the recent outbreak, itself violated the conditions on which its independence was promised. The formal annexation of Cracow to Austria extinguished the last spark of Polish independence.

In the following year (1847), another instance occurred of the dictatorial attitude which Russia had assumed with regard to the lesser powers of Europe. Russia, in conjunction with the governments of Austria and Prussia, addressed a note to Switzerland, stating that they abstained from intervention only on condition of the Swiss adhering to the compact of 1815 (which the three despotic powers had themselves just violated with respect to Cracow), and not altering, or in any way liberalising, their domestic institutions. The Swiss government, animated by a noble spirit of independence, protested against any foreign interference, and proceeded in its own course. The three repressive governments appear to have thought better of the matter; for the only measures taken were by Austria, which imposed some vexatious restrictions on the commerce and intercourse of the Swiss.

The year 1848 was a memorable one in Europe; it was a year of fierce political excitement—a year of revolutions; and the ancient despotisms of the continent seemed

about to crumble into ruin. The Russian government, however, stood firm; for, notwithstanding the severe despotism which constitutes its vital principle, its people, or rather subjects, remained passive from their ignorance and apathetic habits of submission. The flight of Louis Philippe, the overturning of the throne of France, and the establishment of a republic in that country, led other nations to an attempt to shake off their political servitude, and inaugurated a series of insurrections.

Austria was the most severely shaken of the continental powers, and brought, indeed, almost to the verge of dissolution as an empire. Soon after the expulsion of Louis Philippe from Paris, revolutionary movements broke out in Lombardy and Venice, in Hungary, and even in Austria Proper. In the March of 1848, Vienna, excited by a few students and Poles, had risen in insurrection; Prince Metternich fled, and a free constitution was prepared and accepted by the emperor Ferdinand, who shortly afterwards withdrew from the capital, and retired to Innsprück.

But the most formidable movement against the Austrian government was that which took place in Hungary. To escape the tyranny of the Turks, the Hungarians submitted to the domination of Austria, the emperor of which (Ferdinand I.) became their king, his claim to that dignity being based on the fact of his having married, in 1521, Anna, daughter of Ladislaus VI., king of Bohemia and Hungary, and sister of Louis, who, having succeeded his father in the crown of those realms, was killed in the disastrous battle of Mohaz by the Turks, in 1526, and left no issue. A native historian of the Hungarian "War of Liberation"* (as the revolution of 1848 was called), observes—"Ferdinand I. was most unmindful of his promises. So unconscientiously did he neglect the administration of Hungary, that nine years after his coronation, the estates of the nation, assembled in parliament at Presburg, found it necessary to draw up a long list of their grievances. This remonstrance sets forth that the king's absence from the country is the prime cause of all the evils they complain of. Hence the irruptions of the Turks; hence the atrocious cruelties practised by petty tyrants within the confines of the country. Hence, too, the insufferable extortions of all the king's foreign captains, who, instead of protecting the country, drained it to ruin, and betrayed it to the hands of its enemies.

"For three hundred years this Austrian system remained faithful to its original evil principles. And though at intervals—for such there were, though few and far between—a more legal and enlightened administration seemed to prevail, still the cabinet of Vienna returned to its fatal endeavours to oppress and colonise Hungary.

"The kings of the time, before the advent of the Hapsburg race, had for two centuries battled against the Turks, gallantly and often victoriously; and though under the reign of the last two kings of this period the power of Hungary seemed to decline, and though various provinces seceded from the kingdom, still the great territories of Hungary, Croatia, and Transylvania remained intact; and the house of Hapsburg, upon its advent, obtained a free and uncurtailed possession of a great and beautiful empire.

"But scarcely had Ferdinand I. received the crown of Hungary for himself and his family, when he, and his descendants after him, neglected the country and the sacred duties of their office. They all pledged their words to reside in Hungary for a part of the year; but not one of them remained true to his word. Whenever the Hungarian nation expressed their wishes in this respect, they received evasive answers, based on the most futile pretences. The command of the Hungarian troops was given to foreigners, to the signal detriment of the native generals, who were better versed in the ways and means of warfare against the Turks than the Austrian officers could be. When the house of Austria was a suitor for the Hungarian crown, great stress was laid on its hereditary power and the imperial dignity of its members, as giving a promise of an efficient protection against the Turks. But their reign in Hungary was a direct contradiction of their promises. Large provinces were left to the Turks. For one hundred and forty-five years did the Crescent rule over more than one-half of the country. The chiefs of the malcontents, in 1667, were fully justified in protesting, that 'It was an open question: which was worse—Turkish or Austrian sovereignty? The Black Sea and the Adriatic were at one time the confines of the kingdom of Hungary. Ever since the advent of the first

* *Memoirs of the War of Independence in Hungary:* by General Klapka.

Hapsburg our power has decreased, and our frontiers receded; one hundred and forty years have sufficed to make Hungary a narrow strip of land, near the Carpathian and the Styrian mountains. The Danube, the Theiss, the Drave, and the Save, flow for the benefit of the Turks; three-fourths of Hungary, viz., the provinces of Transylvania, Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia, Servia, and Bosnia, are tributaries to them, if not subjects. It is better to make a voluntary surrender to the Porte, and to have liberty of conscience, such as Transylvania enjoys.'

"The successful encroachments of the Turks were chiefly owing to the want of skill of the foreign generals, to the venality of the foreign commanders in our fortresses, to the cowardice of foreign hirelings, to the dilatory measures of the Vienna Hof Kriegsrath, and to treaties of peace which were concluded without the advice and consent of the Hungarian parliaments. When the country was reconquered, the Hungarians took the post of danger in all battles and assaults. They monopolised the danger and the victory. The estates of the country were lavish in their votes of money (large though the king's income was); and no less than 100,000,000 of florins were granted as 'special subsidies' in the period from 1683 to 1706. Still, when in 1699 the peace of Karlowitz was concluded, no reference was made to the palatine or the estates of the country. In that treaty of peace, King Leopold is spoken of as 'his *imperial* majesty,' and any allusion to his *royal* dignity carefully avoided. This is but one trait among a hundred."

This extract will tend to show the feeling existing among the Hungarians towards their Austrian rulers: but the great source of irritation lay in the fact, that the Austrian government endeavoured to extinguish the Hungarian nationality; to make that country merely an Austrian province; to rule it as though it had been a conquered territory; and gradually to supplant and extirpate the ancient Magyar race. Such a mode of government, or rather *mis*-government, almost invariably leads to insurrectionary reaction, and may be termed the nurse of revolution. With so spirited and intensely national a people as the Hungarians, such a result was inevitable. For some years, a powerful national party had been organised, and an active opposition maintained in the Diet; while patriotic feelings had, by every possible means, been excited throughout the country. The Austrian government had in vain endeavoured to repress the movement; and the Diet of 1847-'8 opened with more than the usual hope and energy. Louis Kossuth, the recognised leader of the more advanced liberals, had been returned as representative of the county of Pesth. On the 3rd of March, 1848, the Diet adopted a proposition made by him to send a deputation to their king (the emperor), for the purpose of requiring the formation of a new ministry, essentially Hungarian, as well as certain constitutional reforms. On the 15th of the same month, Kossuth entered Vienna—then in a state of insurrection—with the deputation, and was welcomed by the people with the most enthusiastic demonstrations of applause and sympathy. The deputation was received by the emperor, who yielded to most of its requirements. An Hungarian ministry was formed, of which Count Louis Batthyany became the president, and Kossuth the minister of finance. Various liberal measures passed the Diet, and received the royal assent. They formed Hungary and Transylvania into one kingdom; established an annual Diet, indissoluble by the king; largely extended the suffrage; created a national guard; abolished all feudal privileges; and made other concessions to the popular feeling.

The Hungarian Diet soon thought proper to extend these benefits to the Servians and Croatians; and though they at first rejoiced, in common with the Hungarians, in consequence of their having been raised to the rank of freemen, they were in a short time persuaded by Austrian agents—amongst whom was their own archbishop—that the Hungarians intended to subjugate them, and to destroy their religion and nationality. An insurrectionary movement against Hungary was soon organised, and the first outbreak occurred in June, 1848. Arms, ammunition, and stores were secretly furnished by Austria; and Austrian officers, in disguise, led the Servians to battle. Thousands were slain on both sides; towns and villages were burnt, and the frontier districts laid waste. Most of the Hungarian troops were at this period fighting the battles of Austria in Italy; and Kossuth displayed extraordinary energy in raising means and recruits, and in a short time enabled the Hungarian ministry to organise ten battalions of volunteers, who

were called *Honveds*, or "Defenders of Home."

In the September of 1848, the Croatians crossed the Drave, and invaded Hungary with a force of 30,000 men. The emperor of Austria issued a proclamation, ordering them to retire to their own country; but their leader had good reason to question the sincerity of the command, and did not hesitate to disobey it. In fact, the policy of the emperor was to play off the races against each other; and, dreading their strength, he wished to weaken both. As soon as he felt himself strong enough, he threw off the mask. With this object he sent Count Lemburg, as royal commissioner, with orders to dissolve the Hungarian Diet, and assume the direction of affairs. As the count was entering Pesth for this purpose, he was set upon by the populace, dragged from his carriage, and assassinated. From this period all hope of reconciliation was at an end. The Hungarian ministry resigned its functions; and a committee of defence was established to carry on the government, with Kossuth as its president.

Success for a while attended the military efforts of the Hungarians against their oppressors; and it is more than probable that they would have thrown off the Austrian yoke, but for the intervention of Russia. The incapable Ferdinand had abdicated in favour of his nephew Francis Joseph (the present emperor), who applied for assistance to the czar Nicholas. This the latter readily granted; for not only do the continental despotisms seem to regard it as a sacred obligation to assist each other in repressing all popular and revolutionary excitement, but Nicholas well knew, that by helping Austria in the time of her trial, he prevented her from acting against him in the event of his getting involved in a quarrel with the great powers of Europe concerning Constantinople, or any other Turkish possession. Nicholas, in fact, was amply repaid for the assistance he now extended to the emperor of Austria; for in the war of 1854-'5, Francis Joseph trimmed between the belligerent parties; and while calling himself an ally of France and England, protected, as far as he was able, the interests of Russia. But Nicholas had yet another motive for assisting the shaken despotism of Austria: the Poles had flocked eagerly to serve beneath the Hungarian banners, and he dreaded that, if their arms were successful, he would have another revolution in Poland to suppress. "The insurrection," he observed, in one of those manifestoes which he availed himself of every opportunity to publish, "supported by the influence of our traitors in Poland, of the year 1831, and by reinforcements of refugees and vagabonds from other countries, has given this revolt a most menacing character. In the midst of these disastrous events, his majesty the emperor of Austria has invited us to assist him against the common enemy. We cannot refuse that service. After having invoked the God of battles and the Master of victories to protect the just cause, we have ordered our army to march to stifle revolt, and annihilate audacious anarchists who threaten the tranquillity of our provinces. Let God be with us, and none can resist us; of which we are convinced. Such are the sentiments of all our subjects. Every Russian shares in this hope, and Russia will fulfil her holy mission."

Early in 1849, a Russian army of 90,000 men was marched into Hungary, and another of 60,000 into Transylvania; and these, added to the Austrian and Croatian armies, made a force of upwards of 300,000 armed men to crush the revolutionists. The Hungarians made a brilliant resistance; but their resources were insufficient to contend with so vast a power. They were defeated in several battles by the Russians; and the government, in despair, sought to open separate negotiations with the Russian commander. These proved unavailing; and they then offered to invest General Görgei, the commander of their forces, with full powers to treat for peace. These he refused to accept; and they eventually resolved to appoint him dictator. On this, Kossuth issued a proclamation (August 11th, 1849), announcing his resignation of power into the hands of Görgei, and the investiture of the latter with dictatorial authority. Having solemnly, "before God and the people," charged Görgei to do his best to save the national existence, Kossuth fled into Turkey. Görgei, against whom heavy suspicions of treachery are entertained, immediately concluded a negotiation he had commenced with the Russian general, by agreeing, as governor and dictator, *to surrender unconditionally*. Accordingly, on the 17th of August, his army of 24,000 men, with 150 guns, laid down their arms to the Russians. At the

same time, Görgei directed the officers of the various garrisons and detachments scattered throughout the country, to follow his example. A few only refused; the resistance of the rest was unavailing; and the war was virtually at an end. A large number of the officers and soldiers, as well as civilians, succeeded in escaping into Turkey, where they were hospitably received. Austria and Russia made a united demand that the refugees should be given up to the former power, or at least expelled from Turkey. The Porte nobly refused to do either, notwithstanding threats of force were made use of to intidimate it into compliance. Russia would possibly have put these threats into execution; but as England and France announced their determination of supporting the sultan's decision by the presence of their fleets, if necessary, the refugees were permitted to remain without further molestation.

In Hungary, the suppression of the revolution was followed by a series of trials and executions, attended by circumstances of extreme cruelty. The fate of Count Louis Batthyany, the president of the revolutionary ministry, elicited great sympathy. He was condemned by a council of war to be hanged, an ignominy which he endeavoured to escape by unsuccessfully attempting suicide. He was afterwards shot, his estates confiscated, and his wife and children exiled. The country has since, until quite recently, been subjected to military rule. All the national privileges have been abrogated, and the people subjected to a succession of severe coercive measures. Almost the only permanent benefit which has been secured by the revolution, appears to be the abolition of the feudal privileges and distinctions, which have not been reimposed, and are not likely to be, as it is not the policy of the government to restore the power of the nobles.

Shortly after the surrender of the Hungarian army, and the consequent annihilation of the revolutionary cause, the emperor Nicholas published the subjoined manifesto:—"'Russia will fulfil her holy mission.' Such were the words that we addressed to our well-beloved subjects when we announced to them, according to the desire of our ally the emperor of Austria, that we had commanded our armies to stifle the war in Hungary, and there establish the legitimate authority of the emperor. Under the protection of God, that object is accomplished. In less than two months, our brave troops, after numerous and brilliant victories in Transylvania and under the walls of Debreczin, have marched from victory to victory—from Galicia to Pesth, from Pesth to Arad, from the Buckovina and Moldavia to the Banat. Finally, the bands of insurgents, hurled back in every direction—from north to east by ourselves, from the west and south by the Austrian army—have laid down their arms before the Russian army, appealing to our mediation to solicit a magnanimous pardon from their legitimate sovereign. After having holily performed our promise, we have ordered our victorious troops to return within the limits of the empire. With a heart penetrated with gratitude to the Dispenser of all blessings, we cry out, from the innermost recesses of our soul, '*Nobiscum Deus! audite populi et vincemini, quia nobiscum Deus!*'"

Such language, on such an occasion, is both startling and painful. It is an impious arrogance for a despotic ruler, or indeed for any sovereign whatever, to assume that his cause is that of heaven; his will identical with that of the Deity! But what must we think of such effusions, when employed in vain self-glorifications over successful butchery? It might be a painful necessity on the part of Austria—a necessity arising out of her own misdeeds and evil government—to shed the blood of Hungarian patriots. But the intervention of Russia was not called for by any state necessity on her part. The emperor Nicholas poured out his battalions against the unhappy Hungarians from sinister motives towards the sovereign whom he interposed to protect; from a morbid and bitter hatred of liberty; from a hope that he would make absolutism universal and supreme over Europe; and a desire to extinguish in blood, on the battle-field and the scaffold, every effort of the oppressed nations to relieve themselves from the dread incubus of military tyranny that oppressed them. In the execution of such work, the emperor Nicholas certainly performed the *mission* which he and his predecessor, Alexander, had forced upon Russia; but to apply the term "holy" to the work of tyranny, to the making nations obey the arbitrary whims of one man intoxicated with excess of power, is at once a falsehood and a profanity. It is difficult to say whether these high-placed despots are secretly atheists,

who use religion as an instrument of coercive government—a state property to work out their own selfish ends—or whether, from a long use of insincere language with respect to the will of the Deity, they have really come to believe that their own blind and evil actions are the result of divine inspiration!

CHAPTER XIII.

DISPUTES BETWEEN THE ORTHODOX AND CATHOLIC MONKS AT JERUSALEM; ESPOUSAL OF THEIR CLAIMS BY THE CZAR AND THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON III.; ULTIMATUM OF THE CZAR TO THE PORTE; INVASION BY THE RUSSIANS OF MOLDO-WALLACHIA; ULTIMATUM OF THE PORTE, AND DECLARATION OF WAR AGAINST RUSSIA; BATTLES OF OLTENITZA AND MATCHIN; DESTRUCTION OF THE TUKKISH FLEET AT SINOPE; OPERATIONS IN ASIA; BATTLE OF AKHALJIK.

THERE can be no doubt that the chief reason which induced the emperor Nicholas to assist in quelling the Hungarian revolution, was the certainty that, by so doing, he would acquire an immense influence over the Slav population, not only of the Austrian empire, but also of the Turkish provinces. These races, Croats, Czechs, Serbs, Slovaks, and Bosnaks, have always identified the Turks and Magyars, or Hungarians, as their natural enemies; and by thus using his armies against them, Nicholas was simply carrying out the principle that the Czar of Russia is the natural protector and ally of all the Slav races against their foes, be these foes Turks, Hungarians, or Germans. This principle is based not only on kindred of race and speech, but on the fact that the Czar of Russia is also the head of the Greek church, and, therefore, in duty bound to protect and support his co-religionists in all countries, and to identify their interests with those of Russia. Practically, therefore, Russia aims at the establishment of an orthodox papacy, in which the temporal power predominates to an extent not even dreamt of at the Vatican. It was in this light that the Slavonic population of the Danubian and Adriatic provinces regarded the action of Russia in 1848-49, and thus the czar succeeded in increasing his influence in Austria, and in assuring himself of an ally, or of rendering Austria powerless in case of an attack upon Turkey. At the same time he seized the opportunity to force upon Turkey the convention of Balta-Lima, whereby the election of the hospodars was conducted on a new system favourable to Russia, and a joint right accorded to Russia of occupying the Moldo-Wallachian provinces in case of disturbances.

Having thus prepared the ground to render Austria at least harmless, if not of actual service in an eventual war upon Turkey, the emperor only waited for an opportunity to bring about this result. As a temporal and spiritual sovereign, an opportunity could not fail soon to present itself. This opportunity was at last furnished by a monkish dispute at Jerusalem, which was at once taken up by the czar as protector of the orthodox church, and by the emperor Napoleon as protector of the Catholic church. The history of this dispute is not generally known, and it may be as well to explain all the circumstances, as similar disputes will no doubt continue to rise as long as the conditions remain the same.

The Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem is now, as it was then, unequally distributed amongst the various Christian churches. A portion here and a portion there belongs absolutely to the Catholic or orthodox church; whilst other portions are common property, but in unequal, or may be, in equal shares. Thus on entering the church, the first object of importance is the slab whereon Christ is said to have been anointed after death. This slab is broken through diagonally; one half belongs to the orthodox, the other to the Catholic church. And so on *ad infinitum*. The Copts have a bit here, the Armenians a bit somewhere else; but adding these shares up, the Greek church possesses by far the larger share. The same is the case at Bethlehem; and, as may be

supposed, there are continued disputes going on between the rival sections. Thus, at the church of the Nativity in Bethlehem the spot is shown where Christ was born, and marked by an altar and special chapel, to which both Greek and Catholic had a common right of entrance and equal shares in it. This spot the Catholics determined still further to beautify by the insertion in the pavement, before the shrine, of a silver star with the inscription—"*Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus natus est*"—(Here Jesus was born of the Virgin Maria.) But this gave great offence to the Greeks. First of all because the inscription was in Latin only; and, secondly, because they not having contributed anything towards the expense of the star, it increased the share of the Catholics in the shrine by the amount of its value. The upshot of the affair was that the star was stolen, the Catholics naturally accusing the Greeks of the theft. Whilst this dispute was being waged with all bitterness at Bethlehem, another broke out at Jerusalem regarding the key to the gate of the sepulchre, and the repairing of the roof of the church. The key had been held by the Turks, who furnished a guard of some half-dozen men to keep order in the church, and to whose custody the key was entrusted, they being obliged to open the church, and mount guard inside the porch on the occasion of any celebration of masses or festivals. This key the Greeks managed by intrigues and bribes to gain possession of; so that one evening when the Catholics wanted to celebrate some special mass, and called upon the guard to open the church, they were referred to the Greek patriarch for permission to do so. Of course the Catholics denied the right of the Greek patriarch to exercise this privilege, and thus the quarrel grew in intensity. At the same time, the question as to who should repair the roof, or in what proportion each section should contribute towards the expense, was just as hotly debated. Contrary to what is usually the case, the point was, not as to who should contribute the smallest sum, but as to who should pay the largest; for the larger the sum paid, the greater the right implied and acquired. The disputes at last waxed so hot, that each party applied to its self-appointed protectors for assistance; the orthodox church to the emperor Nicholas, the Catholics to the emperor Napoleon.

The latter, whose *coup-d'état* had been made at the expense of the legitimate supporters of the papacy, the Bourbons and the Orleanists, and who was in consequence not favourably regarded at the Vatican, determined to take up the cause of the Catholic monks, and thus place himself on a better footing with the papal government; in fact, to inaugurate with this act his policy as champion of the Roman Catholic church. He, therefore, instructed M. Lavalette, in 1851, to demand from the Porte the re-establishment of the former regulations regarding the custody of the key, and that the Ottoman officials should force the Greeks to restore the stolen star, whilst the question of repairing the roof should be settled by the Porte undertaking the work, and distributing the shares of the expense equally amongst the various sections. Lavalette insisted on these terms so energetically, threatening to enforce them by the despatch of the French fleet to the Dardanelles, that the sultan yielded. This furnished the czar with the pretext he wished for; and sending Prince Mentschikoff to Constantinople, instructed him in turn to demand that the key should be restored to the custody of the Greeks, and the recognition by the Porte of the Russian protectorate over the Christian subjects of the Porte. These demands were presented in the form of an *ultimatum* on the 21st of May, 1851, which, if declined by the Porte, would entail the departure of the Russian ambassador within eight days of its receipt.

This *ultimatum*, after having consulted with the British and French ambassadors, the Porte refused to sign, and, accordingly, Prince Mentschikoff took his departure from Constantinople. Meanwhile, in spite of all kinds of pacific assurances on the part of the czar, the Russian armies were being concentrated on the Bessarabian frontier and in the Caucasus, ready to cross over into Turkish territory at any given moment. At the same time the czar endeavoured, by all the means in his power, to isolate Turkey, and proposed a partition of the empire between such states as chose to share in the spoil. Thus he proposed that England should take Egypt and the island of Candia; that the French should extend their African possessions; that Austria should annex Bosnia and the Herzegovina; and that Bulgaria and Moldo-Wallachia and Servia should be "independent" states under his protection. All

these proposals were rejected for various reasons, Austria unwillingly refusing them from fear of complications in Italy, which were pretty plainly indicated by the French emperor as possible. Under these circumstances, the Russian preparations having sufficiently progressed, the czar issued a manifesto, and gave the order for his troops, under the command of Prince Gortchakoff, to cross the Pruth, and, without any declaration of war, to occupy the Moldo-Wallachian provinces. This was done on the 25th of June, 1853.

The closing paragraphs of the imperial manifesto are worthy of record, as showing how little the pleas then put forward differ from those advanced in 1877 by the emperor Alexander II.:—

"Having exhausted all the means of persuasion, and of obtaining, in a friendly manner, the satisfaction due to our righteous demands, we have considered it necessary to order our army to enter the principalities, in order to show to the Porte to what consequences its resistance may lead. Still we do not intend to commence war. The occupation of the principalities is simply designed to give us a pledge whereby we may enforce the recognition of our rights.

"We do not seek conquests. Russia does not need them. We only demand satisfaction for the disregard of our rights. We are ready, even at this moment, to stay the progress of our troops if the Porte engages to observe the privileges of the orthodox church. But if wilfulness and blindness obstinately insist upon the contrary, then, invoking the assistance of the Almighty, we will leave the decision of our difference to His care; and placing our full hope in His all-powerful hand, we will march to the assistance of the orthodox church.—Given at Petersburg, the 26th of June, 1853.—NICHOLAS."

Whilst this manifesto and other circulars were being addressed to the various European courts, and precious time was diplomatically squandered instead of being actively employed in preparations for the worst, the Russian troops had penetrated to the Danube, under the command of Prince Gortchakoff and Generals Luders and Dannenberg, the head-quarters being established at Bucharest. Every strategical position of importance was occupied and fortified by earthworks armed with heavy artillery, and the Wallachian provinces were regarded absolutely as Russian territory, the hospodars dismissed, and the taxes and customs levied by Russian officials. The whole army, in fact, lived on the province; whilst General Osten-Sacken remained in Bessarabia, organising a reserve army, and collecting vast amount of stores at Ackerman, Odessa, and Sebastopol. At the same time a third army was formed to operate in Asia Minor, whilst the Russian fleet cruised about in the Black Sea.

In spite of these ominous preparations, the two powers most interested in Eastern affairs, England and France, were still wavering between belief and disbelief of the Russian assurances of disinterestedness, and strove to counterbalance the Russian military movements by diplomatic endeavours to induce Prussia and Austria to form an alliance with them, which would deter Russia from proceeding to extremities. The Turks, however, knew enough about the state of popular feeling in Austria to feel sure that the most that could be gained would be her neutrality, and that Prussia would not be disposed to act in any opposition to Austria on the question for a multiplicity of reasons. They therefore lost no time in preparing for the worst, and sent an army into Bulgaria, under the command of Omar Pasha, and organised a second in Anatolia, under the command of Selim Pasha.

Thus the two enemies stood face to face, both armed to the teeth, each waiting for the other to incur the opprobrium of declaring war. The Russians were especially anxious not to incur the responsibility, so as not to detract from the "holiness" of their intentions; and in accordance with this policy a conference was held in Vienna, where a note was drawn up, which was signed by the various representatives of the powers, approved of by the czar, and submitted to the sultan for his signature. Now the gist of this note was:—

1st. That former treaties had conferred upon the Czar of Russia a certain protectorate over the orthodox Christians of the Porte.

2ndly. That the sultan should undertake to concede to the orthodox church all the privileges accorded to the members of all other Christians in the Ottoman empire, whether acquired by liberty or otherwise.

To these articles the sultan objected, on the grounds that no treaties had ever conferred such a protectorate upon the czar; but, on the contrary, that those treaties in

question—such as the treaty of Kainardji—simply stipulated that the *sultan*—not the czar—was bound to protect the Christians; whilst as to the other point, the sultan proposed the alteration of the words "Christians in the Ottoman empire," to "Ottoman subjects," for otherwise the sultan would have had to concede to members of the Greek church all the privileges and immunities accorded to all foreigners living in the Ottoman empire under the special protection and jurisdiction of their embassies and consulates. It is no small reproach to the European diplomatists that two points of such vital importance should have been left to the Turks to detect, and to have laid themselves open to the rejoinder of Count Nesselrode—that the note was of their own framing and proposal, and that they must adhere to it, and enforce it upon the Turks collectively, or leave Russia to do it. Thus the czar refusing to accept the Turkish emendations, matters still remained the same, the western powers also refusing to enforce the note upon the Porte. Thus ended the fruit of the Vienna conference. Time was then again spun out in order to allow the Russians to complete their preparations, by the conferences at Olmütz between the czar and the Emperor of Austria, the upshot of which was the departure of the czar in assumed displeasure, but in reality assured of the neutrality of Austria.

By this time it had become evident to the Porte that Russia intended war under all circumstances, and determined to take time by the forelock, and declare war themselves against Russia. On what grounds their decision was taken it is difficult to see, and it cannot but be regarded as an error. By so doing, though the Porte may have had international law on its side, and have been acting strictly within its rights, still it produced that feeling in Russia which the czar wished for more than anyone else. The excitement produced throughout Russia was intense when it became known that the Porte had declared war on the 26th of September, 1853, and that Omar Pasha had summoned Prince Gortchakoff to withdraw from the principalities within fifteen days of receiving his despatch. To this summons Prince Gortchakoff replied by stating that he should not leave his post till the czar had obtained the moral satisfaction he required; but that at the same time, he should confine himself to entirely defensive operations. To such an extent was this farce of being animated by the most pacific and forbearing principles carried on, that not only did Count Nesselrode actually take the trouble to write a circular, stating that Russia would only act on the defensive, even if attacked by the Turks, but the powers actually believed it, and refused to send their fleets into the Black Sea on the grounds that they were not at war with Russia; and that Russia having declared she would not take the offensive, there was no necessity for them to enter the forbidden waters, which, moreover, would be regarded by the Russians as an open declaration of hostilities; and the war, which the czar repeatedly asserted he intended to keep localised, would thus take unforeseen dimensions.

Such confiding simplicity, if it can be equalled, can certainly not be surpassed; and it goes far towards proving that diplomats are not so black as they are painted. The simplicity of the matter is only exceeded by the absurdity of trying to make out the subsequent breach of the promise a great moral crime on the part of the Russians; for who shall decide, when two combatants are fighting, where defence leaves off and offence begins? However, as a matter of fact, the Turks commenced hostilities on the expiration of the fifteen days granted by Omar Pasha to Prince Gortchakoff, by throwing bodies of troops across the Danube at Kalafat, Giurgevo, and Oltenitza; at each place about 3,000 men.

At Oltenitza this movement was accomplished on Nov. 2nd, 1853, the Turks succeeding in crossing, establishing a battery on the island between Oltenitza and Turtukai, and entrenching themselves on Wallachian soil within two hours after daybreak. The Russian commander, whose head-quarters were at Slatina, on the river Olt, regarded these movements simply as diversions, and attached no great importance to them. A body of 8,000 to 9,000 men was sent to drive the Turks from their position at Oltenitza; but after repeated assaults they were effectually repulsed, and retired on the approach of evening. During the night both sides received reinforcements, and on the following day the contest was renewed with the same results, the Russians suffering great loss from the accurate and sustained fire of the Turkish artillery. On the third day the Russian forces were brought up to 28,000 men, and

the Turkish to some 20,000. The battle began by an attack upon the Turkish right, the Russians advancing in close columns, which received the full fire of the batteries on the island, and at Turtukai, till they were nearly decimated by the fusillade from the trenches, whence the Turks succeeded in repulsing them with great loss—over 1,000 men—and putting them to precipitate flight. On the 11th of November a fourth attack was made, the Russians having received reinforcements under General Engelhardt; but again they were repulsed with much loss. This success highly delighted the Turks, and reflected no small credit upon Omar Pasha and General Prim—who subsequently became Dictator in Spain, and was assassinated in Madrid during the reign of King Amadeus.

Whilst this was going on at Oltenitza, Ismail Pasha, an energetic and dashing leader, had occupied Kalafat obliquely opposite Widdin, and strengthened it by earthworks and trenches; whilst on the 26th of November another signal success was gained by the Turks, between Braila and Matchin in the Dobrudscha.

The news of these victories produced as great consternation at St. Petersburg, as it did satisfaction in England and France, and it already began to be said that the Turks were fully a match for the Russians; whilst the diplomatists congratulated each other on having done nothing, and incurred no expense or loss to their respective countries. Four days later, however, an event occurred that considerably modified this complacent self-satisfaction. They were destined to be enlightened as to the different constructions to be placed upon the words "offence" and "defence." On November the 30th, Admiral Nakhimoff, the commander of the Russian fleet, consisting of six first-rate men-of-war, four steamers, and two frigates, discovered the Turkish squadron, under the orders of Osman Pasha, lying in the harbour of Sinope, both town and fleet being quite unprepared for action—the excuse being that they relied on the non-offensive declarations of the czar. Both facts were blunders; they should have been prepared, and they should not have relied upon any such absurd promise; and had the Russian admiral, with his overwhelming force, first summoned the Turkish commander to surrender before proceeding to action, no one would have dreamt of blaming the Russians for breach of promise. But, unfortunately, Admiral Nakhimoff did nothing of the kind. Favoured by a dense fog, he at once closed with the Turkish squadron, and blew it all to pieces, mercilessly slaughtering over 4,000 of the crew, and then bombarding and utterly destroying the defenceless town. It was a perfect naval massacre; and the atrocities accompanying it did more to arouse the popular feeling in the West against Russia than anything else, though, as a matter of fact, the Russian navy had already commenced offensive operations by the *Vladimir* cruising off the Bulgarian coast, attacking the shore batteries, and capturing a Turkish steamer of ten guns, as early as November the 20th. However, when the news became known on the 12th of December in London, Lord Clarendon despatched a note to St. Petersburg, stating, in substance, that the attack on Sinope was a breach of faith towards England and France, and was as much an attack on them as on the Turk; and that to prevent the recurrence of such disasters, the combined French and English fleets had orders to require, and, if necessary, to compel the Russian fleet to retire forthwith to Sebastopol, or the nearest port. This despatch was signed on the 27th of December; and about the same time a refusal was given by the Porte to the proposals contained in another Vienna note, of the 15th of December, which contained, in different language, very much the same propositions that had already been refused. The fact is, that the powers wished to construct a golden bridge for the Russians to retreat from their position at the expense of the Porte, and the Porte, very naturally, refused to pay the cost.

Thus the year 1853 came to a close. In the Caucasus and Asia Minor the hostilities were not much above the character of sudden raids and skirmishes, in which Schamyl, the great Circassian leader, played the chief part. The Russian forces were commanded by Prince Woronzoff and Generals Bebutoff and Dolgorouki. The most important affair, after several minor engagements mostly favourable to the Turks, was the battle of Akhaljik, on the 22nd of November, 1853, in which the Turks lost over 4,000 men killed and wounded, 170 prisoners, 10 field-pieces, and stores and ammunition. Finally, they were defeated by General Bebutoff at Onguzli, and driven, utterly routed, into Kars.

By the end of the year, when both armies went into winter quarters, the Russian operating forces amounted to some 50,000 men; whilst the Turks had 25,000, under General Strin, before Alexandropol, 20,000 under Selim Pasha, occupying Russian Georgia, and 30,000 under General Guyon, an Irish officer in the Turkish service.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DANUBIAN PROVINCES; POSITION OF TURKISH AND RUSSIAN TROOPS; BATTLE OF CITATE; NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN RUSSIA, FRANCE, AND ENGLAND; ENGLISH ULTIMATUM; REFUSAL BY THE CZAR; DECLARATION OF WAR; ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN JUSTIFICATIONS; CONVENTION BETWEEN AUSTRIA, PRUSSIA, ENGLAND, AND FRANCE.

BEFORE proceeding with an account of the military operations in 1854, it will be as well to cast a glance at the nature of the barriers opposed to the progress of the Russian troops.

From Galatz, the Danube flows eastwards, in a single body, for about forty miles, splitting up near Tultcha into three arms that form a delta, of which the northern is the Kilia, the central the Sulina, and the southern the George's arm. The Delta itself, and all the land both to the north and south of it, is very swampy and malarious, with low ranges of hills, or rather elevations that tend to keep the inundation water of the Danube back for a longer or shorter period, according to the height the overflow attained. Between Galatz and Silistria, the river flows northwards, the ground on the Turkish side rising above that on the Wallachian side to an average height of 600 to 800 feet. The tract thus enclosed, between this angle of the Danube and the Black Sea, is called the Dobrudscha, and is largely inhabited by Tartars and Circassians, who have fled or been expelled from Russia. Stratagetically this district is closed by Silistria, Shumla, and Varna; so that any army entering the Dobrudscha, would either have to take or mask these three places before proceeding any further.

From Silistria to Widdin, the course of the river is generally eastwards, the ground along the whole of the way being higher on the Turkish than on the Wallachian or Roumanian side, except opposite Widdin, where Kalafat dominates it by some 600 feet. Widdin itself is a strong fortress; but its strength would be rendered almost *nil* for any length of time by the artillery of the present day if Kalafat were in the enemy's hands. Kalafat is the key to Widdin. Thence to Silistria, the only fortress worthy the name is the castle and works of Rustchuk. But as the ground is invariably higher on the Turkish than the Roumanian side, any point can be made of considerable strength by the construction of earthworks and batteries.

A few miles west of Widdin, the ground rises on both sides of the Danube from Orsova to Basiash—*i.e.*, between Servia and Hungary.

The Danube thus forms the first line of defence, the left wing being protected by Widdin, the right by Silistria and the centre, but unequally by Shumla and Rustchuk. The centre is thus the weakest portion of the first line; but, on the other hand, the centre is the strongest portion of the second line, the Balkan. It will thus be seen, that it would be necessary to turn one of the two flanks before an advance could be possible, and the Balkans forced. Thus the chief efforts would have to be made at the extreme west and east of the first line, which, of course, might be materially supported by a rear attack on the Black Sea coast at Varna or Kustendji, if the attacking power had the command of the sea.

Such was the plan of the Russians; and corresponding to it were the measures taken by Omar Pasha. He at once seized Kalafat, as we have already seen, provided Silistria and Varna with sufficient forces, and made Shumla his head-quarters; the rest of the line being more or less left to take care of itself; whilst small but active bodies

of men harassed the Russians by their quick movements.

With the beginning of the year, there were indications that the Russians intended to concentrate large forces upon Kalafat; and a large corps, under the command of Generals Aurep and Fischbach, advancing towards Kalafat, swept round it to the village of Citate, some ten miles up the river from Kalafat. Citate is a long, straggling, overstretched village at some little distance from the Danube, and backed by a range of hills, on which the Russians erected a few batteries, and constructed a series of roughly-thrown-up trenches behind the village, in the centre of which, where the chief street is intersected by a lane, stands a church, which is shown in our engraving.

Here the Russians waited for further reinforcements, and until the movements for the concentration upon Kalafat had sufficiently advanced. The Turkish commanders at Kalafat, however, Achmed and Ismail Pashas, resolved to attack the Citate corps before the concentration could be accomplished, fearing that otherwise, whilst engaged at Kalafat, the Russians might cross the Danube, and march on Widdin from the west. Thus, on January the 6th, the Russian Christmas-day, the Turkish corps, 15,000 men strong, left Kalafat at dawn, and arrived at Citate by 9 A.M. The Turks attacked the village at both ends and the centre, and gradually drove the Russians down the street from both sides towards the church, the Russians fighting desperately from house to house, from corner to corner. Thus the combat dragged on in an hand-to-hand fight, in which no quarter was given on either side, till 12 o'clock, by which time the village was cleared of the Russians, who then sought shelter in the trenches on the slope behind the place. As soon as they had abandoned the village to the Turks, the artillery on the hills opened upon it, and began to play upon the Turks, who now advanced to the attack on the entrenchments. These were well armed, and with a far greater number of guns than the Turks possessed, and thus the loss of the Mussulmans, who stormed the works three times, began to be very sensible. In spite of the utmost endeavours and reckless bravery of the Turks, they could not succeed in driving the Russians out of their works. Matters had come to a regular dead-lock, the Turks holding the village, the Russians their entrenchments, neither side possessing the force to oust the other from its position. General Aurep, however, had at the beginning of the contest sent a messenger to Koraula for reinforcements, which, to the number of 9,000, now appeared on the scene, advancing on the village by the road leading from Risipieitch, and attacking the Turks on the right flank in the rear. The position was for them a very critical one, being thus taken between two fires; but Ismail Pasha, with admirable presence of mind, sent Achmed Pasha with half a brigade of infantry to meet the Russians, whilst leaving one portion of the remainder to engage the trenches, and forming front with the other portion in their rear, trusting to the reserve which he had left at Moglavita and had ordered to come on when the Russian reinforcements had been discovered, to come up in time to turn the scale. The Russians at once advanced in dense columns, into which the thin extended line of the Turks concentrated all their fire with disastrous effect. But still the Russians pressed on, and were already in the streets of the village, when the Turks, after a volley of grape and musketry, rushed to the charge and broke up the first Russian column. This charge had, however, almost exhausted them, when, fortunately for them, the reserve from Moglavita appeared, and falling upon the Russians on the flank and rear, soon forced them into a retreat, which finally became a rout. The entrenchments were then attacked with redoubled vigour, and carried at the point of the bayonet. Attempts were made, on the 7th and 8th of January, by the Russians, to regain their position, but on each occasion they were repulsed, and ultimately withdrew to Krajova. Their loss has been variously estimated at between 3,000 and 6,000, killed and wounded. The Turks, on their part, lost about 1,500; and having obtained their object of preventing a flank movement on Widdin, returned to Kalafat, where they continued the work of strengthening the place, the severity of the season preventing any serious operation on either side.

The news of the disasters at Citate, and the reports of further losses by disease, greatly incensed the czar, and orders were sent to Prince Gortchakoff to prepare to cross the Danube, at any price, as soon as



the weather would allow. Reinforcements were sent, and on the 13th of February they recommenced operations by an attack upon Giurgevo, in such numbers that, after a few days' resistance, the Turks were obliged to abandon the place and cross over to Rustchuk, upon which the Russians then directed an incessant cannonade. Nothing else was, however, done by either side, with the exception of isolated skirmishes, until, on the 5th of March, Prince Gortchakoff was ordered to cross the Danube. An attempt to do this was made on the 11th of March at Kalafat; but the Turks made a sally in such force, that after a fierce and protracted series of combats, the Russians retired. On the same day, General Luders succeeded in crossing the Danube at Galatz with sixty-four guns, twenty-four battalions of infantry, eight squadrons of cavalry, and six sotnias of Cossacks. The news of his successful passage reached Prince Gortchakoff on the 15th of March, after he had endeavoured in vain to force a passage at Rustchuk and Oltenitza. He at once decided to hasten to the support of General Luders; and about a week later also crossed the Danube at Tultcha, with fourteen battalions of infantry, forty-four guns, sixteen squadrons of cavalry, and eight sotnias of Cossacks. These operations were not impeded by Omar Pasha, because he knew very well that the forces at the disposal of the Russian commanders were large enough to ensure their passage of the Danube somewhere, and that by allowing them to enter the Dobrudscha he had succeeded in luring them into a trap, out of which they would find it very difficult to escape for the reasons we have already mentioned. They were locked up in a poor unhealthy country, out of which they could not extricate themselves before taking or masking Silistria, Rustchuk, and Shumla. This the Russians proceeded to do after the arrival of Prince Paskievitch, who ordered General Luders to take up a position between Shumla and Varna, whilst the troops were withdrawn from Western Wallachia, and, with all the others available, were poured into the Dobrudscha, where one after the other of the river fortresses, from Hirsova to Tultcha, fell into their hands.

Such was the position of affairs on the Danube when war was declared by France and England against Russia. The diplomatic year had ended, as will be remembered, with the despatch of Lord Clarendon's note relative to the massacre at Sinope, whilst the French and English fleets were at last ordered to enter the Black Sea.

This was accomplished on January 4th, the *Retribution* being sent to Sebastopol to demand the release of some British subjects—engineers—who had been captured at Sinope. This, and the receipt of Lord Clarendon's despatch, highly enraged the czar, who at once directed his ambassadors at London and Paris to demand explanations from the respective governments, and an assurance of strict neutrality. In case these demands were not complied with, they were at once to demand their passports. At the same time Count Orloff was despatched to Vienna and Berlin, to make sure at least of the neutrality of Austria and Prussia. In the latter the czar was successful; but in his demands for the neutrality of France and England he met a flat refusal; and in consequence Baron Brunow left London, and M. Kisseleff Paris, on the 6th and 7th of November. As soon as the result was known at St. Petersburg, the czar at once sent the English ambassador, Sir G. H. Seymour, his passports, intimating to him that the sooner he went the better, and that he would excuse him from taking leave. The French ambassador, on the other hand, was treated with more consideration. This action was met by an *ultimatum* of the allies, to the effect that the czar was required to withdraw his armies from the principalities before the end of April; and that he should signify his acceptance of these terms within six days after the receipt of the demand.

This *ultimatum* was taken to St. Petersburg by Captain Blackwood, one of the Queen's messengers, *viâ* Berlin and Vienna, the courts of which were informed of the contents of the document. The way in which it was received at the Russian capital was well described in one of the papers laid before the House by Consul Michell, who wrote as follows to Lord Clarendon, under date March 19, 1854:—

"I beg to acknowledge the receipt of the despatch which your lordship did me the honour to address to me on the 27th of February ultimo. This despatch, together with its enclosure, from your lordship to Count Nesselrode, was delivered to me by the Queen's messenger, Captain Blackwood, at a few minutes after eleven o'clock, on the morning of the 13th inst., and I lost

not a moment in endeavouring to give effect to your lordship's instructions.

"Within an hour after the arrival of the messenger, the despatch forwarded to me by his excellency Lord Cowley (enclosing a communication from the French government to their consul here), was placed by me in the hands of M. de Castillon; and before the expiration of another hour, M. de Castillon and myself had presented ourselves at the Imperial Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and solicited the honour of an interview with the chancellor of the empire, for the purpose of simultaneously presenting the notes of the English and French cabinets. Count Nesselrode, through the director of his chancellerie, expressed his inability to see us at that moment, but appointed twelve o'clock on the following day to receive the communications of which we were respectively the bearers. When I parted from M. de Castillon, about two o'clock, it was arranged that I should call for him the following morning at half-past eleven, in order that we might proceed together to the chancellor.

"By two o'clock on the 13th I had placed in the hands of his excellency Count Valentin Esterhazy, the Austrian minister at this court, the packet of despatches brought to me by Captain Blackwood from his excellency the Earl of Westmoreland, at Vienna; and, by a little after two, I had communicated to his excellency General Rochow, the Prussian minister here, the purport of Lord Bloomfield's despatch, dated Berlin, 2nd March instant—viz., 'that no packet had been received by his lordship from the Minister for Foreign Affairs for transmission to St. Petersburg; but that despatches from the Prussian government would be forwarded to the Prussian representative by their own separate courier.'

"A few minutes before the appointed hour (twelve o'clock on Tuesday, the 14th March instant), M. de Castillon and I arrived at the Imperial Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and, after waiting a few minutes, it was intimated to me by the director of the chancellerie, 'that Count Nesselrode would receive the English consul alone,' and I was ushered into his room.

"Count Nesselrode received me with his usual courtesy. I handed to his excellency your lordship's letter, and stated, from a memorandum which I had drawn up, the precise terms of your lordship's instructions with reference to the return to England of the Queen's messenger.

"Count Nesselrode requested permission to peruse this memorandum, and I handed it to him. He then informed me, 'that the emperor was not at that moment in St. Petersburg; that on his majesty's return—which would probably be on Friday, the 5th (17th) inst.—your lordship's communications should be laid before his majesty, and his majesty's commands taken thereon, when a reply to your lordship's letter should be forwarded to me.'

"The chancellor then remarked upon the length of time that had elapsed since the date of your lordship's despatch to me, viz., Feb. 27th, and asked me what had detained the messenger so long on the road?

"I explained that the Queen's messenger had not come direct from London to St. Petersburg, but had been the bearer of despatches for the British ministers at Paris, Berlin, and Vienna, which latter capital Captain Blackwood left only on the 7th inst., and had arrived at St. Petersburg on the morning of the 13th, thus making a rapid journey, considering the very bad state of the roads.

"On quitting Count Nesselrode, I was about to take with me the memorandum I had, at his desire, handed to his excellency for his perusal, when he requested, 'that I might be kind enough to leave it with him.' I said that I had merely transcribed your lordship's instructions for my own guidance, and to prevent any misapprehension of your lordship's intentions with reference to the time fixed for the return of the Queen's messenger to England; that I had no instructions to make any written communication in presenting your lordship's note; but since his excellency desired to retain this paper (which was only a transcript of your lordship's instructions to me relative to the precise moment for despatching the messenger to England), I felt that I should not be acting otherwise than in accordance with your lordship's wishes by rendering any misunderstanding on this head impossible; and accordingly I allowed the chancellor to retain this memorandum, a copy of which I have the honour to send herewith.

"The emperor returned to St. Petersburg early on the morning of the 5th (17th) inst. from Finland, whither he had proceeded on Sunday evening (the 12th), in company with three of his sons, the Grand-dukes Alexander, Nicholas, and Michael, to

inspect the fortifications at Wyborg, Helsingfors, and Sweaborg; the Grand-duke Constantine having gone to Finland some days previously.

"At ten o'clock last night, I received a note from the chancellor of the empire, inviting me to call upon him at one o'clock P.M. this day. I was punctual in my attendance; and on sending up my name to the chancellor, I was informed that the French consul was with his excellency.

"After waiting a short time, I was told Count Nesselrode would receive me. On entering the room, his excellency's greeting was of the most friendly description. He said, 'I have taken his majesty's commands with reference to Lord Clarendon's note, and the emperor does not think it becoming to make any reply to it.' I replied, 'M. le Comte, in a matter of such importance, I am sure I shall be excused for desiring to convey to my government the exact words employed by your excellency.' The count at first used the words, 'His majesty does not think it becoming in him to give any reply to Lord Clarendon's letter (ne le croit pas convenable de donner aucune réponse à la lettre de Lord Clarendon).'

"Upon my repeating this phrase after Count Nesselrode, his excellency said, 'L'Empereur ne juge pas convenable,' &c.; and I again repeated after him the entire sentence. After I had done so, the count said, 'Yes, that is the answer I wish you to convey to your government:—L'Empereur ne juge pas convenable de donner aucune réponse à la lettre de Lord Clarendon.'

"Having delivered to me this official message, Count Nesselrode begged me to be seated, and explained to me that he had only waited the return of the emperor to submit your lordship's letter to his majesty. His excellency then asked me, when I proposed to 'despatch the Queen's messenger?' I told him, 'This afternoon, provided his passport, &c., could be got ready in time.' Count Nesselrode informed me he had already sent a courier's pass for Captain Blackwood to the Baron de Plesson, and then asked me, whether 'to-day' was not 'the sixth day?' I said, 'From his arrival at St. Petersburg it is; but had I been left without any reply, or without such an intimation as I have to-day received from your excellency, I should not have despatched the messenger until to-morrow, the 20th inst., at twelve o'clock, when six entire days would have elapsed since I placed Lord Clarendon's despatch in your excellency's hands.'

"In the course of our subsequent conversation, I asked Count Nesselrode what the intentions of his government were with reference to the consular arrangements between the two countries, in the event of a declaration of war? His excellency replied, 'That will entirely depend upon the course her Britannic majesty's government may adopt; we shall not declare war.'"

On the receipt of this despatch from Consul Michell, war was of course determined on at London and Paris, and the declaration publicly made in the *London Gazette* on the 28th of March, 1854. To this declaration the czar replied by the following manifesto on the 11th of April, 1854:—

"Since the commencement of our difference with the Turkish government, we have solemnly announced to our faithful subjects that a sentiment of justice had alone induced us to re-establish the violated rights of the orthodox Christians, subjects of the Ottoman Porte.

"We have not sought, nor do we seek, to make conquests, nor to exercise in Turkey any supremacy whatever that might be likely to exceed that influence which belongs to Russia by virtue of existing treaties.

"At that period we already encountered distrust; then soon a covert hostility on the part of the governments of France and England, who endeavoured to lead the Porte astray by misrepresenting our intention. Lastly, at this moment, England and France throw off the mask, regard our difference with Turkey as a mere secondary question, and no longer dissemble that their joint object is to weaken Russia, to tear from her a part of her possessions, and to bring down our country from the powerful position to which the hand of the Supreme Being has exalted it.

"Is it for orthodox Russia to fear such threats? Ready to confound the audacity of the enemy, shall she swerve from the sacred purpose that has been assigned to her by Divine Providence? No! Russia has not forgotten God! It is not for worldly interests that she has taken up arms. She combats for the Christian faith, for the defence of her co-religionists oppressed by implacable enemies.

"Let all Christendom know, then, that the thought of the sovereign of Russia is also the thought that animates and inspires

all the great family of the Russian people —this orthodox people, faithful to God, and to His only Son, Jesus Christ, our Redeemer.

"It is for the faith and for Christendom that we combat!

"'God with us—who against us?'

"NICHOLAS."

This manifesto had been preceded, on the 30th of March, by a declaration of the czar's, which presents his view of the case in so clear a light, that it is worthy of great attention, especially as those views still generally prevail throughout the Russian empire, heightened, if anything, by the desire of revenge for the disasters to Russia that ultimately ensued.

He said—"France and Great Britain have at last openly left the system of disguised hostility which they had adopted towards Russia, especially by the entrance of their fleets into the Black Sea.

"The result of the explanations which they have given of that measure was of a nature to lead to a rupture of reciprocal relations between them and the imperial cabinet.

"This last fact was shortly followed by a communication, in which the two cabinets, through their respective consuls, invited the imperial government to evacuate the Danubian principalities within a given term, which England fixed at the 30th April, and France, still more peremptorily, at the 15th of the same month.

"With what right did the two powers thus pretend to exact everything from one of the two belligerent parties, without demanding anything from the other? This is what they have not thought fit to explain to the imperial cabinet. To evacuate the principalities without even the shadow of a fulfilment, by the Ottoman government, of the conditions to which the emperor made the cessation of that temporary occupation subordinate—to evacuate them in the brunt of war, which the latter was the first to declare, whilst it is actively carrying on offensive operations, when its own troops occupy a fortified point of Russian territory—was already a condition inadmissible in substance. The two powers wished that, in form, it should become still more unacceptable. They fixed a term of six days for the adhesion of the imperial cabinet; at the expiration of which, a refusal, or the absence of any reply whatever, was to be by them regarded as equivalent to a declaration of war.

"To a summons so partial in its tenour, as practically inexcusable as it was insulting in its terms, silence was the only reply compatible with the dignity of the emperor.

"Consequently, the two governments have just publicly made known, that Russia, by her refusal to accede to their demand, has constituted herself towards them in a state of war, the entire responsibility of which will rest upon her.

"In the presence of such declarations, it only remains for the emperor to accept the situation which has been made him, reserving to himself to employ all the means which Providence has put into his hands, to defend, with energy and constancy, the honour, independence, and safety of his empire.

"The occupation of the principalities, which is taken now, *après coup*, as a pretext for this war, did not prevent the opening of negotiations. It would not have any more prevented their continuation, or rather these negotiations would have led to something long since, if the powers had not suddenly, without any good reason, completely changed the bases which they themselves had laid down in the first note concerted at Vienna. The objections made by the Porte to certain passages of that note were not sufficient, either, to nullify the rest. The essential substance remained intact, and the imperial government had the right to regard all the points which the Ottoman Porte had not contested as acquired for any ulterior proposition. Such was not done. An attempt was made to impose entirely new conditions upon us; what had hitherto been admitted was declared inadmissible; the complaints of Russia were ignored, as also any claim on its part to an equitable separation, and all its counter-propositions rejected without discussion. At the same time, measures contrary to its rights as a belligerent power coincident in the Black Sea with the conditions transmitted from Vienna, were adopted, as if to impress a character of compulsion to any adhesion on its part. Finally, all honourable retreat was cleverly cut off from it by an imperious summons, such as Russia never before received within the whole period of its history, even at a time when a conqueror, at the head of armed Europe, invaded its territory.

"Not being able to close their eyes upon the insufficiency of the motives for a disastrous war, and upon the want of proportion which exists between its effects and its cause, the two powers are obliged to exaggerate its object by bringing the most vague accusations against Russia.

"They allege that their honour and material interests have been hurt—projects on our side of aggrandisement and conquest in Turkey—the independence of the Porte, and even that of other states; finally, the balance of power in Europe, which, according to them, is threatened by our excessive preponderance.

"All these general imputations rest upon no foundation whatever.

"We have never attacked the honour of the two courts. If that honour has been placed in jeopardy, it has been done by themselves. From the very onset they have adopted a system of intimidation, which naturally would fail. They made it a point of *amour propre* to oblige Russia to bend to them; and because Russia would not consent to her own humiliation, they say that they are hurt in their moral dignity.

"Materially, their interests have not been hurt by us either. They can only be so by the war they wish to wage gratuitously against us. On the contrary, it is they who hurt our interests much more seriously by attacking us in the north and in the south, in our ports, and on different points of our coasts.

"The policy of aggrandisement and conquest, which they attribute to Russia, has been refuted by all her acts since 1815. Of her neighbours in Germany and in the north, is there one which, during the last forty years, have had to complain of an attack, or even of an attempt of an attack, upon the integrity of his possession?

"As regards Turkey, although we have been at war with her, the peace of Adrianople exists to attest the moderate use we have made of our success; and since then, at two intervals, the Ottoman empire has been saved by us from imminent ruin.

"The desire of possessing Constantinople, if that empire should fall—an intention of forming a permanent establishment there—have been too publicly, too solemnly disavowed, for any doubts to be entertained on that subject that do not originate in distrust which nothing can cure.

"Events will shortly show whether the powers or Russia have struck the most fatal blow, not only against the independence, but against the very existence of Turkey. As a price for the interested services given to her, she has already renounced by treaty the distinguishing privilege of every independent power—that of making peace, or declaring war, at its own free will, at the moment, and on the conditions it may itself deem most advisable. She will be forced to subscribe to an engagement which will give equality of civil and religious rights to all her subjects. Russia will sincerely applaud so important a guarantee, obtained in favour of all the Christians in Turkey, if it succeed in assuring it to them in a really efficacious manner. But in presence of a resolution which would so profoundly alter all the constituent bases of the Ottoman government, Russia has the right to be surprised that an engagement by which the sultan confined himself to confirm religious privileges already existing, and emanating from our treaties with him, should have been declared an attempt against his sovereignty and his independence.

"It is for Europe—not for the two powers—to decide if the general equilibrium really runs the risks which are attributed to it from the supposed excessive preponderance of Russia. It is for it to examine which weighs heaviest to-day upon the freedom of action of states—Russia left to herself, or a formidable alliance, the pressure of which alarms every neutrality, and uses, by turns, caresses or threats to compel them to follow in its wake. Europe will also decide if, during the last year, it is from Russia that have come pretensions the most hostile to the rights of sovereignty and to the independence of feeble states; if in Greece, in Sicily, in Naples, in Tuscany, it is for or against those rights that she has declared; whether in Germany, between the great governments, she has sought to sow discord, or to re-establish union; whether, morally in Lombardy, and materially in Hungary, her efforts have not been consecrated to the maintenance of equilibrium; and whether the blows that are preparing against her, the isolation in which it is hoped to place her, by handing over the political world to a far different sort of preponderance, will not rather be the annihilation of that equilibrium.

"We thus see to what the vague generalities urged against Russia are reduced. But

the last especially of these grounds of accusation suffices to understand the true motive of war, for which, judged by its apparent grounds, there is no reason; and it is so contrary to the moral, industrial, and commercial interests of the entire world, that it will really accelerate the ruin of the very empire which it made the pretext to save from an imaginary peril. The true motive was publicly proclaimed by the English ministers, when they asserted, before parliament, that the moment had arrived, at last, when it was necessary to abate the influence of Russia.

"It is to defend that influence, not less necessary to the Russian nation than it is essential to the maintenance of the order and the security of other states—it is to sustain the independence and territorial integrity which are the bases of it—that the emperor, obliged, in spite of himself, to embark in this contest, is about to devote all the means of resistance which are furnished by the devotion and patriotism of his people. He trusts that God, who has so often protected Russia in the day of trial, will assist him once more in this formidable struggle. He sincerely laments the infinite evils which are about to fall on humanity; but at the same time he feels it to be his duty to protest, solemnly, against the arbitrary pretensions laid down by the two powers, which throw upon him alone all the responsibility of them. They are free, without doubt, to adopt against Russia such measures as are convenient to them; but it does not belong to them to lay the consequences to his charge. The responsibilities of the calamities of a war belong to the power which declares it, not to that which is bound to accept it.

"St. Petersburg, March 30, 1854."

Such was the czar's case as described by himself. That of the allies was well put by a reply of the French government, which was written by the emperor himself. It was as follows:—

"The Russian government has just published a declaration in answer to the summons addressed to it, for the last time, by France and England, and to which it has not consented to subscribe. We have not the intention to enter once more into an examination of the arguments refuted to satiety; we will limit ourselves to some observations on the new errors which that declaration is endeavouring to get accredited.

"In the first place, the Russian government demands by what title England and France pretend to exact the evacuation of the principalities of the Danube. There is no one so ignorant as not to be aware how much their summons is founded upon right. The powers who signed the acts of Vienna have themselves recognised them as such. The cabinets of Paris and London acted on this occasion in virtue of treaties, and their conduct had the approbation of other governments.

"How, says the declaration of the Russian cabinet, could we evacuate the principalities, without even the shadow of the conditions to which the emperor had made subordinate the cessation of that occupation being fulfilled by the Ottoman government? But these conditions which Russia required were manifestly unjust, and the conference of Vienna had formally confirmed on that point the judgment of Europe.

"The declaration adds, that the Russian armies could not evacuate the principalities in the midst of a war which the Ottoman government had been the first to declare. The parts cannot be more strangely interverted. The invasion of the two provinces of the Turkish empire was, in the eyes of the whole world, an act of war. If the Porte has been recommended not to make it a case of war, it was because, in spite of the aggressive character of the acts of Russia, it was still hoped that there would be, on the part of that power, a return to moderation and equity.

"Russia has no better foundation for casting back, on the two maritime powers, the initiative of the provocations. It is an affair already judged; and since the cabinet of St. Petersburg brings to our mind, on this subject, its memorandum of the 18th of last February, we can, in our turn, send it back to the whole of the documents, which, in England and in France, have so completely placed the question beyond a doubt, that neither of the two governments have thought it worth their while to occupy themselves for one moment with this memorandum, which has frequently been refuted beforehand. The initiative of the acts of war, as far as regards the Porte, as well as the provocations in matters touching the maritime powers, belongs exclusively to the power which invaded the principalities of the Danube; and such is the opinion of all Europe.

"The declaration of the Russian cabinet

remarks that the occupation had not prevented the negotiations from being opened, and that they would not have stopped their being followed out, if the powers had not suddenly, and without valid reasons, changed the bases which they had themselves given in the first note drawn up at Vienna. The powers had, in fact, laid down principles which, loyally admitted, might then have solved the difference; but the commentary which the note in question received from the Count de Nesselrode, attested that the Russian cabinet did not accept them, except by attaching to them a signification very different from the idea of the conference of Vienna, as was admitted by all the governments represented in that conference. It is, therefore, Russia herself which changed the bases of the negotiation, and compelled the great powers to seek for others. The Russian government bitterly complains of the demand which the cabinets of Paris and of London addressed to the commander-in-chief of its naval forces at Sebastopol, in consequence of the aggression of Sinope. We admit that that demand was unusual, but it was called for by a state of things not less so; and it was not until after every means of conciliation, which patience, moderation, and a sincere desire can suggest, had been exhausted, that France and Great Britain had recourse to that extreme measure. It is true that the Russian government attempts to lessen the proportion which 'exists between the effects and the cause;' adding, 'that the two powers are compelled to exaggerate the object of it by putting forth the most vague accusations against Russia.' In order to prove the gravity of the cause, it is only necessary for us to call to mind the declarations made at Vienna in the documents of the conference; and as to the object, the revelations contained in the English documents sufficiently prove that the accusations of France and Great Britain are far from being exaggerated. According to the declaration of the Russian cabinet, we have less respect for the independence of the Porte than it has; and one of the proofs it adduces for this is, that the Ottoman government has renounced, by treaty, the power of making peace without its allies. In entering into that engagement, the Porte only contracts a reciprocal obligation, on the footing of a perfect equality, and, moreover, in strict conformity to constant and general usage and the law of nations, when several unite together to pursue by arms a common object.

"The Porte (adds the Russian cabinet) is about to be forced to subscribe to an engagement which would extend to all its subjects—equality of civil and political rights. That assertion, far from being well founded, gives us an occasion of showing, in a striking manner, what is the difference of acting between Russia and the western powers in their relations with the Ottoman empire. Russia has insisted on stipulating with the Porte, either in a treaty or by means of a note, for the maintenance of the liberties of the sultan's subjects. The other powers have not, for a single moment, thought of requiring from the Porte any such engagement, either in the form of a treaty or note. They have not, it is true, neglected any occasion to suggest to the Porte such measures as appeared to them best calculated to ameliorate the condition of the Christians in the Turkish empire; but they never could have thought of restricting the sovereignty of the sultan, when, on the contrary, they were taking up arms to defend it against the pretensions which were menacing it. 'It is for Europe, and not for the two powers (continues the Russian government), to decide if the balance of power in Europe really runs any of the dangers which, it is pretended, arise from the excessive preponderance of Russia.' On that point the wish of the Russian cabinet is already realised. It is the great powers of Europe, and not France and England alone, who have signed the acts of Vienna; and these acts declare loudly that the position taken by Russia on the Danube, places the general equilibrium in danger. According to the cabinet of St. Petersburg, it is, on the contrary, France and England who are exercising, at present, on Europe a pressure of a nature to disquiet all the neutral powers. Every one, however, knows that, far from manifesting any disquietude, the neutral powers, on the contrary, applaud the attitude assumed by the two maritime powers, and that, at the present moment, from every part of the world, they send to thank the two powers for the recent declaration which has just confirmed the *ensemble* of the principles under which they had in vain endeavoured hitherto to shelter their liberty in time of war. Finally, the Russian government thinks that the isolation, into which it declares it is about to be thrown,

will only deliver the world up to a more dangerous preponderance than its own could possibly be. That government forgets that not one of the great powers aims like it at exclusive advantages, or wants to act by itself alone. Far from permitting a preponderance of any kind to be established, a common action exercised by the four powers is, for all the other states, a pledge of security and impartiality. The influences which co-operate for the object in view constitute a just counterpoise of one to the other, and guarantee, in advance to Europe, that the general interest, which has drawn the four powers together, will not cease a single moment to guide their resolutions, and will be alone listened to to the end. The observations which precede will enable every one to judge of the new document published by the Russian government."

Whilst such were the relations between the Russian emperor and the governments of the two allies, no precautions were omitted to obtain the declared neutrality of Austria and Prussia. This was accomplished by a protocol, which was signed on the 9th of April by the respective plenipotentiaries—MM. Buol-Schauenstein, Bourqueney, Westmoreland, and Arnim. Herein they "declared that their governments remain united in the double object of maintaining the territorial integrity of the Ottoman empire, of which the fact of the evacuation of the Danubian principalities is, and will, remain one of the essential conditions; and of consolidating in an interest so much in conformity with the sentiments of the sultan, and by every means compatible with his independence and sovereignty, the civil and religious rights of the Christian subjects of the Porte.

"The territorial integrity of the Ottoman empire is, and remains, the *sine quâ non* condition of every transaction, having for its object the re-establishment of peace between the two belligerent powers; and the governments above represented engage to endeavour in common to discover the guarantees most likely to attach the existence of that empire to the general equilibrium of Europe; as they also declare themselves ready to deliberate and to come to an understanding as to the employment of the means calculated to accomplish the object of their agreement.

"Whatever event may arise in consequence of this agreement, founded solely upon the general interests of Europe, and of which the object can only be obtained by the return of a firm and lasting peace, the governments represented above, reciprocally engage not to enter into any definite arrangement with the imperial court of Russia, or with any other power, which would be at variance with the principles above enunciated, without previously deliberating thereon in common."

This was very satisfactory as far as it went; but suspicions arose that Prussia and Austria were not acting quite aboveboard in the matter. Both countries were afraid that a decisive victory of the allies or the Russians would give the conqueror such predominance as might possibly be injuriously exercised as regards themselves. Austria's position was very shakey; the Hungarians were highly discontented; so were the Italians; whilst Prussia was alarmed lest, if the allies won, Napoleon might be inclined to follow out his uncle's policy towards Germany. Therefore, as soon as they had signed their declaration of neutrality, they at once entered upon an alliance, offensive and defensive, between themselves, which was concluded on April 20th, 1854, and of which the following are the most important articles:—

"ART I.—His imperial apostolic majesty, and his majesty the King of Prussia, guarantee to each other reciprocally the possession of their German and non-German possessions, so that an attack made on the territory of the one, from whatever quarter, will be regarded by the other as an act of hostility against his own territory.

"ART. II.—In the same manner, the high contracting parties hold themselves engaged to defend the rights and interests of Germany against all and every injury, and consider themselves bound accordingly for the mutual repulse of every attack on any part whatsoever of their territories; likewise, also, in the case where one of the two may find himself, in understanding with the other, obliged to advance actively for the defence of German interests. The agreement relating to the latter-named eventuality, as likewise the extent of the assistance then to be given, will form a special as also integral part of the present convention.

"ART. III.—In order also to give due security and force to the conditions of the offensive and defensive alliance now concluded, the two great German powers bind

themselves, in case of need, to hold in perfect readiness for war a part of their forces, at periods to be determined between them, and in positions to be fixed. With respect to the time, the extent, and the nature of the placing of those troops, a special stipulation will likewise be determined.

"*Additional Art.*—Their majesties have not been able to divest themselves of the consideration, that the indefinite continuance of the occupation of the territories on the Lower Danube, under the sovereignty of the Ottoman Porte, by imperial Russian troops, would endanger the political, moral, and material interests of the whole German confederation, as also of their own states, and the more so in proportion as Russia extends her warlike operations on Turkish territory."

The conclusion of this treaty naturally led to inquiries on the part of the allies, and the assembling of a conference at Vienna on the 23rd of May, 1854, the result of which was a protocol confirming both the first protocol and the subsequent treaty between Austria and Prussia.

Thus all attempts to preserve the peace of Europe had utterly failed. No one wanted war. The Quakers themselves were not more opposed to war than the rest of Europe. The czar himself did not desire war. He would have avoided it if he could have done so. Why, then, was it declared? War is only waged for the defence of material interests, or for the extension thereof. Who was, therefore, the mysterious, invisible assailant?

The reply is—the Greek church. Or the reply may also be—the Roman Catholic church. These two churches, represented by the czar and the emperor of the French, set Europe in a blaze because they considered their interests endangered. The temporal power of the papacy was taken as a model by the czar, and its principles, as far as the East was concerned, by the emperor Napoleon. This is the great factor in the Eastern question. As long as that remains unchanged, there can be no enduring peace in the East, the Greek orthodox church forming so concentrated a phalanx, that the temptation to convert it into a political and temporal power must always be irresistible to the ruler of a nation like Russia.

Hence the attempts that have been made, and ever will be made, to restrain the advance of Russia, who, with her millions and millions of souls, would otherwise be as actual a danger to European liberty as she menaces to be.

Europe was thus ranged into hostile and neutral camps—the latter anxiously watching the course of events, prepared to benefit by the contest if possible; but, at any rate, to resist any injury that might be done to themselves by either of the victorious parties.

CHAPTER XV.

THE WAR ON THE DANUBE; THE SIEGE OF SILISTRIA; RETREAT OF THE RUSSIANS ACROSS THE DANUBE; CONVENTION BETWEEN AUSTRIA AND TURKEY; EVACUATION BY THE RUSSIANS, AND OCCUPATION BY THE AUSTRIANS, OF THE PRINCIPALITIES; BOMBARDMENT OF ODESSA BY THE ALLIED FLEET; BLOCKADE OF THE DANUBE.

THE war now threatening to take unforeseen dimensions, the czar pressed all his preparations forward with the greatest activity, and bade his generals spare neither man nor money to push forward over the Balkan. Had this been done, as the czar confidently expected it would, the whole aspect of the war would have been changed. The error had, however, already been committed of entering the Dobrudscha, and nothing now remained to be done but to proceed to the reduction of the fortresses that barred the way. Had the czar possessed sufficient troops to threaten a second point on the Danube as effectually as Prince Paskievitch and Prince Gortchakoff threatened the Dobrudscha, there would have been no harm done. But in spite of the number of men over whom the czar ruled, the advantage was out-balanced by

the difficulties of transport, the bad state of the commissariat, and the general corruption prevailing in the administration. Stores were found empty that figured as full on paper; ammunition was wanting; much of that existing, especially that proceeding from foreign countries, was found inferior; and, in fact, all supplies had more or less deteriorated. Indeed, the dark blots that sullied the British administration during the war were fully as dark in Russia. The Russian system of centralisation was wholly inadequate to respond to the requirements of so vast an empire.

Under these circumstances the Russian commanders pushed forward their preparations for the siege of Silistria, and on the 14th of April fire was opened upon the town from the batteries established on the other side of the Danube, and the full investment proceeded with.

The defences of Silistria consisted of the fortifications of the town itself—five bastions river-wards, and seven land-wards, with a number of detached forts and earthworks thrown up since the outbreak of the war. Of the detached forts, the chief was Fort Abdul-Medjid, situated on a hill behind the town, and supported by their minor forts, also built on eminences, but commanded by Fort Abdul-Medjid. The western approach to the town was barred by Forts Tchair and Diman, and on the east by Fort Dairmem, all three in the plain. Fort Abdul-Medjid was, in addition, still further protected by the two powerful earthworks—Illanli and Arab Tabia. The difficulties presented by these earthworks go far towards proving the theory, that mud and watling are far more efficacious defences than solid masonry.

These walls were now approached by the Russian trenches and batteries constructed by General Schilders, who had already won his laurels before Silistria twenty-five years before, and who seemed determined to burrow under all the fortifications and undermine them. On the 11th of May, the Russian preparations were so far completed as to permit of an effectual bombardment of the town. Shot and shell were poured into it without interruption for four hours, and set it on fire in numerous places. The batteries, however, suffered very little. This first bombardment was intended rather as a "moral persuasion;" but it lost much of its effect from the fact that the inhabitants had already taken precautions to provide themselves with subterranean refuges, so that neither the loss of life or alarm was very great. The cannonade continued, with longer or shorter intervals of rest, till the 15th of May, when the garrison made a sortie and attacked a body of reinforcements; but without any important result. The same occurred on the 16th, when the cannonade was furiously carried on from 5 A.M. till dusk, the impression in the town being that the Russians were preparing for an assault. This impression was strengthened by the Russians sending in an officer under a flag of truce, to offer to the commander, Musa Pasha, terms of capitulation. He was strongly advised by the Russian envoy to submit, "because the czar had commanded Prince Paskievitch to take the place, and that of course it must be taken." To this Musa Pasha laconically replied, that "the sultan had commanded him to keep this place, and that of course it must be kept." An attempt was then made to bribe the pasha, but without success; and for the next four days such an incessant hail of shot and shell was poured into the town, forts, and earthworks, that the garrison began to lose heart—especially as there seemed to be no signs of any attempt on the part of the allies, or of Omar Pasha, to raise the siege. But they were greatly encouraged by Captain Butler and Lieutenant Nasmyth, who had volunteered their services at the outset, and to whose energy, cheerfulness, and valour, the successful defence of the place was, in a great measure, due. On the other hand, the Russian system of advance in dense columns contributed in a very large degree towards the failure of the repeated attempts to force the Turkish outworks. Still, in spite of all these advantages, the garrison were hardly pressed; their numbers had already fallen from 12,000 to 10,000, and reinforcements at least were anxiously looked for. But the fact is that the allies had not yet definitely formed their plans. They had landed at Gallipoli, but the future seat of war was not yet determined upon. They were waiting to see on what portion of the line, extending from the Hungarian frontier to the Caspian, the czar intended to concentrate his chief attack; whilst the czar himself was also waiting to see what steps the allies were going to take. For this reason Omar Pasha was prevented from marching to the relief of Silistria.

This is the explanation of the inactivity of the allies, that gave such umbrage to the Turks, and caused so many malevolent criticisms at home and abroad. Then there arose another element, also, which induced the allies to leave Silistria and the Danube to take care of themselves; and that was, the conviction that Austria would not be able to keep out of the fray if the Russians gained any signal advantages in this direction. As long as the allies took care that Constantinople was safe, they felt quite easy as to the development of affairs on the Danube.

But however satisfactory all this may have been from a broad political point of view, the garrison of Silistria were not at all disposed to regard it in such light; and on the 28th of May their courage and endurance were put to severer test than any they had yet had to submit to. The bombardment began with terrific fury at break of day, and continued until nightfall. Shortly after midnight the Russians proceeded to the assault of the Arab Tabia, and advanced with such caution, that the officer on duty in the redoubt was actually cut down by the leader of the storming party before the Turks were aware of their danger. A fierce combat then ensued within the Turkish works; but the leader of the Russians had entered the redoubt too soon, and before his men had been properly disposed to support him. The consequence was, that the Russians were driven out of the works and hurled into the ditch, where volley upon volley of grape, canister, and musketry were poured in upon them before they could extricate themselves. Fresh columns were then sent forward to the right, left, and centre, with senseless precision and clockwork volleys, like a machine set to do one particular kind of work, but utterly unable to change or adapt itself to circumstances. The confusion at last became so great in the Russian ranks, that the vigorous onslaughts of the Turks and Albanians with bayonet and scimitar, forced them to retreat in disorder; the stiff, agricultural Russ being utterly unable to compete in agility with the supple and lissom Turks of the Balkan and Pindus, whose limbs had never been stiffened by hard work.

The other works were also assaulted at the same time, but with similar results, the energy of the Turks having been redoubled by the fact that this day, the 29th of May, was the anniversary of the conquest of Constantinople.

The following day, the 30th of May, the sultan was the unwitting and unwilling cause of Musa Pasha's death. He sent the brave commander the order of the Medjidie, who, after receiving it from the hands of the messenger, went to prayer and to offer up thanks for the distinction offered him, and was struck on the back by a shell splinter, and killed on the spot.

As soon as the result of the great assault of the Russians became known at Constantinople, it was decided to follow up the successes, and send reinforcements, so as to enable the garrison to operate more systematically in the open field against the Russians. Thus, on the 4th of June, 30,000 men was sent by Omar Pasha from Shumla, and, marching with great rapidity, threw in a thousand men on the night of the 5th. At the same time the garrison of Rustchuk made a sortie to distract the attention of the Russians, and in order to make them think that a flank movement was intended, whilst the British fleet blockaded the mouth of the Danube and destroyed the Russian batteries at the Sulina mouth of the river on June the 8th.

The same day, the garrison at Silistria, now commanded by Hussein Bey, made a sortie, under cover of which another thousand men entered the town. Two days later, the left face of the Arab Tabia was blown down by the explosion of a Russian mine, and for a short space the Russians gained a footing in the works. But the Turks fought so desperately, and were aided, moreover, so effectually by another sally of Hussein Bey, that they were again forced to retreat. On the 13th more extensive operations were undertaken. Selim Pasha made a feint upon Oltenitza. Said Pasha crossed the Danube at Giurgevo, drove the Russians out of their works for a time, and then drew back; whilst Hussein Bey led a fresh sortie, attacking the Russians in their own lines until the relieving force had entered the place. The carnage on that day was frightful; in some places the dead literally blocked up the trenches. Captain Butler was grazed on the forehead by a ball; but though the wound seemed to be of no importance, the strain upon the constitution had been so great, that he died from the effects nine days later.

The Russian commanders now resolved to make a supreme effort; but their men were worn out, disheartened, and demoralised; and on the day of the last assault, June the 22nd, the utmost endeavours of the officers were necessary to bring their men up. This explains the great number of officers killed and wounded on that day. In spite of the greatest bravery, they were repulsed at every single point. Count Orloff, the son of the diplomatist, and nearly all the staff officers, were killed. General Luders had his jaw shattered; General Schilders, both his thighs carried away; Prince Gortchakoff was severely wounded, and Prince Paskievitch almost mortally struck. Under such circumstances, all hopes of forcing the lines of Silistria and Shumla were quite out of the question, and under cover of a bombardment at midnight on the 22nd, the Russians crossed the Danube, and raised the siege, leaving behind them the bones of some 20,000 men. The Turkish losses exceeded 4,000.

On the retreat of the Russians, who had gradually been drawing in their forces from Western Wallachia, Omar Pasha established his head-quarters at Rustchuk; Prince Gortchakoff taking up his at Bucharest. But during the siege of Silistria, two convictions had forced themselves upon the czar's mind. He saw that the military campaign had commenced with an error it was now too late to retrieve, and that the allies intended to concentrate their operations elsewhere than on the Danube. His armies were, therefore, useless in Wallachia; the only thing to be considered was a decent pretext for evacuating them. He therefore caused Austria to propose an occupation of the provinces, well knowing that such a measure would not seriously affect his ultimate aims in case of his eventual success, nor render his position any worse in case of defeat. This measure was carried out in the form of a convention between the Porte and Austria, signed on the 14th of June, 1854, and ratified on the 30th with the consent of the western powers. The terms of the convention were so worded as to leave the czar time to adapt his preparations according to the turn of events, it being provided that Austria should undertake to—

1. Exhaust all means of negotiation to obtain the evacuation of the Danubian principalities.

2. Engage to enter into no convention with the czar on any other basis than the integrity of the Ottoman empire.

3. Occupy the provinces with the requisite number of forces: and,

4. To evacuate them forthwith on the conclusion of peace.

The first article was introduced to allow the czar time for his generals to try and retrieve their position, and Generals Dannenberg and Bebutoff, who had been so successful in Asia, were sent with reinforcements from Bessarabia, to try to infuse new life into the demoralised troops. But the campaign had been irretrievably muddled, and the Russians were successively defeated at Nicopoli, Giurgevo, and Frasketi, and General Bebutoff himself severely wounded. The game had been played and lost, and on the 2nd of August, Prince Gortchakoff led his army, shattered and demoralised, back again across the Pruth; whilst three weeks later the Austrians had entered upon their inheritance of occupation.

Thus disastrously ended the campaign on the Danube. But the argument that the Turks proved themselves a match for the Russians without any assistance from the allies, is as fallacious as mischievous. That an equal number of Turks is fully equal to a corresponding number of Russians, may be at once conceded. We may go even still further, and acknowledge that the *physique* of the Turks is superior to the Russians, and that the Turks would hold their own on their own ground against three to one. But the resources of Russia far exceed those of Turkey; and unassisted, the latter power would, eventually, most certainly succumb. It must also be remembered, that, though the allies were not actually on the spot, still the prospect of their interference, and their subsequent presence at Gallipoli and the Black Sea, had virtually out-flanked Prince Gortchakoff's armies, and thus materially influenced the course of events; so that any argument based on the fact that the Russians were matched by the Turks unaided is very fallacious. Russia has always beaten the Turks eventually, and, probably, always would do so.

As may be imagined, the result of the Danubian campaign cut the czar to the quick. Especially humiliating were the repeated defeats of the Russian armies in the open field in Western Wallachia. That they should have been beaten back from Silistria was not so disgraceful, when regard

was had to the difficulties they had to contend with, and the error in concentrating the chief attack in the Dobrudscha was taken into consideration. But that, as the czar himself said, the flower of the Russian army should have been vanquished by raw levies of half-civilised Turks, was too humiliating, and, to him, inexplicable. He did not see then, as every one else saw, that his system of attacking in dense columns, rigid in their massive formation, was of no avail against the scattered and meagre ranks of the enemy, who buzzed and hovered round his concentrated masses like a swarm of mosquitoes round an ox. Consequently, whilst condoling with Princes Paskievitch and Gortchakoff on account of their wounds, he, at the same time, made the most bitter remarks, and deplored the faithlessness of his servants, contending that he had been deceived and betrayed at every step and turn, finally despatching the minister of war to the head-quarters of the army to ascertain the causes of its defeat; at the same time he ordered a levy of recruits, to the number of 9 per 1,000 of the population, whilst an extraordinary contribution of one-fourth of the annual revenue was exacted from the provinces. Unfortunately for the Russians, the means of communication were so few and so bad, that the task of mobilising the various regiments, and bringing them to the scene of action, was a most difficult one. As an instance, may be mentioned the fact, that after the war had been concluded, large bodies of men still continued to arrive at their various depôts, and men who were never placed in line were more than a year absent from their homes; and, when collected, the work of drilling had to be executed. This was apparently an easy task. The Russian is accustomed, as all agriculturists are, to methodic and precise movements; and thus nothing can excel the precision of a Russian parade. But it was just this precision and mechanical movement that so greatly contributed to the defeat of the Russian battalions. Precision was their only art.

The same observations apply to the conveyance of stores and ammunition. It is quite true that, practically, London and Paris were much nearer to the seat of war than St. Petersburg. Finally, the command of the Black Sea having been lost by the Russians, and their Baltic ports blockaded, they were practically out-flanked on both sides. Thus having lost the power of aiding his armies, except by their rear, the czar could not help seeing that any further attempts to force the Balkans would be futile, menaced, as he was, by the possibility of Austria forsaking him and turning her benevolent neutrality into active opposition. Besides which, he began to be convinced that the object of the allies had gradually taken shape, and that they would confine themselves to the destruction of his maritime supremacy in the Black Sea by the destruction of the great fortress and military harbour, with which he dominated the sea up to the entrance of the Bosphorus. Thus the war, henceforth, was resolved into an attack upon Sebastopol. The fall of that town, the emperor foresaw, would be the end of the war, as far as the allies were concerned. That they would follow up their success, and expose themselves to the risks of an invasion of Russia, was not to be thought of for a moment. It would have been far too good for the Russians to have expected it; so that, on the whole, the czar awaited the issue of the struggle with comparative equanimity. The most unfavourable result would not be so very bad, whilst it was quite within the range of possibilities that Sebastopol might defy the allies as successfully as Silistria had defied the Russians, and at the same time there was still a chance of successful advance in Asia Minor, though, of course, that chance was also much diminished by the control of the Black Sea having slipped from his hands. His armies here were also impeded by the lawless tribes to whom any government is an incubus; whose notion of liberty is only the liberty to act as they please without acknowledging any authority, whether Russian, Turkish, or British.

It is easy to understand, therefore, the anxiety of Russia to assure herself of the control of the Black Sea. The case is well put by a Russian statesman, who wrote on a recent occasion as follows:—

"There are such things as national nightmares. Every nation has its favourite one in some form or the other. Russia's nightmare is the knowledge that the coalition of two powers is sufficient to entirely isolate Russia, and to destroy her commerce as long as they choose. The Baltic can be closed on the north, and the Black Sea on the south. It is this knowledge that weighs upon us without cessation; is always present to our mind; is called up by a thousand circumstances every day. The fact

is aggravated by the key of the Black Sea being held by an uncivilised barbarian, who is our natural enemy, and who flaunts his power day after day in our face. A still further aggravation is caused by the fact that this barbarian infidel is the remorseless oppressor of millions of our race, and kith and kin and co-religionists.

"Let me put the case in a light that may specially interest the British statesman. Suppose the Channel contracted at both ends, so that Dover and Calais, and Brest and Plymouth, were within easy fire of each other. And now imagine Brest and Calais to belong to an infidel race, oppressing millions of Protestants of your own English race; and suppose, still further, that the infidels in question were your bitterest enemies, and claimed the right of closing both gates of your Channel whenever they chose, and refused to allow your war-ships ingress and egress; and then, finally, imagine that every time you try to put an end to such a state of things, or to ameliorate the position of your suffering kindred, you are at once attacked by four or five other powers, and hindered and thwarted in all your attempts, or war declared against you. Imagine all this, and imagine that it has been going on for centuries, and tell me whether such a condition of things would not be a national nightmare, a horrible incubus, that duty, interest, sentiment, honour, and pride all united to demand the suppression of.

"That is the case with Russia. The feeling is universal, and it stifles our national existence. The incubus *must* be removed by fair means or foul—to-day or to-morrow. But till it is removed there can be no lasting peace between Russia and the Ottoman empire; no lasting confidence between Russia and Europe. We Russians may be but semi-civilised as a nation—I quite acknowledge the fact; but no one can deny that we do not progress; that we have the will and wish to extend civilisation, and that we are capable of it. No one will deny that Russia, backward as she may be, is at least as far in advance of Turkey as Great Britain may be in advance of Russia.

It is therefore unreasonable, unstatesmanlike, and impolitic to expect Russia to yield to Turkey, and submit to her tutelage in the matter of the Black Sea, with the assistance of a number of European monitors, who would like to keep their pupil from growing, lest he one day be too big for them to manage."

As soon as war had been formally declared, the fleets of the allies, which, since the massacre at Sinope had been cruising about the Black Sea without any particular object in view, proceeded to play their part in the first act of the drama, which had been dragging on its weary and sanguinary length along the banks of the Danube. One of the first acts of hostility was the bombardment of Odessa, which arose out of one of those unfortunate events that do so much to embitter rival armies, and that never fail to occur in any war. The *Furious* had gone, on the 6th of April, to Odessa in order to claim and take on board the consuls and French and English subjects who might prefer quitting the city before the outbreak of hostilities. On arriving off the port, the *Furious* was brought-to by two blank shots from the batteries, whereupon she hove-to out of range, and lowered a boat which hoisted a white flag and proceeded to the quay, when the officer in charge was informed that the British consul had already left Odessa. Hereupon, the boat pushed off, and was returning to the *Furious*, when the latter, from some reason or other that has not been explained, put the engines into motion, and, according to the Russian accounts, steered towards the batteries and got within range. Hereupon the Russian batteries opened fire and fired seven shots, which, however, did no damage. As soon as the incident was reported to headquarters Admirals Hamelin and Dundas conferred together, and despatched one French and two English steamers to demand an apology from Baron Osten-Sacken, the Russian governor of Odessa. The baron refused an apology, stating, in effect, that the *Furious* having disregarded the summons conveyed by the two blank cannon-shot, had unnecessarily come within range of the Russian guns, and that the commander of the battery had done no more than his duty in firing upon her. Strictly and literally, no doubt, the Russian governor was justified in taking this view; but, morally, taking into consideration the fact, that one frigate would scarcely attempt to tackle the whole batteries of Odessa, and that, practically, she was as much covered by the white flag as the boat itself, there can be no doubt that the baron's explanation was insufficient, and

that an apology was the least that could be expected from him. But the Russians, in their state of mind at that time, were not at all inclined to apologise, and preferred indulging in the luxury of refusing to do so. For this luxury the admirals decided they should pay dearly, and followed up their demand for an apology, by a further demand that all British, French, and Russian vessels at anchor, under cover of the batteries, should at once be given up to the combined fleet. To this demand the baron made no reply whatever; and on the 22nd of April, the allied fleet, consisting of twelve steamers and a number of rocket-boats, proceeded to inflict summary chastisement on the refractory town.

Though not a regular fortress, Odessa was well protected by batteries and a citadel commanding the port, which is divided into four portions by the Quarantine Mole and the Imperial Mole, both of which are defended by embrasured parapets. The former contained the foreign mercantile vessels; the latter, the Russian and the men-of-war. Between these two moles lies the chief quay and boulevard, to which two flights of steps led from the plateau on which the town is built. Two batteries were constructed to the right and left of these steps, and there was a third battery opposite the Quarantine Port. Altogether there were seven batteries, exclusive of mole batteries and those of the citadel.

When the fleet approached, the rocket-boats were sent well in, and poured a continual stream of 24-pound shot upon the principal mole and the Russian shipping, whilst the steamers, moving on in single file, described a continual circle, each one delivering its fire as it passed the mole. The Russian batteries answered with rapidity, but their aim was bad, whilst almost every shot of the allies told well; and the *Terrible* eventually standing in closer and using red-hot shot and rockets, succeeded in exploding the imperial powder magazine, the mole itself being so shattered by the explosion, that its batteries were silenced. The allies then stood still closer in and concentrated their fire upon the Russian shipping, and the naval and military stores. These were well defended by the Russians, who succeeded in inflicting considerable damage on the *Retribution*, and set the French frigate *Vauban* on fire by red-hot shot; but fortunately for the crew, the fire was extinguished by the help of the sailors sent to their assistance before it spread to the magazine. The upshot of the action was the destruction of the Russian shipping, the official buildings, and a considerable portion of the town, thirteen vessels laden with naval stores and ammunition being cut out, and some fifty men taken prisoners. The loss of the Russians was 800 killed and wounded; whilst that of the allied fleet did not amount to more than twenty-four killed and wounded.

This successful bombardment of Odessa, which was simply undertaken to avenge the outrage committed by firing upon a flag of truce, was represented by the Russian government as a successful repulse of the allied fleet: in fact, to read the emperor's proclamation on the subject one would be inclined to imagine that Baron Osten-Sacken had placed himself at the head of his regiments, charged the whole fleet at the point of the bayonet, and utterly dispersed it, for which exploit the gallant baron was rewarded with the order of St. Andrew, with the accompanying decree published in the *Invalide Russe*.

"On the day when the inhabitants of Odessa, united in their orthodox temples, were celebrating the death of the Son of God, crucified for the redemption of mankind, the allies of the enemy of His holy name attempted a crime against that city of peace and commerce—against that city where all Europe, in her years of dearth, has always found open granaries. The fleets of France and England bombarded for twelve hours our batteries, and the habitations of our peaceful citizens, as well as the merchant shipping in the harbour. But our brave troops, led by you in person, and penetrated by a profound faith in the Supreme Protector of justice, gloriously repelled the attack of the enemy against the soil, which, in apostolic times, received the precursor of the Christian religion in our holy country. The heroic firmness of our troops, inspired by your example, has been crowned with complete success; the city has been saved from destruction, and the enemy's fleets have disappeared. As a worthy recompense of so grand an action, we grant you the order of St. Andrew.

"NICHOLAS."

Apart from the mere punishment for the outrage committed on a flag of truce, the bombardment of Odessa, and destruction

of the shipping, was also a measure of expediency, in order to increase the difficulties in the supply of provisions for the Russian army in the Dobrudscha; but it was also judged necessary to blockade the mouths of the Danube, and destroy the batteries constructed by the Russians. The blockade was declared on the 1st of June, and on the 8th the batteries on the Sulina mouth were attacked and destroyed, with the exception of a small portion which was taken possession of and manned by marines. Towards the end of the month, the stockades erected around the village of Sulina were attacked by the *Firebrand* and *Vesuvius*, under the command of Captains Parker and Powell, who conducted the expedition in a reckless fashion, which led to the death of Captain Parker. Captain Parker apparently took for granted that the stockades were deserted, and approached them without any precautions, until a volley of musketry riddled the boat and wounded several of the men. Withdrawing down the river, he waited for the other boats to come up, and landing his men, led them to storm the stockades, when he was shot through the heart—a fate that also befel the two Russian officers in command.

With the exception of the bombardment of Odessa, and blockade of the Danube, there was but little for the fleets to do. The Russian fleet would not leave the shelter of Sebastopol, and the fortifications of that place were far too powerful to be attacked with any chance of success. Altogether, throughout the war, the fleets, both from the Baltic and the Black Sea, played a very subordinate part, as far as active operations were concerned. But still, the services they rendered as transports and blockaders, cutting off the supplies of the Russians, and outflanking them as it were in the Dobrudscha and in the Caucasus, were very valuable.

CHAPTER XVI.

LANDING OF THE ALLIES AT GALLIPOLI; FURTHER ADVANCE TO SCUTARI AND VARNA; WRETCHED STATE OF THE ARMIES AT VARNA; DEPARTURE OF THE ALLIES FOR THE CRIMEA; LANDING AT EUPATORIA; BATTLE OF THE ALMA; ADVANCE ON SEBASTOPOL; OCCUPATION OF BALAKLAVA AND KAMIESH BAY.

As soon as it had become evident that war was unavoidable, the despatch of French and British troops to the East commenced; but owing to the undecided state of the political atmosphere, and the general ignorance prevailing as to the military dispositions of the Russians, combined with doubts as to the success of Omar Pasha in keeping the Russian army on the Danube in check, no definite plan of operations was decided on; and, practically, it was determined to be guided by the course of events. For these reasons the allied troops were first disembarked at Gallipoli. It was thought that the progress of the Russians through the Dobrudscha and the Balkan provinces would be so rapid, that Constantinople itself might be attacked before the allies could oppose a sufficient force to resist the Russian advance; and serious alarms were even felt for the safety of the fleets anchored in the Bosphorus. It was thus held to be necessary to create a basis of operations for defence as well as offence. This basis was discovered in the isthmus of Gallipoli, which was defended towards the land side by a fosse of several yards in depth, running from sea to sea. In case therefore of a rapid advance of the Russians both by sea and land, Gallipoli seemed to the allies a strong and safe position both in case of offence and defence. More precautions were deemed necessary at the outset than subsequent events justified. In fact, it was determined at first to push on very gradually. Under favourable circumstances, the next step in advance was to have been the peninsula of Erdek, opposite the island of Marmora, to which the land approaches were capable of defences of the same character as at Gallipoli. There was thus a considerable doubt as to the extent of the powers of the allied forces. In fact, it may be said that, for a considerable period, the allies and the Russians were equally afraid of each other, and neither side had sufficient

confidence in its own powers; so that an advance depended rather upon which side turned tail first than upon a bold initiative.

The French troops arrived first on the spot, and, like all first comers, they were the best served. The first vessel that arrived was the *Golden Fleece*. She made Gallipoli on Wednesday night, with 1,000 men on board; but there was no pilot to show her where to anchor, and ultimately she had to run out her cable in 19 fathoms water. The reception the first British army met with that ever landed on the shores of the Dardanelles, is well related by the *Times* correspondent. When morning approached, it was seen how well the French had employed their time.—"The tricolour was floating right and left, and the blue coats of the French were well marked on shore, the long line of bullock-carts stealing along the strand towards their camp making it evident that they were taking care of themselves. As it happened, the consul had gone to the tower of the Dardanelles, to look for the *Golden Fleece;* but it had escaped him in the dark. The first thing that happened after the visit of the commissaries was characteristic. The general desired to send for the consul; but the only way of doing so was by water, and the only vessel available for the purpose was a small Turkish imperial steamer near the *Golden Fleece*. The consul's dragoman, a grand-looking Israelite, prepared to go on the expedition; but the engineer on board had just managed to break his leg. He therefore requested the loan of an engineer, as no one could be found to undertake the care of the steamer's engines; and, after a successful cruise, he returned in the evening with the consul, Mr. Calvert, on board. Mr. Calvert went to the Turkish council, reminded them that there were British troops yet to come, and succeeded in having half of the quarters of the town reserved to him for their use. Next day he visited and marked off the houses; but on his return the French authorities said they had made a mistake as to the portions of the town they handed over to him, and he of course had to yield and give them up. They had the Turkish part of the town, close to the water, with an honest and favourable population; the English had the Greek quarter apportioned them, further up the hill, and perhaps the healthier, with 'dextrous' tradesmen and a population which hated them bitterly, and regarded them as foes quartered on them by force of arms.

"As we have seen, the troops arrived on Wednesday night (Thursday morning), but it was mid-day on Saturday ere the troops were landed and sent to their quarters. Nothing was ready for them. The force consisted of only some thousand and odd men; and, small as it was, owing to the fault of 'somebody or other,' it had to lie idle for two days and a-half, watching the sea-gulls, or with half-averted eye regarding the ceaseless activity of the French, the daily arrival of their steamers, the rapid transmission of their men by the paddle-box boats of their vessels to shore, and the admirable completeness of all their arrangements in every detail; hospitals for the sick, bread and biscuit bakeries, waggon-trains for carrying store and baggage; every necessary and every comfort, indeed, to be had the moment their ships came in. Not a British pendant was afloat in the harbour! The great naval state was represented by a single steamer belonging to a private company. Well might a Turkish boatman ask—'Oh, why is this? Oh, why is this, young man? By the beard of the Prophet, for the sake of your father's father, tell me, oh, English lord, how is it? The French infidels have got one, two, three, four, five, six, seven ships, with fierce little soldiers; the English infidels, who say they can defile the graves of these French (may Heaven avert it), and who are big as the giants of Asli, have only one big ship. Do they tell lies?' (Such was the translation of an interesting waterman's address.)

"On Thursday there was a general hunt for quarters through the town. The consul, attended by dragoman and interpreter, and a train of lodging-seekers, went from house to house; but it was not till the eye had got accustomed to the general style of the buildings and fittings, that any of them seemed willing to accept the places offered to them. The general got a very fine place in a *beau quartier*, with a view of an old Turk on a counter looking at his toes in perpetual perspective.

"The tall door, which was an antiquated concern—not affording any particular resistance to the air to speak of—opened on an apartment with clay walls of about 10 feet high, and of the length and breadth of the whole house. It was garnished

with the odds and ends of domestic deity—with empty barrels, with casks of home-made wine, buckets, baskets, &c. At one side a rough staircase, creaking at every step, led the way to a saloon on the first floor. This was of the plainest possible appearance. On the sides were stuck prints of the czar, and of the Virgin and child (after the Greek school), with wonderful engravings from Jerusalem. There was no other furniture. It may be observed, that as a schism between the Greek Catholic and the Roman Catholic churches arose out of the discussion of an intricate question on the subtlest point of theology, they fight bitterly on matters of very fine distinction yet. Thus the Greeks are iconoclasts, and hate images, but adore pictures. A yellow Jonah, in a crimson whale with fiery entrails, is a favourite subject for these artists, and doubtless bears some allegorical meaning.—From this saloon opened the two or three rooms of the house—the kitchen, the divan, and the principal bedroom. The floors were covered with matting; but with the exception of the cushion on the raised platform round the wall of the room (about 18 inches from the floor), there was nothing else in the room offered for general competition to the public. Above were dark attics—*voilà tout.* These apartments would form a study for philosophers. If they want to understand the true principle of keeping up a current of fresh air everywhere, let them go out to Gallipoli and take possession of one of these remarkable chambers. True, the walls are of mud and straw, and the staircase has been devised expressly for the purpose of entrapping the first heavy Turk who may happen to stride up. It is the thinnest wood-work possible. Water is some way off; and the philosophers, if not provided with servants who can speak the language, and an allowance of rations from her majesty's stores, may be seen soon after stalking up the street with as much dignity as is compatible with the circumstance of their carrying a sheep's liver on a stick in one hand, some lard in the other, and a loaf of black bread under their arms [at least the *Times* correspondent had to adopt that course or die of hunger]. There was not such a thing as a pound of butter in the whole country; meat was very scarce, fowls impossible, but the country wine was fair enough; eggs were not so rare as might have been imagined from the want of poultry."

The Turks themselves were by no means pleased at the disembarkation of the troops at Gallipoli, so far away from the actual seat of war. Nor did it conduce to the health, comfort, or spirits of the army. But as we have shown, the movement was owing to the general indecision arising from inaccurate knowledge as to the forces at the disposal of the czar. Instead of deciding at once upon their own course of action, the allies preferred waiting to see what the Russians intended. The delay, however, in the advance of Prince Gortchahoff, gave them a little more courage, and they determined to advance another step; so that when the *Himalaya* arrived with fresh troops on the 13th of April, 1854, she was sent on to Constantinople, and the men quartered at Scutari. But during the whole of April and May, the operations were entirely of a precautionary and defensive character; but early in June, when it became apparent that the Russians would be forced to raise the siege of Silistria, and that Austria was about to sign the convention already mentioned with Turkey, it was decided to advance another short and safe step to Varna, all fears of a flank attack by the Russians in the Dobrudscha having been dispelled. Besides this, the plans of the allies had gradually been gaining consistency, and it began to become a conviction, that any number of defeats of the Russian armies in the open field, or curtailments of Russian territory on the Danube, would be unavailing for the preservation of a durable peace as long as Sebastopol remained a standing menace to Turkey, and as long as Russia possessed a powerful fleet that dominated the Black Sea, and could always retreat under cover of the vast amount of metal that defended the Crimea from Odessa to Kertch. Unfortunately no one knew anything reliable about the Crimea or its resources. No one knew whether the rivers Katalia, Alma, and Bulganatch, were full, or dried-up torrent-beds in summer. But anyhow, whilst *reconnaissances* were being made by the fleets along the northern shores of the Euxine, it was decided to raise the camps of Gallipoli and Scutari, and proceed to Varna, trusting to Providence and the Russians to decide on the next step. It was a wretched state of childish indecision,

due to ignorance and want of preparation, assisted by divided counsels at home. There were, in fact, more cooks to make the soup than there was soup for the cooks; and it may well be imagined that the Turks were by no means delighted with their allies, who were fiddling and faddling about whilst their own men were bearing the brunt of the war, unaided, on the Danube.

Thus the 1st division of British troops, under Sir George Brown, and the French forces under General Canrobert, landed early in June at Varna, followed, on the 14th of the same month, by the guards and highlanders and the British commander-in-chief, the Duke of Cambridge. The 1st division pushed on to Aladyn, and subsequently to Devno, under Sir George Brown; whilst it was followed up to Aladyn by Sir R. England, the Earl of Cardigan with his light cavalry pushing on towards the Dobrudscha, and joining hands with Omar Pasha. There was then a gradual advance of the British lines, whilst the French troops remained in Varna and Baltschik, during which the Russians were often sighted, but without any engagment taking place. Truth was, that even yet no plan was formed; but even if it had been decided to advance, there was no material to do so. Means of transport there were none; everything was wanting; and in addition, disease broke out in consequence of the malarious climate of Varna, which rapidly progressed into virulent cholera. The very simplest precautions had been neglected; and instead of the camps being pitched on the highlands north of Varna, they were located at their foot, on the banks of a notoriously unhealthy swamp, dignified by people of romantic tendencies, or who never saw it, with the name of a lake. For, notwithstanding the beauty of the country about Aladyn and Devno, it is a renowned hot-bed of fever and dysentery. The valley of Devno is even called, by the Turks themselves, the Valley of Death; and had the natives been consulted, or any proper medical examination been made, neither Aladyn or Devno would have been chosen as the grave for thousands before they had ever set eyes upon the enemy. Beautiful as it might be to the eye, the long expanse of rich meadow land, the luxuriant vegetation, and sparkling waters of stream and lake, "these meadows nurtured fever, ague, dysentery, and pestilence in their bosom; lake and stream exhaled death, and at night fat unctuous vapours rose up, fold after fold, from the valleys, and crept up in the dark, stealing into the tent of the sleeper, and folding him in their deadly embrace. So completely exhausted, on the 19th August, 1854, was the brigade of guards—these 3,000 of the flower of England—that they had to make two marches in order to get over the distance from Aladyn to Varna, not more than ten miles. But this was not all; their packs were carried for them. The highland brigade was in better condition; but even these fine regiments were far from being in the health and spirits they were in when they set out from Varna. The French had their cholera camp about two miles from the town; it was only too extensive and too well filled. Horrors occurred here every day, shocking to think of. Walking by the beach, one might see straw sticking up through the sand; and scraping it away with a stick, be horrified at bringing to light the face of a corpse, having been deposited there with a wisp of straw around it, a prey to dogs and vultures. Dead bodies rose up from the bottom in the harbour, bobbing grimly around in the water, or drove in from sea, drifting by the sickened gazers on board the ships, buoyant, upright, and hideous, in the sun. A boat's crew went on shore to put a few stones together to form a sort of landing-place on the sand; they moved a stone—discovering underneath a festering corpse. On one occasion a Frenchman of herculean size, who had been buried at sea with a shot at his feet, rose up after an interval, and seemed to have special mission to hang about the landing-ladders of the transports. Ineffectual attempts were made to sink the corpse; but, like the old man of the sea, he could not be got rid of until it was determined to bring a gun to bear upon him, so bad was the effect it produced."

The consequence of this state of affairs was, that a large number of men and officers were invalided, and the discontent became very great. Nor was the position of the allies rendered any better by a vast conflagration that broke out at Varna on the 10th of August, and destroyed over 200 houses, 19,000 pairs of boots, and large quantities of stores and provisions. It was only by dint of the most strenuous

exertions that the powder magazine was saved. Well, it was some consolation to know, that whilst the army was thus slowly —even rapidly rotting away, the martial appearance of "the men" was well looked after, and the sepulchre duly whitened, the Earl of Lucan complaining, in a formal order of the day, of the dirty appearance of the men, and insisting on the more assiduous application of pipe-clay and ochre for the proper dressing of belts and facings.

At last, the rumour ran that a move had been decided on. The reconnoitring squadrons had returned from their expedition to Baltchik and Varna, and councils of war were repeatedly held as to the most advisable spot for the disembarkation of the troops on the Crimea. Finally, it was decided that the armies should be disembarked at the mouth of the Katscha; and this decision was at once trumpeted forth by the correspondent of the *Times*. Fortunately, the Russians did not believe in this intention, and regarded it as a *ruse*. They were convinced that the allies would attack them on the Danube, and that Bessarabia would be the seat of war. This opinion was certainly strengthened by the disembarkation of the allies at Varna; but Prince Mentschikoff, who commanded in the Crimea with 23,000 men, saw from the first that no such plan was intended, and wrote despatch after despatch, stating his convictiou that the ultimate destination of the allies was the Crimea, and that they would attempt a landing between Eupatoria and Sebastopol. It was in vain that he asked for reinforcements. To the last moment it was believed that the real destination of the allies was Odessa, and not Sebastopol.

At last, after much trouble, and loss, and anxiety, the fleets and transports started from Baltchik on the 7th of September, for the Isle of Serpents, off the mouth of the Danube, as a preliminary rendezvous. Here met together an armada of the combined British, French, and Turkish fleets, numbering in all over 700 ships; and on the 11th of September, the whole set sail for the second rendezvous off Cape Tarkan. And still the exact spot for disembarkation had not yet been decided on. Opinions were divided in both camps, and each disagreed with the other as to the most eligible spot. At last, after mutual concessions, it was decided that the beach at Old Fort, four days' march from Sabastopol, presented the most advantages, and on the 14th of September, the disembarkation of the troops commenced, Eupatoria itself being taken possession of by Lord Raglan, and the British flag hoisted over the town without any opposition, except from a small squadron of Cossacks, who were speedily routed by a detachment of dragoons.

The place selected for the landing of the troops was a low strip of beach and shingle cast up by the violence of the surf, and forming a sort of causeway between the sea and a stagnant salt-water lake—one of those remarkable deposits of brackish water so frequent along this shore of the Crimea. The lake was about one mile long and half a mile broad; its surface and borders frequented by vast flocks of wild fowl. There was another sheet to the south, and another to the north, between the camp and Eupatoria. The causeway was not more than two hundred yards broad, and led to the right, or southern extremity of the lake by a gentle ascent, to an irregular table-land, or plateau, of trifling elevation, dotted with tumuli or barrows, such as are seen in several parts of England, and extending to the base of the very remarkable chain called, from their shape, the Tent Mountains. Towards the sea the plateau presents a precipitous face of red clay and sandstone, varying in height from 100 to 150 feet, terminating by a descent almost to the sea-level, at the distance of nearly two miles from the shores of the lake. Thence, towards the south, was a low sandy beach, with a fringe of shingle raised by the action of the waves above the level of the land, saving it from inundation. This low coast extended as far as the eye could reach, till lost beneath the base of the mountain ranges over Sebastopol. The country inland, visible from the decks of the ships, was covered with cattle, with grain in stack, with farm-houses, seeming capable of producing enormous quantities of live stock and fodder. The stubble fields were covered with wild lavender, southern-wood, and other fragrant shrubs, which the troops were busily collecting for fuel, and which filled the air with perfume.

The French were the first to land, and effected the operation in admirable order and with great celerity. The only witness

THE CRIMEA.



SEBASTOPOL



SEBASTOPOL HARBOUR



BANKS OF THE ALMA



SEBASTOPOL

SEBASTOPOL, BEFORE ITS INVESTMENT BY THE ALLIES.

Engd. Drawn & Engraved by H Winkles

THE LONDON PRINTING AND PUBLISHING COMPANY, LIMITED.

The Map Drawn & Engraved by J Rapkin

of their operations, on the part of the enemy, was Lieutenant Stetenkoe with a few Cossacks, who had been sent by Prince Mentschikoff to follow the movements of the fleets as far as he possibly could. He very coolly remained as long as possible without being molested in his occupation of taking notes, till one of the Cossacks suddenly crouched down and pointed with his lance to the ascent of the cliff. Then ensued rather a comical scene, as observed from on board the fleet. The officer turned and looked in the direction the Cossack had pointed to, when suddenly a cocked hat rose above the horizon. "Another figure with a similar head-dress came also in view. The first was Sir George Brown, on foot; the second, Quartermaster-General Airy. The scene was exciting. It was evident the Russian and the Cossack had seen Sir George, but that he did not see them. A picquet of Fusileers and riflemen followed the general at a considerable interval. The Russian got on his horse, the Cossack followed his example, and one of them cantered to the left to see that the French were not cutting off their retreat, while the others stooped down over their saddle-bows, and rode stealthily, with lowered lances, towards the Englishmen. Sir George was in danger, but he did not know it. Neither did the Russians see the picquet advancing towards the brow of the hill. Sir George was busy scanning the country, pointing out various spots to the quarter-master-general. Suddenly they turned and slowly descended the hill—the gold sash disappeared — the cocked hat was eclipsed—Cossacks and officers dismounted and stole along by the side of their horses. They too were hidden from sight in a short time, and on the brow of the cliff appeared a string of native carts. In about five minutes two or three tiny puffs of smoke rose over the cliff, and then the faint cracks of a rifle were audible to the men in the nearest ships. In a few minutes more the Cossacks were visible, flying like the wind on the road to Sebastopol, and crossed close to the left of the French lines of skirmishers. Sir George had a narrow escape of being taken prisoner. He was the first to land, and pushed on without sending videttes or men in front, though he took the precaution, very fortunately, to bring up a few soldiers with him. The Cossacks who had been dodging him made a dash when they were within less than a hundred yards. The general had to run, and was only saved from capture by the fire of the Fusileers. The Cossacks bolted. The first blood spilt in the campaign was that of a poor boy, an arabjee, who was wounded in the foot by the volley which dislodged them."

The greater part of the army had landed by nightfall; and, as usual, the French and Turks got comfortably under canvas before it was dark, and were able to pass in tolerable ease the terribly stormy night that ensued. Torrents upon torrents of rain drenched the British troops to the skin, for of course all their camp was in confusion, Sir George Brown lying under a waggon, and the Duke of Cambridge under a gun-carriage. A few more died in consequence of that night's exposure. The next morning the rest of the men were landed; the sum total of the forces being, 26,000 English, 24,000 French, and 4,500 Turks, and 124 guns.

At midnight of the 18th, the order was given to be prepared to advance at break of dawn. When dawn broke, the following was the picture that presented itself to the eye of an officer who thus describes it:—

"We now marched into camp; and when we arrived we found all hurry, bustle, and confusion. *Uncooked* rations were served out to the men, which some were unwilling to carry; while others, in the hurry to stand to their arms, were unable to obtain their portion. This was a great pity; for I believe half the men of our regiment started without water in their kegs, to which in a great measure must be attributed the numbers who fell out during the march. The well was too far from the camp to allow them to fetch it that morning before they commenced their march; and considering the total absence of water in our line of march, *it should have been provided, and boats sent ashore with it from the ships, a very few of which would have been sufficient for their wants.* Our men thus started uncomfortably and without their breakfasts, *for which no time was allowed them.* I fortunately had a small piece of boiled pork and biscuit in my haversack; this, and a pull at my water-barrel, composed my *déjeuner.* On arriving at head-quarters, we found our general, Sir George Cathcart, waiting

for us, and were all much inspirited by his active and soldier-like appearance. As soon as the waggon-train and commissariat carts arrived, and had passed on to some little distance, we marched. It was a very hot sultry morning, and the sun struck down on our poor heads with unusual violence. Our pace in marching was obliged to be regulated with great judgment, as we were on a vast plain, without even a drop of water, or shade of any kind. A more monotonous country I never beheld, and we had fifteen miles of it. It was 9 o'clock before the whole of the army was prepared to march, being delayed by the inadequate transport provided for the stores, baggage, &c. Many of our men fell down in the ranks, attacked by cholera, or from becoming faint and exhausted for want of water. If they recovered shortly, they followed us with the rear-guard; but if not they were left to the tender mercy of any passer-by. It was certainly much to be lamented that we had no ambulance waggons for these poor sick fellows who fell out on the march; for had they been carried a mile or two, or had a drink of water, I have no doubt half of them would have rejoined their companies. Ambulance carts ought surely to have attended each brigade, and each should have carried some medicine, particularly when the cholera was likely to affect the army. The medical officers in general carried a small bottle of brandy and flask of water, which they gave the men, and thus did much good. Some of our poor fellows actually came to me, and on their knees besought me for a drink out of my flask; and I am happy to say that I managed to relieve a few of them. I found in our brigade that the men of the other regiments fell out almost ten to our one."

In the advance that now ensued, the French formed the right wing, and the British troops the left wing, the fleet following their movements to give them its support when necessary. The English troops were commanded by Lord Raglan, supported by Sir George Brown commanding the light division, the Duke of Cambridge commanding the 1st division; Sir De Lacy Evans, with the 2nd division; Sir Richard England with the 3rd division; Sir George Cathcart with the 4th; and Lord Lucan with the cavalry divisions. The French were under the command-in-chief of Marshal St. Arnaud, supported by Generals Canrobert, Forey, Bosquet (Zouaves), and Prince Napoleon. The fleet was commanded by Admirals Dundas and Hamelin, on board their flag-ships *Britannia* and *Ville-de-Paris*.

The march forward led over a dried-up hillocky steppe, without water or shade, no signs of the enemy being visible until the river Bulganak was reached, on the other side of which the ground rose to a slightly elevated ridge, shutting off the horizon. The Hussars led the way, galloping up to the top of the ridge, when the enemy put in appearance in the shape of a body of Cossacks, some two thousand strong, well supplied with horse artillery. They at once opened fire on the British cavalry, which was responded to by the few pieces that had unlimbered; but after some slight skirmishing, resulting in a loss of seven or eight men wounded, the enemy retired towards another ridge, on which the Russians appeared in force, and extended themselves so as to overlap the left wing of the British forces, which, therefore, fell back upon the Bulganak, and in that position camped for the night—if lying on the ground without rugs, blankets, or tents, on a cold dewy September night, can be called "camping." At dawn on the 20th the troops rose, chilled with wet, and shivering, sopped through and through by the heavy dews, and formed front whilst the sappers were levelling the banks of the river to get the artillery over. The march forward was over a series of rolling ridges, the French following a good road near the sea-shore, and supported by the fleet. At last the final ridge was topped, and the river Alma, with its range of terraced hills on the other side, crowned by the Russian troops and batteries, broke into view.

The Russian right wing was more strongly fortified with batteries and redoubts than the left wing and centre, as the ascent of the heights there was not so steep, but cut up into terraces. The centre and right wing, on the other hand, was protected by the extremely steep character of the ascent; and thus the French would have had a far harder task than the British wing to accomplish had they not been supported by the fleet. From these heights and terraces the Russian artillery swept the approaches to and from the Alma, which, though generally fordable, was rendered difficult of passage

by its steep and rugged banks, the willows alongside which had been cut down so as to deprive the allies of any shelter from the fire that swept the plain. At the extreme right of the Russian army, where the ascent was more gradual, and was the key of the position, there were two strong redoubts and a series of trenches. This strong position was held by 45,000 to 50,000 men, extending along a line of some two miles in length.

The action was commenced by a movement of General Bosquet's Zouaves, who gradually crept up the crags and rocks bordering the mouth of the Alma and the sea-shore, in which operation they were supported by the fleet, which opened fire on the Russians with good effect, and by a movement of General Canrobert at the critical moment when the French troops had gained the summit, and were struggling for their foothold on the precipitous acclivities. The fire of the Russians was tremendous; but the Zouaves, taking advantage of every rock and stone, swarmed up the heights in loose order, and gradually gained on the enemy. At this moment—about half-past twelve—the order was given for the whole line to advance. As preconcerted, the French engaged the enemy's centre, whilst the British troops proceeded to do their share of the day's work, which, it had been intended, was to turn the Russian right as the French had turned the left wing. Both forces advanced at the double-quick, under cover of the artillery fire, but sorely galled by the enemy's fire, which swept through their ranks like hail, and rendered any species of formation almost an impossibility. The French troops, however, succeeded in gaining possession of the first lines of the Russians, who had established themselves in the gardens and vineyards between the river and the hills, and soon succeeded in pushing them over the slopes of the hills, and driving them on to the plateaus above; General Bosquet's Zouaves, at the same time, pressing on their left wing and doubling them up. They did not make a long stand on the plateau; and when Marshal St. Arnaud sent his second line forward to the assistance of the first, the Russians fell back in disorder.

In the meantime the British forces had crossed the river, in the face of a tremendous fire, in front of the village of Bouliak; but the Russians being in such force at this point, and having so arranged their fire as to make a flank movement an operation of time and extreme danger, Lord Raglan decided upon a bold attack straight upon the works which the Russians had so carefully fortified their position with against any front attack. This was the hottest part of the battle, but it was conducted with the same success as the French movements; so that, by half-past three, the Russian army was cut in two and thrown back upon Baghtche-Serai and Belbek. The whole battle therefore lasted only three hours: in three hours the allied forces had taken the position the Russians had spent three weeks in fortifying. The loss of the British troops was about 2,000 killed and wounded, and that of the French 1,500; whilst the Russian losses amounted to about 6,000 killed, wounded, and prisoners, among whom were Major-Generals Karganoff and Shokanoff. The Russian losses would have been much greater had the allies possessed more and better-mounted cavalry. As it was, however, by 6 P.M. they encamped on the very ground the Russians bivouacked on.

The consternation that reigned in Sebastopol when the news of Prince Mentschikoff's defeat arrived there, and the measures taken to resist the invaders, will be described hereafter. The immediate result was the sinking of a number of ships across the mouth of the port, in a line from Fort Constantine to Fort Alexander; two powerful booms, in addition, having been thrown across from Fort Catherine to Fort Mentschikoff; whilst within this second line of defence, seven or eight sail-of-the-line had been keeled over so as to let the guns sweep the land approaches north of the harbour, that being the side which the Russians expected to be attacked, and on the defence of which they at first concentrated all their energies, Prince Mentschikoff having abandoned all idea of defending the second line of defence he had at first chosen, that of the river Katcha, which presented even better means of resistance than the Alma.

The road to Sebastopol was then quite open to the allies; Prince Mentschikoff having retreated with the utmost precipitation, and encamped his troops in the plains of Balaklava, on the south side of Sebastopol. He confidently expected that the allies would commence their operations on the north side of the town, for it was in reality the weakest part. Such, also, had

been the intention of the allies on quitting Varna; but it was found that the enemy's cannon from the outworks, protecting the citadel of Sievernaia, commanded the tract between the fortress and the river Belbek, which would have necessitated commencing operations with this river between the camp and the point of final assault. The plan was, therefore, discarded; for it was not known, at the time, that the northern defences were by far the weakest, and that the citadel, though capable of holding 10,000 men, was in a very dilapidated state. There is little doubt but that, if the allies had had the information they ought to have had, the north side of Sebastopol might have been carried by assault within a week of the battle of the Alma.

As it was, for want of this information, it was decided to make the attack on the south side of the town; and the armies having received four days' provisions, the orders were given on the 25th of September for the advance; Marshal St. Arnaud having on that day resigned his command to General Canrobert, he being in a dying state, and subjected to acute sufferings, from which death released him four days later, on September the 29th.

The plan was to circumvent Sebastopol so as to gain the harbour of Balaklava, to which the fleets had also been ordered; Prince Mentschikoff would, in consequence, have been taken between the fires of the army and the fleet—a contingency which he foresaw, and decided to guard against by withdrawing such of his forces as were not required in Sebastopol, to Baghtche-Serai. Both armies, the French and Russian, were thus advancing on each other and flanking each other without knowing it. The whole movement, on both sides, was a disgraceful one, from a military point of view. Each commander was cautious to timidity, and the allies at least badly served in respect of information. As might be imagined, the two armies crossed each other's path; whilst the British army, Lord Raglan himself really doing *éclaireur* work, was steering in a hap-hazard sort of fashion through the forests, north-west of Mackenzie's Farm. Fortunately for the British troops, the dilatoriness of the artillery, who were disinclined to advance without being covered by cavalry, delayed the progress of the troops, who had not yet emerged from the forest when the Russians, some 15,000 strong, were perceived crossing a small plain, surrounded by forests. Had the British column been the first to debouch upon this plain, its inferiority would at once have been perceived by the Russians, and probably have been cut to pieces. But as they did not know the strength of the column, they at once jumped to the conclusion that the whole of the allied forces was upon them, when Lord Raglan gave the order for the attack; and after but a show of resistance they fled, cut in two by the British column, one portion falling back upon Sebastopol, and the other continuing its way northwards, at a precipitate pace, towards Simpheropol and Baghtche-Serai, and ultimately to the banks of the Belbek.

Thus, after a series of fortuitous chances, in which scarcely any part of the programme first decided on had been carried out, the two armies had, in their mutual bewilderment, executed a *pas de deux*, terminating in a *chasse croisée*, each one taking up the position intended for the other.

In the meantime, the British fleet, under Admiral Lyons, had occupied Balaklava as a base of operations for the English army, leaving the bay of Kamiesh for the French base. The positions of the allied forces were thus reversed, the French forming the left, and the British the right wing. For the ultimate disposition of the forces, and for a description of the works and the ground round Sebastopol, we refer to our plan of Sebastopol, which conveys a much better idea of the place than any words can do. Thus, by the 27th of September, 1854, Sebastopol was invested by the allies—if leaving one side of the place open can be called an investment.



GENERAL
TODTLEBEN.

DESIGNED ON THE DEFENCES OF SEBASTOPOL

CHAPTER XVII.

FIRST BOMBARDMENT OF SEBASTOPOL; FAILURE OF THE ATTACK; BATTLE OF BALAKLAVA; BATTLE OF INKERMANN; GREAT STORM IN THE BLACK SEA; WRETCHED CONDITION OF THE BRITISH AND TURKISH FORCES.

By the 28th of September, 1854, sixty siege guns had been landed at Balaklava, and on the 3rd of October the first sod of the trenches was turned. The allies had thus practically sat down before Sebastopol.

Now Sebastopol had been fortified with a special view to an attack by sea. It was intended as an immense harbour of refuge for the protection of the Russian navies, and whilst the fortifications on the land side had not been entirely neglected, still the chief exertions had been concentrated upon the forts and batteries commanding the harbour and its approaches. The consequence was, that when the allies began their operations, the town was practically open on the southern side, upon which the attack was to be concentrated. In fact, when Prince Mentschikoff, after his defeat on the Alma, asked the engineers how soon they could construct the necessary defences, he was told not before two months. The prince then began to consider whether it would be worth while attempting to defend the southern side at all, and whether it might not be better to retire at once to the north side, which commanded the southern. But on hearing the decision of the engineers, a young officer, Lieutenant Todleben, stepped forward, and offered to construct the necessary works within two weeks, if a sufficient number of men were placed at his disposal. His offer was accepted, and the works commenced with immense energy along the whole line, and, be it remembered, under the very noses of the allies. The existing protection on the southern side of the town consisted only of a loopholed wall running from Fort Mentschikoff to the central bastion towers, and protecting the Quarantine Battery. Thence, all round the town, there were no other permanent fortifications except the Malakoff. Todleben at once proceeded to rectify the weakness of this position. The head of the inner harbour was protected by immense earthworks, and two tremendous batteries, called the Garden Battery and the Flagstaff Bastion; further batteries protecting the barracks and central bastion. This line was continued from the head of the inner harbour by a series of earthworks called the Barrack Battery and the Redan, extending to the Malakoff, which was also protected by the Korniloff Bastion and the Mamelon Redoubt; whence a further series of works extended to an inlet out of the harbour, called Careening Bay.

All these works—a new Sebastopol, in fact—were being constructed at the same time that the allies were digging their own trenches, without any molestation whatever at the hands of the Anglo-French forces; who, on the other hand, were subjected, during the whole of their operations, to the galling fire of the besieged. There was a great deal of grumbling at this inaction, that the commanders wished to do everything according to "system," and objected to the fire being returned until all the batteries could be unmasked. It was evidently intended on both sides that the struggle should be an artillery duel, in which the advantage, as far as weight of metal was concerned, was decidedly on the Russian side, with the exception of the British batteries of Lancaster guns.

Thus the works were pushed on with much energy by both parties, in spite of the great difficulties attending the transport of stores and material from Balaklava, where everything was in the greatest confusion; forming a remarkable contrast to the systematic order prevailing in the French depôt in the Kamiesh bay, which, besides, was much better protected against wind and waves than Balaklava bay. As a specimen of the disorder pervading the British administration, may be mentioned the fact, that the knapsacks of the men, which had been sent on board for carriage to Balaklava when the army made its inland march, were for the most part forgotten, and went sailing about to Constantinople or Marseilles, as the

various vessels were despatched on fresh duties. Still, in spite of these and similar drawbacks, the works were well pushed forward, not only those of offence, but also of defence, along the heights from Balaklava to the mouth of the Inkermann valley, north of which the field army of the Russians was encamped, and reinforced on the 3rd of October by General Luders and 16,000 men. At last, by the 16th, the works had so far progressed that it was determined to open fire along the whole line on the following day, immediately after daybreak; whilst Admirals Dundas and Hamelin were to co-operate with the fleet, and attack the Russian batteries at the mouth of the harbour.

At dawn, on the 17th of October, the batteries were unmasked, and the signal to commence given by the discharge of three shells from the centre of the French works. The sailors' battery was the first to obey, and soon the whole of the sixty-eight guns were disgorging their fiery contents upon the enemy's works; the roar of the Lancaster gun, and the rush of its conical shot, being, as an Irishman observed, "like the noise of an express-train that stopped at no intermadiate stations." The nature of the struggle was well described by Lord Raglan, who observed that the character of the position which the enemy occupied was not that of a fortress, but rather of an army in an entrenched camp on very strong ground, with an unlimited number of heavy guns, amply provided with gunners and ammunition.

The firing was continued, on both sides, with great energy; but it soon became apparent that the French works were too lightly armed to be able to withstand the heavy metal the Russians brought to bear upon them, and, at about ten o'clock, the powder magazine in the French battery, on the extreme right, was exploded, and completely paralysed the efforts of the French for the day. This explosion was succeeded by another, at two o'clock, of twenty tons of powder. This quite stopped the French fire, and allowed the Russians to concentrate their fire upon the British works, where they also succeeded in exploding an ammunition-waggon, heavily laden with powder. The British sailors, however, stood well to their guns, in spite of the storm of metal poured upon them, which dismounted many of their guns, including one of the Lancasters. The remaining one went on working, and succeeded in exploding a Russian magazine in the rear of the Redan, the greater part of the wall of which was entirely demolished. The contest was continued far into the night, without any decisive result being gained beyond gauging the powers of offence and defence of both parties. Whilst the land forces were being thus engaged, the fleets—numbering fourteen French, ten English, and two Turkish vessels—formed a double crescent, extending from Fort Constantine to the Quarantine Battery; but instead of opening fire simultaneously with the land batteries, they did not enter into action until half-past one, instead of at dawn, as ought to have been the case if the diversion was meant to assist the land batteries. This is, of course, all that was intended, no idea of forcing the harbour having been entertained for a moment. The excuse for the dilatoriness was that it was a calm, and that the time was lost in towing the ships into position; but, inasmuch as a calm had prevailed since the 15th, it ought not to have required any very great mental exertion to provide against the probable contingency of its being a calm on the 17th also, and getting the ships in position during the night. As it was, the whole demonstration resulted in very little damage to the Russians, but considerable confusion and loss of life on the part of the vessels. The attack was conducted, so to say, by instalments; thus leaving the Russians time to work their guns with ease. The great fault committed by the admirals consisted in their placing their vessels too far away; the result being, that whilst they themselves were unable to do much damage to the Russians, they were well within range of the enemy's guns; whereas, had they steamed-in closer, the Russian shot would have passed over the ships, or, at any rate, not have done more damage than they did. The only ships that got into close quarters were the *Agamemnon*, with Admiral Lyons on board, and the *Sanspareil*, which tackled Fort Constantine; whilst they were supported by the *Terrible* and *Sampson*, which engaged the Wasp and Telegraph batteries. But all the ships engaged suffered more or less severely, the English losses amounting to forty-four killed and 266 wounded, and those of the French to thirty-four killed and 200 wounded. The Russian losses,



during the naval engagement, amounted to 500 killed and wounded, Admiral Korniloff being amongst the former, and Admiral Nakhimoff amongst the latter.

Thus, whatever, may have been the courage and individual bravery of the men and officers, the 17th of October resulted practically in a repulse all round. It became quite evident that the allies' weight and quantity of metal would have to be largely increased, and that the chances of a successful assault had been reduced to a minimum by the energy with which the Russians had strengthened their lines.

"This repulse had a great effect upon the garrison and forces of Sebastopol; and when the fire was recommenced on the 18th, they showed that the lesson of the previous day had not been thrown away by the increased accuracy of their fire, the range having been efficiently ascertained. The cannonade was, however, less effective than it might have been, in consequence of the French not yet having repaired their batteries, and of a want of ammunition. The Russians, however, continued, with undiminished energy, to pour their fire upon the works of the allies, and began seriously to reconnoitre the port of Balaklava and the state of the lines around it. Thus, on the 20th of October, General Semiakin advanced along the right bank of the Tchernaya to the village of Kamara; but withdrew on the approach of the English troops. The same night a successful sortie upon the French trenches was executed, and eight mortars and eleven guns spiked; whilst on the next night an English patrol was attacked in front of the trenches, and its commander, Lord Dunkellin, made prisoner. General Semiakin's report was considered satisfactory; and between the 23rd and 24th, over 10,000 Russians, under General Liprandi, crossed the Tchernaya, and gradually approached the Turkish redoubts on the heights protecting Balaklava on the north-east."—A glance at our plan of Sebastopol and Balaklava, will show at once, and plainly, that the line of the allies in this direction was too extended, too weakly held, and insufficiently supported, the real defences not commencing before the French lines on the plateau dominating the valley of the Tchernaya and the north-western portion of the Balaklava plain. The position was thus peculiarly open to a flank attack from the village of Kamara and it was here that General Liprandi determined to try to break through the line of Tunisian redoubts, and swoop down upon Balaklava, along the Baidar road, with one portion of his forces—his left wing—whilst engaging the centre with his right wing. On the night from the 24th to the 25th of October Liprandi made all his necessary dispositions, and before dawn crept up, under cover of a dense mist, from Tchergoum to Kamara. Here there was a delay in the Russian advance, caused by a diversity of opinion amongst the Russian commanders—one party advocating a movement forward, in force, upon the British position, and simply masking the Tunisian batteries: the other insisting that these batteries must first be taken. The latter counsel prevailed, and, at half-past six, the attack commenced. Advice of the appearance of the Russians was sent off to Lords Lucan and Raglan and Sir Colin Campbell, who at once set about making the necessary arrangements to defend the position; and two batteries of artillery, under Captains Barker and Maude, with a detachment of Scot's Greys, were sent forward towards the redoubts 2, 3, and 4. By this time the Russians were swarming over the plain, and brought their 12-pounders speedily to bear on Maude and Barker's batteries with such effect, that the British artillery—Captain Maude being dangerously wounded by a shell—was obliged to fall back, the Scot's Greys accompanying them. The Russians then, disregarding the fire from the French mortar-battery, on the edge of the plateau south-east of the English head-quarters, advanced in five close columns, preceded and flanked by swarms of Cossacks, upon the Tunisian redoubts. The garrisons of these redoubts were formed exclusively of Tunisians, with one or two English gunners, and were quite panic-stricken when they saw the overwhelming forces marshalled against them. After one or two harmless volleys, the men in the redoubt No. 1 scrambled out of the battery as fast as they could, whilst the Russians scrambled in, and turned the guns—six 12-pounders, which the panic-stricken Africans forgot to spike in their hurry to escape—upon redoubt No. 2. Here the garrison did not wait for an attack; but abandoned their guns before the Russians entered the works. They were followed by the men of No. 3, and, after a somewhat better resistance, by

those of No. 4. The guns in these last three batteries had been spiked, however; whilst Barker's battery, which had again been pushed forward, was replying to the Russian fire from No. 1. Such of the garrison as escaped then re-formed to the right and left of the 93rd Highlanders, posted in front of No. 4 battery, before the village of Kadikoi.

The position at this juncture was as follows: the Russian cavalry and artillery, backed by the redoubts, and a large body of infantry occupying the Kamara gorge, were holding the Tchernaya and side of the Balaklava plain, ready to swoop down, with a flank movement, upon the port of Balaklava. To counteract this movement, the British and French forces at the immediate disposal of the allies, consisted only of the 93rd Highlanders, and the heavy cavalry and the light brigade, under the command of Earls Lucan, Cardigan, and Brigadier-General Scarlett.

The position was thus highly critical; the batteries of Sebastopol were pounding away with redoubled vigour; the extreme right of the defence line was seriously threatened; and there were, besides, reasons for the belief that an attack might also be made on the left wing, at the mouth of the Tchernaya. Orders were therefore sent to Captain Tatham, of the *Simoom*, who commanded the port of Balaklava, to get the transports ready for sea, and make ready to defend the head of the harbour with the frigates *Wasp* and *Diamond*. Nor even after the battle was over was it considered that the danger had passed away; and during the whole night preparations were made to evacuate the place. The commissariat shipped its cash, and much of the stores and ammunition was re-embarked.

Things were looking thus serious when the Russian cavalry advanced, supported by their artillery in very great strength, and, dividing into two columns as they crossed the plain, attacked the 93rd Highlanders, front and flank, with the one, and the heavy cavalry, under the Earl of Lucan and Brigadier-General Scarlett, with the other. The attack on the 93rd was frustrated by a judicious withdrawal behind the crest of the hill, out of range of the enemy's artillery, until the charge of the Russian cavalry was made upon the right flank, where the Tunisian troops had fallen back before the artillery fire of the Russians. Then, however, the grenadiers of the 93rd, under Captain Ross, wheeled upon them, and, well supported by the fire of the marine artillery battery, forced them to retire. Meanwhile, the bulk of the Russian cavalry, two regiments of Hussars, advanced steadily in two lines, four deep, and mounted the ridge of the hill that kept them concealed from Scarlett's heavy brigade. On gaining the crest, they closed up, and swept down on the British lines in a semicircle, with the intention of folding up the British cavalry in its embrace; but they were met with such impetuosity, that, after a short struggle, their first line was broken through by the Scot's Greys and the Enniskillen dragoons, who then swept on, and also penetrated the second line. But the number of the Russians was too great, and they were being rapidly outflanked, when the second British line, composed of the 1st Royal Dragoons, the 4th Irish Dragoons, and the 5th Dragoon Guards, was launched against them with complete success. The Russian lines broke and dispersed precipitately across the hills and the high-road, till they gained the shelter of their batteries, the fire of which prevented any further pursuit on the part of the British cavalry.

The Russian attack had thus been repulsed at all points; and they now doubled back on their own lines, still keeping redoubts 1 and 2 in great force. Meantime, the Duke of Cambridge and Sir George Cathcart had descended into the plain with two divisions of infantry, supported by the French division and the Chasseurs d'Afrique. No movement was, however, made on either side, each expecting the other, apparently, to attack, and contenting themselves with a desultory cannonade. At last the Russians advanced from Kamara upon the British right, which gave the signal for the commencement of those remarkable orders which seemed to show that the head-quarters had completely lost their senses; for, whilst the Russians were steadily advancing, the field battery posted on the right flank of the 93rd was ordered to withdraw, and take up a position to the extreme left. Incomprehensible as the order was, they were preparing to obey, when Sir Colin Campbell rode up to enquire what they were doing. The officer told him of the orders he had received, but at once offered to disregard head-quarters if Sir Colin Campbell would undertake the responsibility. This Sir Colin at once did,



and the battery continued to render effective service until the position was still further strengthened by the advance of the Duke of Cambridge, Sir George Cathcart, and General Canrobert, with their divisions.

On this demonstration taking place, the Russians retired, and re-formed at the entrance of the gorges leading into the Tchernaya valley, and under cover of redoubts 1 and 2, forming a treble line of artillery, cavalry, and infantry. Lord Raglan, on seeing this, and imagining that the Russians were about to retreat and take the captured guns with them, sent the following order by Captain Nolan to the Earl of Lucan:

"Lord Raglan wishes the cavalry to advance rapidly to the front, to follow the enemy, and try to prevent the enemy carrying away the guns. A troop of horse artillery may follow; French cavalry is on your right.—Immediate.

"RICHARD AIRY."

When Lord Lucan received this order he was quite bewildered, and observed that there must be an error somewhere. To which Captain Nolan retorted, that they were Lord Raglan's orders, and that the cavalry was to attack immediately. Hereupon Lord Lucan plaintively enquired where they were to go, and what guns they were to take? Captain Nolan replying contemptuously, as he pointed towards the concentrated enemy, "There, my lord, is your enemy, and there are *our* guns." Lord Lucan made no reply, but communicated the order to the Earl of Cardigan, commanding the light brigade. Lord Cardigan remonstrated; but Lord Lucan, saying that he agreed with him, replied that the order must be obeyed. Lord Cardigan then formed his men into four squadrons, composed of the 13th Light Dragoons, 17th Lancers, 4th Light Dragoons, and 11th Hussars, with the 8th Hussars forming a support. They advanced slowly across the Woronzoff road, till the bugles sounded the charge, and, in the face of an overwhelming fire, dashed on to the enemy's guns, and sabring the artillerymen till they were driven back by the plunging fire of the infantry in the rear, whilst both flanks were cut up by the cross-fire of the batteries on either side. With great difficulty they at last managed to extricate themselves by twos and threes, still harassed by the enemy's fire, and pursued by the cavalry. Not one would have escaped had not the 8th Hussars and the Chasseurs d'Afrique fallen upon the Russian Lancers and checked the pursuit, until they were still further supported in their retreat by the heavy cavalry brigade, despatched by Lord Lucan for the purpose.

Thus began and ended the celebrated charge of the light brigade at Balaklava, which, not lasting more than half an hour, entailed a loss of 300 men and officers (among whom was Captain Nolan), out of a total of 680 who went into action. In spite of all that has been written and said regarding this action, the responsibility for it has never yet been satisfactorily settled upon any one—one of the chief actors, Captain Nolan, having been killed at the outset. It must, however, be remembered, that there was a bitter feud between Lords Cardigan and Lucan, and that the latter publicly stated that he never, on any one occasion, allowed himself, directly or indirectly, to remark upon any act of Lord Cardigan, so as to avoid, as he succeeded in doing during the whole time he was under his command, all altercation with him. There is no doubt but that the terms on which Lord Cardigan, Lord Lucan, and Captain Nolan were with each other, were such as to prevent either from taking any course of action which might lay him open to a reproach of cowardice from the other. Thus, to satisfy a personal point of honour and pride between themselves, all three contributed to the massacre of 300 men, by the literal obedience to an order which admitted of a discretionary interpretation; for it must be remembered, whilst Lord Raglan's order was to try to prevent the enemy carrying away the guns, at the time it was received they were already practically carried away, and in possession of the whole Russian army.

The result of the whole action was, that the Russians obtained possession of redoubts 1 and 2 and the heights commanding Balaklava plain, thus forcing the allies to draw in their lines to the precipitous heights immediately confining the harbour. This, however, entailed the loss of the road leading from Balaklava to the trenches, and rendered the position generally so insecure, that Lord Raglan would not risk leaving the ships, or more of the stores than necessary for immediate use, within the port, but ordered them to anchor outside—an arrangement which

led to the immense destruction of stores and shipping on the 14th November.

The attack on Balaklava, and the success gained by the Russians in keeping their ground, capturing some of the artillery, and forcing the allies to draw in their lines, encouraged them to renew their offensive operations. They had discovered the weak points in the position of the allied forces, and determined to take advantage of it to the best of their power; and, on the morning following the battle of Balaklava, the fire from the town was conducted with redoubled energy, exploding the magazine in the chief French battery, and silencing several guns on the British right. As soon as this was accomplished, a strong force was seen issuing from the works near the Malakoff, strongly supported by cavalry and artillery, whilst a second body was forming at the head of the harbour, the object of these movements evidently being an attack upon General De Lacy Evans's division. They came on preceded by a cloud of skirmishers, and brought their artillery to bear upon Evans's right flank; but the British division rapidly forming front, and being protected on their right by a movement of General Bosquet and the Duke of Cambridge, whilst their left was supported by a regiment of rifles from Sir George Cathcart's division, and a couple of guns from Sir George Brown's, their artillery was forced to withdraw by the eighteen pieces brought to bear upon them, and which, then opening fire on the columns of infantry, forced them to retreat in the utmost disorder, being pursued by the 30th and 95th regiments almost to the very head of the harbour. The whole action did not last much more than an hour, entailing a loss of about 100 killed and wounded on the British side, whilst the Russians left 130 dead alone on the field. Their loss in wounded would, therefore, have been some 400 or 500 men, besides 80 prisoners, amongst whom, curiously enough, was the officer who had captured Lord Dunkellin.

This sortie of the garrison, combined with the attack the day before on Balaklava, though successfully repulsed, did not tend to reassure Lord Raglan and his staff as to the safety of the British landing-place, as the vessels were still obliged to anchor outside the harbour, involving much loss and suffering both to those on board and to the invalids on shore, who could not be got off. Meanwhile the Russian commanders had gradually matured their plans, which comprehended for their object an investment of the investors. General Liprandi was busily entrenching himself with his troops on the heights of Kamara, and completely commanded the Balaklava plain and the lower road from the port to the trenches, pushing their lines up to the sea-shore, and establishing heavy batteries there, which seriously threatened the extreme right of the British line of defence.

Whilst Liprandi was thus strengthening the Russian left, reinforcements arrived on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd of November from Bessarabia, under Generals Dannenberg and Soimonoff, and were poured into the Russian camp on the heights north-east of the mouth of the Tchernaya, and north of the head of the harbour. These movements were conducted on a scale that enabled the allies to form a strong idea that a fresh attack in force was contemplated, but no extra precautions were taken. Not even the pickets were strengthened, nor any order issued enjoining greater attention.

At eleven o'clock on the night of the 4th to the 5th of November, the bells of Sebastopol all began ringing, and the chants of the men gathered together for divine service could be distinctly heard in the allied lines. These unusual sounds ceased a little before 2 A.M., and were succeeded in about an hour by the rumbling of wheels, and other signs indicative of the movement of large bodies of troops. The men on guard in the various pickets reported these events to their officers; but no notice was taken of them, the repulse which the Russians had suffered a few days back precluding, in their opinion, any likelihood of an attack in this direction. Before dawn, however, under cover of a thick fog, strong columns of infantry came upon the advanced pickets on the right of the position, and slowly drove them in, every foot of ground being tenaciously disputed. The alarm soon spread throughout the camp that the Russians were attacking in force, and the 2nd division, under General Pennefather, and the light division, under Lieutenant-General Sir George Brown, were sent to the front of the attacked position as soon as possible, whilst Sir George Cathcart, with the 4th division, was brought to bear



upon the front and right of the attack, and generally supported by the rest of the divisions as they could be brought up. The Russians, however, poured on in overwhelming numbers, supported by a fierce fire from their own works and the ships in the harbour, which had been brought up for the purpose. They gradually gained ground, and made a determined assault upon the extreme left, and succeeded in taking four guns, which they were, however, forced to relinquish upon an attack of the 88th and 77th regiments. At all points of the attack the contending forces swayed backwards and forwards, whilst Liprandi and Prince Gortchakoff made a diversion towards Balaklava, and 5,000 of the garrison of Sebastopol made a sortie, and fell upon two of the French batteries near the Flagstaff Bastion. For a long time the victory was doubtful. Sir George Cathcart, with a few companies of the 66th, descended into the valley, and charged the full force of the Russians in a narrow ravine, the heights of which were literally lined with Russian troops; but, whilst trying to disentangle his men, was shot dead through the heart. At last, all fears of a serious flank attack by Liprandi having been dispelled, the French troops, brought up by Generals Bosquet and Canrobert, fell upon the Russian left, and, attacking it with an irresistible energy at the point of the bayonet, succeeded in turning the fortunes of the day, and at last forced the Russians to retreat, leaving close upon 5,000 dead on the field, out of a force of at least 45,000 men, who had been thus signally repulsed by 14,500 of the allied troops, 6,000 of which were French. The losses of the British troops amounted to 2,400, killed and wounded, among the former being Generals Cathcart, Goldie, and Strangways; the French losses were 1,726, killed and wounded, General de Lourmel being amongst the dead, and General Canrobert himself slightly wounded. The Russians lost General Soimonoff, who was shot through the body, and died soon after.

Thus ended the great battle of Inkermann, disastrous to both sides alike. The Russians, as well as the allies, were equally disheartened, and both sides feared a renewal of the struggle. Another such attack, conducted by fresh men, before the allies could have recovered from the blow dealt on the 5th of November, would most likely have resulted in the siege being raised.

By this time the British forces had dwindled down to about 14,000 men; and it became clear that they alone could not hope to hold the positions at the head of the harbour, and the mouth of the Tchernaya, against another such attack as that of the 5th of November; and, consequently, the care of the position was handed over to the French, who had received reinforcements, and at once proceeded to construct those defences which the English had neglected either from want of men or want of will at headquarters. At the same time, it was agreed that the Flagstaff Bastion, which had hitherto been regarded as the key of the town, was nothing of the sort, but that the Malakoff was the true key; and that it was from that side that an assault would have to be made upon the town. It was also universally acknowledged that the artillery at the disposal of the allies was insufficient in quantity and weight, and that the works would have to be pushed much further forward before a successful attack could be carried out.

Meantime a worse enemy than the Russians was approaching—winter, with its storms, tempests, and snows, against which the British troops, at least, were quite unprovided, owing to bad management on all sides. During the whole of the siege, for instance, *green* coffee-berries were served out to the men in the trenches. Cases of lemons, sent out for scurvy cases, were left unpacked in the stores to rot away; and, in short, all the sanitary and commissariat arrangements were so execrable and thoroughly disgraceful, that during the whole war, whilst only 40,000 were killed in battle or died of their wounds, 120,000 were killed by disease, starvation, and neglect. The misery occasioned by this neglect was greatly increased by the terrific storm that broke over the shores of the Black Sea nine days after the battle of Inkermann, the losses from which were increased by the orders forbidding a large portion of the fleet to enter the port of Balaklava; in consequence of which, the *Prince*, with a cargo of stores for the troops, worth £185,000, was dashed to pieces on the rocks, and only six saved out of a crew of 150 men. Altogether, more than twenty vessels were lost with 2,000 hands, and cargoes amounting to nearly £2,000,000. The gale rose towards daylight on the 14th, and by 7 A.M. had increased in force

to a hurricane. The wind had a harsh screaming sound, increasing in vehemence as it approached, and striking everyone with horror "On it came, a mighty and strong wind; the pole broke off short in the middle, as if it were glass, and in an instant we were pressed down and half stifled by the heavy folds of the wet canvas, which beat us about the head with the greatest fury. Half breathless and blind I struggled for the door. Such a sight as met the eye! The whole head-quarters' camp was beaten flat to the earth, and the unhappy occupants were rushing through the mud in all directions in chase of their effects and clothes, or holding on by the walls of the enclosure, as they strove to make their way to the roofless and windowless barns and stables for shelter. Three marquees alone had stood against the blast—General Estcourt's, Sir John Burgoyne's, and Major Pakenham's. The general had built a cunning wall of stones around his marquee, but ere noon it had fallen before the wind, and the major's shared the same fate much earlier in the day. Next to our tent had been the marquee of Captain de Morel, aide-de-camp to the Adjutant-General Estcourt. It lay fluttering on the ground, and as I looked, the canvas seemed animated by some great internal convulsion—a mimic volcano appeared to be opening beneath it, and its folds assumed the most fantastic shapes, tossing wildly about in the storm. The phenomenon was speedily accounted for by the apparition of the gallant owner fighting his way out desperately against the wind, which was bent on tearing his very scanty covering from his person; and at last he succeeded in making a bolt of it, and scampered through the mud to the huts. * * * Right before us the camp of the Chasseurs d'Afrique presented an appearance of equal desolation and misery. Their little *tentes d'abri* stood for a few minutes, but at last the poles snapped, and they were involved in the common ruin.

"Woe betide the Russians had they come on that day, for, fiercer than the storm, and stronger than all its rage, the British soldier would have met and beaten their teeming battalions. The cry was, all throughout this dreadful day, 'Let us get at the town; better far that we should have a rush at the batteries, and be done with it, than stand here to be beaten by the storm.' Scenes of wretchedness met the eye. The guard tents were down; the late occupants huddled together under the side of a barn, their arms covered with mud, lying where they had been thrown down from the 'pile' by the wind. The officers of the guard had fled to the commissariat stores near Lord Raglan's, and found there partial shelter. Inside the commissariat yard, overturned carts, dead horses, and groups of shivering men, were seen — not a tent standing. Mr. Cooksley had to take refuge amongst his stores, and was no doubt glad to find it, even amid salt pork and rum puncheons. Nearer to us Hussar horses were dead and dying with cold.

"With chattering teeth and shivering limbs, each man looked at his neighbour. Lord Raglan's house, with the smoke of its fires steaming away from the chimneys, and its white walls standing out freshly against the black sky, was, indeed, 'the cynosure of neighbouring eyes.' Our generals' marquees were as incapable of resisting the hurricane as the bell-tents of the common soldiers. Lord Lucan was seen, for hours, sitting up to his knees in sludge, amid the wreck of his establishment, meditative as Marius amid the ruins of Carthage. Lord Cardigan was sick on board his yacht, in the harbour of Balaklava. Sir George Brown was lying, wounded, on board the *Agamemnon*, off Kamiesch Bay. General Evans, sick and shaken, was on board the *Sanspareil*, off Balaklava. General Bentinck, wounded, was on board the *Caradoc* at Constantinople, on his way to England. The Duke of Cambridge, sick and depressed, was passing an anxious time of it in the *Retribution*, off Balaklava, in all the horrors of that dreadful scene at sea. But General Pennefather, Sir R. England, Sir J. Campbell, Brigadier Adams, Brigadier Buller—in fact, all the generals and colonels and officers in the field—were just as badly off as the meanest private. The only persons whose tents weathered the gale, as far as I could hear, were Mr. Romaine, deputy judge-advocate-general; Lieutenant-Colonel Dickson, Royal Artillery, and Captain Woodford. The first had, however, pitched his tent cunningly within the four walls of an outhouse, and secured it by guys and subtle devices of stone-work. They were hospitable spots, those tents—oases in the desert of wretchedness; many a poor half-frozen wanderer was indebted,

almost for life, to the shelter he there received. Now and then a cruel gleam of sunshine absolutely shot out of a rift in the walls of clouds, and rendered the misery of the scene more striking. Gathered up, as we were, under the old wall, we could not but think, with anxious hearts, of our fleet at sea—of our transports—of Balaklava and the Katcha—of the men in the trenches and on picket. Alas! we had too much reason for our anxiety. Towards ten o'clock matters were looking more hopeless and cheerless than ever, when a welcome invitation came through the storm for us to go over to the shelter of a well-protected tent. Our first duty was to aid the owner in securing the pole with a 'fish' of stout spars. Then we aided in passing out a stay from the top of the pole to the wall in front, and, in a short time afterwards, a cup of warm tea was set before each of us, provided by some inscrutable chemistry; and, with excellent ration-biscuit and some butter, a delicious meal—as much needed as it was quite unexpected—was made by my friends and myself, embittered only by the ever-recurring reflection, 'God help us: what will become of the poor fellows in the trenches and on the hill!' And there we sat, thinking and talking of the soldiers and of the fleet, for hour after hour, while the wind and rain blew and fell, and gradually awakening to the full sense of the calamity with which Providence was pleased to visit us. Towards twelve o'clock the wind, which had been blowing from the south-west, chopped round more to the west, and became much colder. Sleet fell first, and then came a snow-storm, which clothed the desolate landscape in white, till the tramp of men seamed it with trails of black mud. The mountain ranges assumed their winter garb. French soldiers, in great depression of spirit, flocked about our head-quarters, and displayed their stock of sorrow to us. Their tents were all down, and blown away—no chance of recovering them; their bread was *tout mouillé et gâté;* their rations gone to the dogs. The African soldiers seemed particularly miserable. Poor fellows! several of them we found dead next morning, outside the lines of our cavalry camp. We lost several men also. In the light division, four men were 'starved to death' by the cold; two men in the 7th Fusileers, one man in the 23rd, and one man of the 2nd battalion Rifle Brigade, were found dead. About forty of the horses, also, died from the cold and wet. But the day was going by, and there was no prospect of any abatement of the storm. At two o'clock, however, the wind went down a little, and the intervals between the blast of the gale became more frequent and longer. We took advantage of one of these halcyon moments to trudge away to the wreck of the tent, and, having borrowed another pole, with the aid of a few men we got it up, all muddy and filthy, and secured it, as far as possible, for the night; but it was evident that no dependence could be placed on its protection, and the floor was a mass of dirt and puddle, and the bed and clothes dripping wet. I mention my own tent only, because what was done in one case was done in others; and, towards evening, there were many tents re-pitched along the lines of our camps, though they were but sorry resting-places. Although the tents stood, they flapped about so much, and admitted such quantities of snow, rain, and filth from outside, that it was quite out of the question to sleep in them. What was to be done? Suddenly it occurred to us that there might be room in the barn, used as a stable for the horses of Lord Raglan's escort of the 8th Hussars; and we at once waded across the sea of nastiness which lay between us and it, tacked against several gusts, fouled one or two soldiers in a different course, grappled with walls and angles of outhouses, nearly foundered in big horse-holes, bore sharp up round a corner, and anchored at once in the stable. What a scene it was! The officers of the escort were crouching over some embers of a wood-fire; along the walls were packed some thirty or forty horses and ponies, shivering with cold, and kicking and biting with spite and bad humour. The Hussars, in their long cloaks, stood looking gloomily on the flakes of snow which drifted in at the doorway or through the extensive apertures in the shingle roof. Soldiers of different regiments crowded about the warm corners, and Frenchmen of all arms, and a few Turks, joined in the brotherhood of misery, lighted their pipes at the scanty fire, and sat close for mutual comfort. The wind blew savagely through the roof, and through chinks in the mud walls and window-holes. The building was a mere shell, as dark as pitch, and smelt, as it ought to, an honest, unmistakable stable—improved by a dense pack of moist and mouldy soldiers. And yet it seemed to us

a palace! Life and joy were inside, though melancholy Frenchmen would insist on being pathetic over their own miseries—and, indeed, they were many and great—and, after a time, the eye made out the figures of men, huddled up in blankets, lying along the wall. They were the sick, who had been in the hospital marquee, and who now lay, moaning and sighing, in the cold; but our men were kind to them, as they always are to the distressed, and not a pang of pain did they feel which care and consideration could dissipate. A staff-officer, dripping with rain, came in to see if he could get any shelter for draughts of the 33rd and 41st regiments, which had just been landed at Kamiesch; but he soon ascertained the hopelessness of his mission, so far as our quarters were concerned. The men were packed into another shed, 'like herrings in a barrel.'

"Having told us, 'There is terrible news from Balaklava; seven vessels lost, and a number on shore at the Katcha,' and thus made us more gloomy than ever, the officer went on his way, as well as he could, to look after his draughts. In the course of an hour an orderly was sent off to Balaklava with despatches from head-quarters; but, after being absent three-quarters of an hour, the man returned, fatigued and beaten, to say he could not get his horse to face the storm. In fact, it would have been all but impossible for man or beast to make headway through the hurricane. We sat in the dark till night set in—not a soul could stir out. Nothing could be heard but the howling of the wind, the yelp of wild dogs driven into the enclosures, and the shrill neighing of terrified horses. At length a candle-end was stuck into a horn lantern, to keep it from the wind: a bit of ration pork, and some rashers of ham, done over the wood-fire, furnished an excellent dinner, which was followed by a glass or horn of hot water and rum; then a pipe; and, as it was cold and comfortless, we got to bed—a heap of hay on the stable floor, covered with our clothes, and thrown close to the heels of a playful grey mare, who had strong antipathy to her neighbours, a mule and an Arab horse, and spent the night in attempting to kick in their ribs. Amid smells, and with incidents impossible to describe, or to allude to more nearly, we went to sleep, in spite of a dispute between an Irish sergeant of hussars, and a Yorkshire corporal of dragoons, as to the comparative merits of light and heavy cavalry, with digressions respecting the capacity of English and Irish horseflesh, which, by the last we heard of them, seemed likely to be decided by a trial of physical strength on the part of the disputants. Throughout the day there had been very little firing from the Russian batteries. Towards evening, all was silent except the storm. In the middle of the night, however, we were all awoke by one of the most tremendous cannonades we had ever heard, and, after a time, the report of a rolling fire of musketry came down on the wind. Looking eagerly in the direction of the sound, we saw the flashes of the cannon through the chinks in the roof, each flash distinct by itself, just as a flash of lightning is seen in all its length and breadth through a crevice in a window-shutter. It was evident there was a sortie on the French lines. The cannonade lasted for half-an-hour, and gradually waxed fainter. In the morning, we heard the Russians had sallied out, from their comfortable warm barracks, on the French in the trenches, but that they had been received with an energy which quickly made them fly back again to the cover of their guns. It is said that the French actually got into a part of the Russian lines in chasing their troops back, and spiked some of the guns within an earthwork battery. In Balaklava, the harbour was lined with the *débris* from the wrecks outside; trusses of compressed hay, pieces of timber, large beams of wood, masts and spars of all sizes, formed large natural rafts, which lay stranded by the beach, or floated about among the shipping. The old tree which stood at the guard-house, at the entrance to the town, was torn up, and in its fall it had crushed the house, so as to make it a mass of ruins. The soldiers of the guard were doing their best to make themselves comfortable within the walls. The fall of this tree, which had seen many winters, coupled with the fact that the verandahs and balconies of the houses, and a row of very fine acacia trees on the beach, were blown down, corroborates the statement so generally made by the inhabitants, that they had never seen or heard of such a hurricane in their lifetime, although there is a tradition among some, that once in thirty or forty years such visitations occur along this coast."

Henceforward, to the close of the year 1854, the war in the Crimea, on both sides,





was a war against the elements, want, and disease; the Russians themselves being but little better off than the allies. Worst off of all, however, was the Turkish contingent; and the following picture of the sufferings of these poor fellows, shows, better than anything else, to what dire straits the allies had been brought through undertaking such an enterprise as the reduction of Sebastopol, without sufficient forces or material of war.

"The men were without clothes, without food, and without shelter—literally left to die. The surgeon said, the 110 drachms of biscuit granted by our commissariat was utterly insufficient to support the men under the duties they were expected to perform. They were brought in to him all day, and day after day, dying from exhaustion, and he had nothing to give them—not even a refuge where they could pass away quietly. We descended the hill towards a good sized building—a new Greek church—the roof of which had not been quite finished, and which, with many houses, had been given up to the Turks for the use of their sick. As we came near it, two or three men were being carried in. The surgeon pointing to them, said solemnly, 'None of those poor fellows will come out alive. I have not saved a single man who has once entered that fatal building.' I asked him, had he any medicines? and he replied, pointing to two large tents covering trunks and boxes, that he had a considerable store of them. 'But they are useless,' he added; 'the men are dying of hunger, and medicine is of no avail.' His patients, when admitted, were too weak to masticate their small ration of bread, and they soon ceased to require his care. An acute kind of diarrhœa, somewhat similar to cholera, always terminated their sufferings. He said he had many times entreated our commissariat authorities to spare him a little meat of any kind, salt or fresh, with a little rum, for the use of the hospital, but in vain, so he thought they had none to give. I asked to be allowed to see his hospital; but he advised me strongly not to go inside, as the atmosphere of the place was almost poisonous. However, I pressed my request, and, with some reluctance, he advanced towards the door of the building, across which, as in Turkish houses, hung a piece of matting. He pulled this aside, and the sight that met my gaze rooted me to the ground, and made my heart sink within me. The building inside formed a square of about 100 feet, and every inch of the space was covered with Turks. Not a soul was in the place but the dead and dying. The deadly fœtid air which issued from this charnel-house, made me involuntarily shrink back from the door with loathing, and I already repented my rash wish to enter. But the surgeon had gone in, and I followed. The sickening horrors that I saw would be repulsive to dwell upon; but the principal features, which surpassed all the imaginations of Defoe or Boccaccio ever conceived, may be soon told. The building had once been used as a cholera hospital; and, before the Turks, the Russian wounded had been put there, and all died. Since the allies first took the place, the floor had never been cleaned, and it was now ankle-deep in filth of the most abominable description. The Turks lay *in* this without blankets, covering, bed or bedding. The latest comers—those nearest the door—had a wan, pinched, mournful look, in which death was plainly written. They did not speak, but raised their eyes in mute appeal as we passed. Those further in, who had been inmates of the place some three or four days, were dying fast; many were dead, and lay rigid and almost unnoticed amongst the rest. Beyond small jars of rice-water here and there, there was no food or medicine of any description in the place. At the upper end of all, my blood crept to perceive, that both the Turks that lay there, and the walls of the building, were completely covered with maggots, which crawled in all directions. While I was there, four men of the burying party entered, and began looking carefully amongst the prostrate forms. They had not long to search. Five corpses were carried out by the arms and legs, and laid upon the stones in front of the place, from whence another party bore them to their last home. Other incidents occurred, but of so harrowing and dreadful a nature that it would be impossible to mention them here. Dizzy and sick with what I had seen, I hurried into the open air. The surgeon followed me, and, in reply to some of my exclamations of horror, said the place would yet, he feared, be worse before the winter was over. I promised to see him again, and obtain a detailed account of all the sufferings of his unfor-

tunate countrymen, which he said he was most anxious to give me. But on the following day he was sent to Eupatoria, and I saw him no more, and literally had not the courage to visit the 'hospital' again."

During the rest of the months of November and December, the siege progressed without any special events of importance. The Russians continued strengthening their works, the allies advancing their parallels amidst a series of sorties and surprises that cost a good deal of life. Several changes took place in the various commands. Directly after the battle of Inkermann, the Duke of Cambridge returned home, and, soon after, Sir De Lacy Evans and Lord Cardigan resigned their commands; whilst, in the fleet, Admirals Lyons and Bruat succeeded Dundas and Hamelin. The Turkish troops, too, which had been disengaged from service in the Danubian provinces by the action of Austria, began to arrive in the Crimea at Eupatoria, the importance of which was beginning to be recognised both by the czar and the allies.

CHAPTER XVIII.

OPERATIONS OF THE FLEET IN THE BALTIC; RAIDS IN THE GULF OF BOTHNIA; BOMBARDMENT AND CAPTURE OF BOMARSUND; OPERATIONS IN THE WHITE SEA; ATTACK ON PETROPAULOWSKI; RETURN OF THE FLEETS; SIR CHARLES NAPIER'S DEFENCE.

WHILST Russia was thus being attacked in the south, a strong fleet, under Admirals Sir Charles Napier and Parseval-Deschênes, sailed for the Baltic, representing a force of 44 vessels, 2,200 guns, and 22,000 sailors and marines. Great things were expected from this imposing force, and almost still greater things from Sir Charles himself; but it was soon discovered that the nature of the Gulf of Finland, with its shoals, shallows, and intricate passages, protected by such fortresses as Sweaborg and Kronstadt, presented insuperable impediments to any effectual offensive measures by a fleet, however strong, without the support and co-operation of a large army to reduce the garrisons of the strong places, and oppose the numerous forces that the czar had called up to protect the Baltic provinces.

All this had been overlooked by the Admiralty, as well as by the public.

Both seemed to think that the allied fleets would only have to steam up the gulf, shatter the forts of Sweaborg and Kronstadt, utterly destroy the Russian navy, and completely cripple the commerce of the country at least, even if the fleets did not actually bombard and take St. Petersburg itself.

All these extravagant expectations were doomed to disappointment; it was found that Sweaborg and Kronstadt were unapproachable, and far too strong to be successfully tackled without very heavy artillery, so that the operations of the fleet were practically confined to a blockade of the various ports or the capture of Russian merchantmen. Hostilities commenced with the notification of the blockade of all Russian ports, and the despatch of an expedition up the Gulf of Bothnia, destroying all the shipping, stores, and dockyards at Brahestad and Uleaborg. At Gamla Karleby, however, the officer in command, assisted by the inhabitants and 400 men, successfully repulsed the expedition, consisting, by the way, of the *Leopard*, *Vulture*, and *Odin;* losing fifty-four men killed, 148 wounded, and twenty-two prisoners, besides a gun and a flag. *Per contra*, the loss inflicted on the Russians amounted, in the Gulf of Bothnia, to forty-six vessels afloat or on the stocks, and pitch and timber to the value of £400,000, most of it private property, and undefended; so that the Russians had some cause for triumph at the squadron being signally defeated at the only place on the gulf where a defence was made.

Meanwhile, *reconnaissances* were being made at the entrance of the Gulf of Finland; and Bomarsund, on the island of Aland, was bombarded from a distance of a mile and a-half, almost beyond range of the batteries, for seven hours. The fire was renewed on the 25th and 26th of June; but without any important results. At Hango an attack was also repulsed by the Russians,







who inflicted considerable loss on the squadron. Whilst these operations were going on at the entrance of the Gulfs of Bothnia and Finland, the fleet had steamed up to Kronstadt. The result of this visit is well described by Dr. Cottman, an American residing in St. Petersburg, and whose words will reflect the state of the Russian mind at this time. He says—

"Old Admiral Napier came up last Sunday-week, and took a look at Kronstadt, where I have been waiting a month to see a great combat, and have been disappointed, for the fleet all disappeared on Monday. I have found out there is to be no show. I paid my money at the gate, got admission, but found the principal actor sick—'Can't come to the scratch,' and the play 'is given up.' The finest fleet that ever floated passes by Riga, Revel, Sweaborg, and Kronstadt, and contents itself with a look. The days of chivalry are gone; and I must be satisfied with cheerful, happy faces, and hospitable hearths, in lieu of great battles in Russia. British valour has eked out in gasconade, detraction, and defamation of private character, and destruction of private property. The idea of terminating a war by discord in the imperial household, and jealousy betweeen the elder brothers of the imperial family! There never existed a more united or harmonious family. The Grand Duke Alexander is, according to the journals of the day, dying of hectic fever and night-sweats, when in reality he would pass freely for a beer-drinking, athletic Englishman, and, I might almost say, with an exuberance of health; and, instead of jealousy and distrust, the most cordial sympathy and devotion to each other prevail. Brothers more devoted to each other cannot be found anywhere in the private walks of life. Michael, the chief of artillery, and Nicholas, of infantry, are both very intelligent; and the devotion to their father, and the desire to execute his will, equal anything that the most exalted imagination could picture. The emperor's health and spirits have been very good for the last two months; but they both appeared to advantage the two days that the allied fleet lay off Kronstadt. The fleet lay between the imperial pavilion on the premises of the Grand Duchess Helen, at Oranienbaum, and the fortifications at Kronstadt. Thousands of persons collected on the heights of Knausa Gorkoe, and about Oranienbaum, as they said, to see Old Charley cut capers when the ball opened; but they were disappointed: this magnificently attired company declined to face the music, and left the saloon; consequently, the ball was closed before the dancing commenced, as it is rather awkward to dance without a *vis-à-vis*."

Meanwhile, summer was rapidly slipping away; and both the crews of the fleet, and the public at home, began to grumble at the "inaction" of the fleets. Something had to be done; Sweaborg and Kronstadt were, or were considered to be, unassailable; so it was determined to make another attempt on Bomarsund, which had so successfully resisted the bombardment of the 21st, 25th, and 26th of June.

The fortifications of this place were not very formidable. They consisted of a main work, faced with granite, and flanked by two towers of the same material. These works were swept by forts Nortike and Tsee, and were further supported by two or three towers built on a rocky ridge, almost surrounding the *enceinte*. The armament was 190 guns, and a garrison of 3,000 men. It would be thought that the most powerful fleet the French and English were able to put upon the Baltic would be amply sufficient to reduce this place: but it was not thought so; and 11,000 French and 1,500 British land troops were despatched to assist the fleet in its operations. These commenced on the 7th of August, with the disembarkation of the troops and the guns for the batteries, to be erected against the round towers; the French receiving Fort Tsee for their share, whilst the English laid themselves against Fort Nortike; the batteries, however, being so placed as to be able to concentrate their fire on either. On the 13th of August, fire was opened by the French battery at daybreak, but little impression was made upon the works; still, the commanding officer in the fort plainly saw that he would eventually be forced to give up the fort, and, desirous to save life, offered to capitulate. His terms, however, were not accepted; and, next day, the fort was stormed by the French, access being obtained by the lower embrasures, which were unarmed, only boarded up, and not more than six feet high above the ground. The greater part of the garrison, however, escaped to the chief fort, leaving thirty-two prisoners in the hands of the French, who had a narrow escape from being blown up, the fort having been undermined for the purpose. Fortunately for them, the fact

leaked out, and they had just time to leave it, when the mine suddenly exploded, and entirely shattered the whole building, burying a few French and native stragglers, who had delayed their departure too long, beneath its ruins.

During the night, the British forces had succeeded in establishing a battery of three 32-pounders and four howitzers within 750 yards of Fort Nortike, on which they opened fire at daybreak on the 15th. The garrison replied with great energy, but the battery continued pounding away at the tower till a breach was made, and preparations commenced for the assault, when the white flag was hoisted, and the garrison—120 men—surrendered. Meanwhile, the fleet was bombarding the rest of the works at a distance of 3,000 yards, and, on the 16th, the two forts having fallen, General Bodisco, the governor, was convinced that further resistance would only entail unnecessary and a fruitless loss of life, and surrendered with his garrison, 2,300 men, who were made prisoners of war. The fortifications were ultimately blown up on the 30th of August, and the fleets proceeded to Hango, where there were some small works which the Russians destroyed themselves, the garrison retiring to Abo, whither they were followed by a squadron under Captain Scott, who, however, contented himself with firing an occasional shot at the gun-boats and batteries protecting the place, which, moreover, was defended by a body of some 18,000 men. In the meantime, Admiral Napier had effected a *reconnaissance* off Sweaborg, but came to the conclusion, that whatever might be effected in that direction could not be accomplished that year at any rate; and thus, towards the end of October, the allied fleet steered homewards, to the intense discontent of the public in England and France; and, it may be added, to that of the crews also. The Russians and other continental nations were, of course, in high glee; Danes, Swedes and Dutchmen grinned complacently, and opined that Great Britain's naval supremacy had gone for ever; and that walls of oak were no match for walls of stone. There was much quarrelling, both in France and England, as to what might have been done; and the British government and Sir Charles Napier got so at loggerheads on the subject, that the admiral was placed on half-pay. Sir Charles defended himself against the charge of neglecting his duty, and not attacking Sweaborg, in terms anything but complimentary. His defence is contained in a letter he wrote to the *Times;* and with this letter, premising that he was succeeded in the command of the Baltic fleet by Admiral Dundas, the account of the operations in this quarter, for 1854, may be closed. Sir Charles wrote—"I send you a chart of Sweaborg and Helsingfors, and a plan of their fortifications, showing the adjacent islands and sunken rocks. Show them to any naval officer, young or old (and you must know many), and ask him if it is possible, in winter, to place buoys and beacons on those rocks and shoals; to conduct a fleet alongside the batteries of Sweaborg, having neither gun-boats nor mortar-boats to cover the approach of the vessels and boats; to place the buoys on the sunken rocks, all of which are within range of the enemy's batteries. It will require several days for this operation, and they will be under fire night and day. The Russians themselves could not navigate these seas without beacons, and they are all removed. During the time the process of buoying is going on, the fleet must be at anchor among the outer rocks. Imagine to yourself, sir, a south-west gale coming on (and in the winter, without warning), and judge what would become of your fleet and gun and mortar-boats. A great number of the former would be driven on the rocks, and the latter would either be swamped or obliged to take refuge in the enemy's harbour."

Nor were the British and French fleets more successful in any other quarter. In the White Sea they were repulsed at the few points they did attack; and suffered great losses at Petropaulowski, on the shores of Kamschatka, where the Russian commander, with 144 guns, signally repulsed the attack made upon the place by Captain Nicholson—Admiral Price having shot himself on the eve of the attack—inflicting great loss upon the allied squadron, composed of eight vessels, with 250 guns.

After the departure of the fleet from the Baltic, Bomarsund was reoccupied by the Russians, and trade carried on vigorously during the time that the ports were still free free from ice. The defences of Riga, Revel, Helsingfors, and Sweaborg, were strengthened; heavier guns despatched to protect the more accessible points, and torpedoes prepared for the coming spring campaign.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CAMPAIGN IN ANATOLIA; OPERATIONS IN THE CAUCASUS; DEFENCE OF KARS; REPULSE OF THE RUSSIANS; SUFFERINGS OF THE GARRISON; SURRENDER OF GENERAL WILLIAMS; CLOSE OF THE CAMPAIGN.

In Asia Minor, the exertions of the Turks and Circassians in revolt, under Schamyl, received such assistance as the squadron under Admiral Lyons could afford. Some 20,000 cartridges were given to Schamyl, and Suchoum Kaleh and Redout Kaleh, which were abandoned by the Russians as soon as the squadron put in an appearance, were strengthened and garrisoned by a force of 2,000 Turks each; the other points on the Russian coast, up to Gagri, also being held by Turks or Circassians.

In the interior, operations consisted, more or less, of a series of raids, conducted by Schamyl and his followers, whilst the bulk of the Turkish army remained camped before Kars, and echeloned in isolated posts of greater or lesser strength along the frontier. The army was now under the command of a series of incapable pashas, not devoid of courage and personal valour, but utterly and totally wanting in any powers of organisation and enduring enterprise. Forethought and calculation were not within the range of their mental endowments, and thus, in almost every single action, they were defeated by the Russians, who, had they had sufficient men, might have swept through Asia Minor like a tempest. As it was, they steadily gained ground, and, on the 29th of July, attacked the Turkish camp, 10,000 strong, at Karaboulah, some twenty miles from Bazejet, and utterly routed them with an immense loss. This laid the way open to Erzeroum, which the Russians occupied two days later; the garrison and most of the Moslem inhabitants flying to Trebizonde for protection. The news of this disaster induced the Turkish army before Kars to arouse itself from inaction, and advance to attack the Russians in a strong and well held position at Kuyakdere. The Turks were commanded by Mustafa Pasha, who had fought so successfully at Oltenitza, and attacked the Russian right wing with such impetuosity that, for a moment, the victory trembled in the balance. But the Russian cavalry executed a brilliant charge just at the right moment, which utterly crushed the Turks, and completely routed them. Over 3,000 were left dead on the field, and nearly the same number taken prisoners.

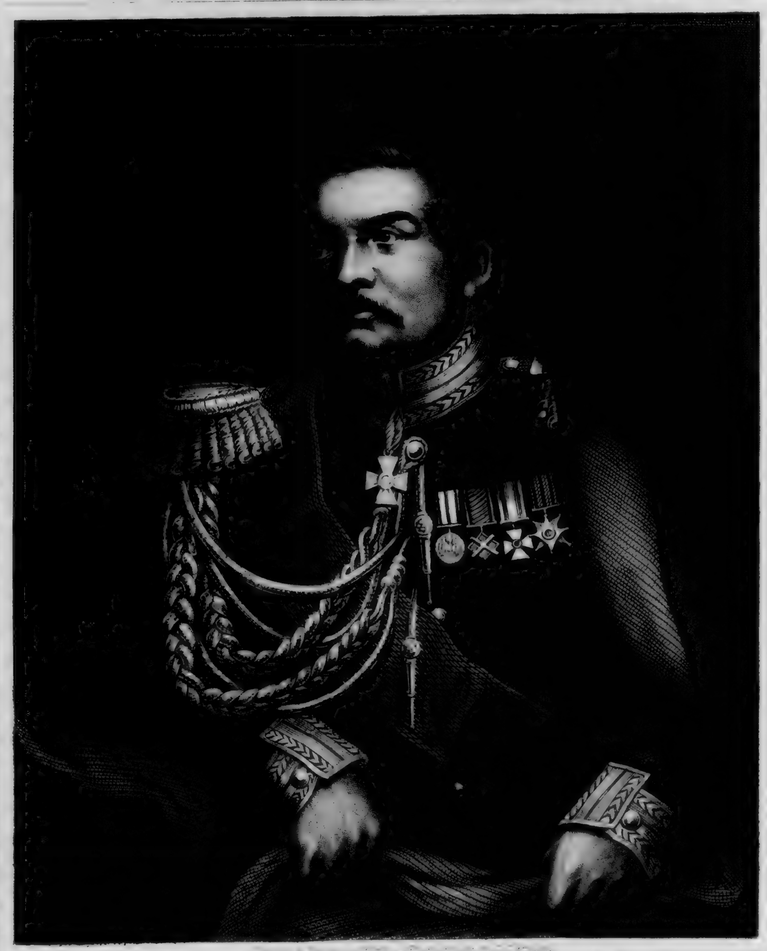
These disasters produced a profound impression upon the Turks, and reinforcements pouring in on all sides, whilst Schamyl invaded Georgia at the head of 20,000 men, they exhibited so much energy, and so decided a front, that General Bebutoff gave orders for his division to fall back upon Alexandropol and Tiflis, closely followed by the Turks, who were, however, too incapable to take any advantage of the Russian retreat. Disgusted with such dilatory, hap-hazard operations, Schamyl gave up all idea of co-operating with the Turks, and confined himself to consulting his own and his followers' immediate interests by the acquisition of as much booty as he could lay hold of; whilst the Russians continued consolidating their forces, and preparing for a thorough offensive or defensive campaign, as events might decide. Meantime, the Turkish forces were rapidly falling to pieces, and becoming more and more demoralised, till they were more of a danger and a nuisance to the country than a protection.

Matters were in this unsatisfactory state when tidings reached London of endeavours being made by the Russians to conclude an alliance with Persia, and of active negotiations with the Khans of Khiva and Bokhara. To counteract these intrigues, and stimulate the Turks to a better resistance on the Asiatic frontier of Turkey, Colonel Williams, who had been formerly (1840) engaged on the Turco-Persian Boundary Commission, and was then in Bulgaria, received orders from the Earl of Clarendon to act as commissioner for the British government in Kars, with the object of reporting on the state of the army and advising the Turkish commanders. He was accompanied by Lieutenant Teesdale and Dr. Sandwith; and ultimately received the further assistance of Mr. Churchill. After passing a couple of guns, standing in solitary glory

in the middle of the road, and a load of rammers and sponges pell-mell on the top of a waggon, abandoned by the officer who ought to have taken them on to Kars, Colonel Williams arrived at Erzeroum in the middle of September, 1854. Here the commissioners had a foretaste of what was awaiting them at Kars. There were about 600 men in garrison, whose pay was from fifteen to nineteen months in arrear; the staff itself four months in arrear; whilst in the hospital there were 1,200, chiefly wounded, and generally in a wretched state, from the want of cleanliness, proper food, and medicines. The pharmacy was lamentably deficient in drugs of any value; decoctions of various herbs forming the chief supply; and it appeared that what there was to be had was administered indiscriminately. Thus, if carbonate of iron was required in any case, some other carbonate that happened to be handy, such as carbonate of ammonia or soda, was used instead; whilst, as regarded surgical instruments, the chief supply consisted of such as are generally used when people are ushered into the world, and not when they are in danger of leaving it. But then the Turks object to serious operations, as there is an idea amongst them that a mutilated man is debarred, by the loss of his limbs, from entering Paradise; so that the patient generally prefers risking his worldly life to endangering his future bliss, a theory which the laziness of the Turkish doctors rather encourages than otherwise.

When Colonel Williams arrived at Kars, he found not only that the men's pay was from fifteen to twenty-two months in arrear, but that the army, which figured on paper as 40,000 strong, and for which number supplies were drawn, did not amount to more than 22,000 all told; that the commissariat had been charging for four okkas of barley a day for the horses, but had only given them two; that there was not more than a month's provisions or provender in store, no fuel, no money; and, finally, that the army was in debt at Kars and Erzeroum to the amount of 10,000 purses—£100,000. For all this, the Turkish governor, Zarif Mustafa Pasha, was called to account by Colonel Williams, who also reported the state of affairs to Lord Clarendon, and to the British ambassador at Constantinople, Sir Stratford de Redcliffe. But neither Zarif Mustafa nor Sir Stratford liked this inquisitive colonel, who insisted on poking his nose into all the dark corners and tortuous passages of Turkish malversation, mal-administration, and mal-everything. Zarif Mustafa objected because such conduct interfered with the interests of his pocket and the pockets of his other friends, the pashas; Sir Stratford objected because, being naturally of a pasha-logical disposition, which was intensified by his long residence amongst the original tribe, he wished to reign absolute in all matters appertaining to Turkey, and claimed a sort of monopoly in the initiation of all reforms, &c., in Turkey: in short, Sir Stratford regarded himself as the real Sultan of Turkey, and, as such, entitled to make complaints himself, and to insist on this, that, and the other, but certainly not called upon to act upon the complaints of others. In fact, such complaints as those of Colonel Williams, with his insisting, first on one thing, then on the other, were regarded by him almost as complaints made against himself; and hence Colonel Williams never received one single answer from Sir Stratford in reply to no less than fifty-four separate despatches and letters, on matters of great importance. The consequence was that Colonel Williams was forced to make a formal complaint regarding Sir Stratford's inactivity and neglect to Lord Clarendon, who at once wrote in a tone to the ambassador that at last induced him to attend to Colonel Williams's desires, and obtain from the Porte the dismissal of Zarif Mustafa, and his successor, Shukri Pasha. Colonel Williams then, by indefatigable exertions, succeeded in provisioning Kars, improving the defences, and greatly ameliorating the sanitary condition of the town. He was considerably assisted in all this by the rank of *Ferik*, which had at last been conferred upon him by the Porte, and placed him on a footing of equality with the pashas, many of whom, at Kars and Erzeroum, became deeply attached to him and young Teesdale—especially Vassif Pasha, the new mutessarif, and Kerim and Tabia Pashas.

The doings of the English commissioners at Kars and Erzeroum soon became known at Russian head-quarters, and produced considerable uneasiness there, though it was not expected that the Turks would take the offensive. Still, it was evident that the presence of the English commissioners was exercising a great influence amongst the Turks; and that any advance



of the Russian army would be met far more energetically and intelligently than during the last campaign. It was, therefore, decided to replace General Bebutoff by General Mouravieff, an officer who had greatly distinguished himself by his tactical qualities during the war in the Caucasus, under Prince Woronzoff. His appearance in the Caucasus was the signal for renewed activity on the part of the Russians, as far as the severity of the Caucasian winter would allow. Instead of relying only on their forts, columns and troops perpetually traversed the country in preconcerted movements; and with such success were these operations conducted, that Schamyl and his followers were more or less confined to their mountain fastnesses.

This renewed activity on the part of the Russians decided the British government to reinforce Colonel—or rather, as he now had become—General Williams's staff, with Lieutenant-Colonel Lake, Major Olpherts, and Captain Thompson. Between them they put both Kars and Erzeroum in an efficient state of defence, the Turks having been judiciously frightened into hard work by accounts of General Mouravieff's intentions to attack them with all the forces at his command. By the beginning of June, they succeeded in raising a force of 17,000 men; whilst Mouravieff, who had most judiciously employed his time in assuring the safety of his men, had brought up his offensive force to 28,000 infantry and 10,000 cavalry, with the proportionate amount of field-artillery, besides a siege train of heavy guns. With this force he advanced upon Kars, which the Turkish pashas wanted to abandon, or, at any rate, not to limit their whole endeavours to the defence of the place. They argued that it would ultimately be obliged to succumb, and looked upon Williams's decision to hold it as bad strategy, they preferring to let the Russians advance till they should be obliged to split up their forces, and thus present an easy prey to the attacks of the Turkish columns. The Turks, in fact, wanted to lead the Russians away from their basis of operations, and entangle them in the interior, feeling sure that Mouravieff would not receive sufficient reinforcements to cover any extended advance. Whether this view was right or wrong has been and is a disputed question. If the Turks could have been depended upon for a long and enduring resistance, the pashas were right, and General Williams wrong. But that is a very big "if;" though, at the same time, it may be laid down as an axiom, that no commander of a field army can be justified in shutting himself up in a fortress unless he is quite sure of being speedily relieved, especially when, as in the case of Kars, there is an insufficiency of provisions and ammunition. On the whole, the defence of Kars, brave as it was, can scarcely be regarded otherwise than as an error, both from a military as well as a political point of view.

On the 7th of June, Mouravieff having broken up his camp at Gumri, General Williams transferred his head-quarters from Erzeroum to Kars. This place is situated, as our engraving very well shows, at the foot of a precipitous range of rocky hills, and stretches across the gorge which cuts this range into two portions. In front of, or to the south of the town, lies a plain, in which, as our engraving shows, the Russians dug their trenches. This plain is bounded on the other side by hills, commanding the town, on which Colonel Lake erected several outworks; whilst the hills behind the town were protected by two works on each side of the gorge, called Arab Tabia and Teesdale Redoubt, the western extremity being defended by Vali Pasha Tabia. All these works were connected with the fortifications in the plain by a series of breastworks. On June the 16th, 1855, the Russians advanced, and driving in the Turkish pickets, advanced in three columns of infantry, preceded by three regiments of Cossacks, and flanked by three of dragoons, with six batteries of eight guns each. The Turkish cavalry retired till within a thousand yards of their own lines, when the Russian cavalry made a desperate rush upon them, and completely routed them, very nearly succeeding in entering the town with the fugitives, when they were checked by the artillery fire from the hill forts, and forced to fall back upon the main body, which then retired across the plain, and disappeared over the brow of the southern hills.

The Turks were highly elated with this success, which, however, was nothing more than a *reconnaissance* in force, to support, if events should turn out propitious, a sudden *coup de main*. In this they were disappointed, owing to the precautions taken by the defenders. The Russians therefore proceeded to invest the place;

and, having large sums of money at his command, Mouravieff was able to secure the service of an admirable corps of spies. On the 29th of June, they succeeded in seizing Yenikoi, where there were large stores of corn, intended for the Kars garrison, and which ought to have been within its walls instead of outside. All attempts of the Kars garrison to provide food were defeated by the Russians, who easily threw back the bodies of Bashi-Bazouks in their flash-in-the-pan sorties, and succeeded in lifting all the cattle and stores in the neighbourhood.

Meanwhile, leaving a force of eighteen battalions of infantry, three regiments of cavalry, and fifty-four guns to mask Kars, Mouravieff advanced upon Erzeroum, where he, however, speedily saw that the defences of that place were secure against a *coup de main*, and that, before advancing upon it he would be obliged to disengage his troops before Kars, which could not be done until that place had fallen. The officers, however, who were left in charge of the blockading army, thought that it would succumb to a grand assault, and advanced in dense columns soon after dawn on the 7th of August; they were allowed to approach within easy range of the guns of the Karli Tabia and Kanadagh works, when fire was opened upon them so briskly and continuously that their ranks were literally ploughed through by round shot and shell, and forced them to abandon the attack; for which, by the way, the commander was severely censured by Mouravieff when he returned from his *reconnaissance* of Erzeroum three days later, in consequence, partly, of the firm front there opposed to him, and partly on account of the news of the unsuccessful attack on the 7th.

During the month of August, the Russians did nothing but harass the garrison with *alertes* and skirmishes whilst drawing their lines closer and closer round the place, and cutting off all supplies, besides getting a train of battering guns into position to the north-west of the town, so that it was with great difficulty that General Williams could even send a messenger to Erzeroum. This he did on the 1st of September, sending a despatch to Consul Brant, which he received five days later, and wherein it was stated that the soldiers were reduced to half allowances of bread and meat, and that the population itself was on the verge of starvation; and that under no circumstances whatever would they be able to hold out for more than two months longer.

This and other unceasing representations by General Williams, regarding the state of Kars, and the threatening aspect of Mouravieff's forces and resources, began to work upon the fears of the Porte and the British government as to the possibility of an advance by the Russians through Asia Minor upon Constantinople; and much disputation took place between the Foreign Offices at Paris and London, the Porte at Constantinople, and the generals in the Crimea; which dragged on its weary length from June to September, as each party had very different views upon the subject. The Porte wished for a demonstration in Asia Minor, and wanted its troops reinforced there; but also wanted to conduct the campaign on its own system, of which the unconditional holding did not form a part. They wanted, in short, to carry the war into the enemy's country, and operate in the rear of Mouravieff's army—a plan which they thought would inflict considerable damage on the Russians, whilst, at the same time, forcing Mouravieff to withdraw his forces from Asia Minor, and retire within his own borders. This Omar Pasha wished to accomplish by withdrawing 20,000 or 30,000 of the Turks before Sebastopol and Eupatoria, and, landing with them at Souchum Kaleh or Redoubt Kaleh, march upon Tiflis, which he expected would fall into his hands without difficulty. Having accomplished this, he would then fall upon Gumri and Alexandropol, and cut off Mouravieff's retreat, taking him between his own forces and those of Kars, Erzeroum, and Batoum. The plan was a genial one, and would probably have succeeded. But whilst the London Foreign Office and War Office thought it would be much safer for Omar Pasha to advance in the rear of the Turkish forces at Erzeroum by way of Trebizonde, and face Mouravieff in front, instead of on his flank and rear, the generals in the Crimea were dead against any diminution of the forces before Sebastopol and at Eupatoria. In this they were strongly supported by Napoleon, who saw that the end was approaching with the final fall of Sebastopol; and, wearied with this particular war, did not wish to risk having it prolonged by any weakening of the forces which his generals protested against. Thus matters

dragged on and on, till Omar Pasha, proceeding to Constantinople, after having had anything but an amicable interview with the allied generals, obtained the consent of the Porte and the other powers to carry his plan into execution; but it was not until the middle of September that he landed at Batoum, and began organising the forces there under Mustafa Pasha; and the 3rd of October before he reached Suchoum Kaleh, when of course it was too late to save Kars.

Meanwhile, Mouravieff, who was kept well informed of all that was going on, continued to blockade Kars most vigorously, whilst General Williams was greatly harassed and worried by the dissatisfaction of the *redif*, or militia, and by their constant desertions to the enemy, who not only paid them well, but allowed them to return to their homes, whence they had been taken. In the face of all this treachery within and without the walls, famine staring them in the face, and the enemy quietly waiting his opportunity, whilst his cavalry scoured the plains under their very noses, the defenders of Kars could do nothing but strengthen their defences. This they did very effectively, converting their chief open works into closed works, and protecting them still further with *trous de loup*—horse-holes—against any cavalry attacks. September thus gradually wore on amidst vain hopes of relief, raised by rumours and assurances of speedy relief from Omar Pasha; all these hopes being greatly intensified when, on the 23rd of September, a Georgian, Aislen Aga, deserted from the Russians, and brought in the news of the fall of Sebastopol. There was great joy at this news in Kars, and a salute was ordered to be fired from the castle; but as soon as the first shot had been discharged, a Russian regiment and a couple of batteries at once opened fire on Hafiz Pasha Tabia, in order to drown the salute, and prevent its being heard by the Russian army.

Mouravieff very craftily took advantage of this news. He rightly calculated that what with the news of the fall of Sebastopol, and that Omar Pasha was trying to come to the relief of Kars, the opinion would be formed within the town, that he, Mouravieff, would probably raise the siege. This idea he did his best to foster by resorting to a favourite Russian stratagem—that of packing up his baggage and sending it off, apparently to Gumri. "Even by the light of lanterns the arabas moved on that road all last night" (27th September), as General Williams wrote. Armies are not in the habit of conducting their operations, whether for an attack or a retreat, by the light of lanterns within view of an enemy: and that General Williams' sanguine expectations and hopes did not allow him to relax for one moment his extreme vigilance, speaks more for his military qualities than anything else; and when Mouravieff commenced his grand attack, he found the Turks well prepared to receive him, owing considerably to the precautions taken by Ismail Pasha (General Kmety), who never believed for one moment that Mouravieff would raise the siege before assaulting the place.

About three o'clock on the morning of the 29th of September, 1855, the outposts heard the rumbling of artillery—a sound unmistakable by those who have once heard it—and reported the fact to Kmety, who at once marshalled his men, passed on the alarm, and sent out some riflemen to obtain information, the utter darkness of the morning preventing the garrison from seeing beyond a few yards. About four o'clock the scouts returned, and reported that the enemy was advancing. At this juncture, one of the men, Hussein by name, a Kurd, remarkable for his powers of vision in the dark, perceived the head of the advancing column, upon which a gun was at once brought to bear, and a plunging volley of grape poured into the ranks of the astonished Russians, who, coming to surprise, were thus grievously caught in their own trap. They, however, rushed forward without delay, and soon the attack extended all along the line; but, when daybreak permitted it, the defenders saw that the chief attack was being made on the Tamasp lines and Fort Lake. The resistance was most determined, and cannonade and fusilade resounded in an unbroken roar. The Russians, still advancing in dense columns, of which the heads were successively swept away, but without deterring them from advancing and overlapping both the right and the left of the Tamasp lines, succeeded in getting to the rear, which they had hoped to find open, and in this hope had spent so much blood. When they found that such was not the case, they formed on the plateau, and poured volley upon volley of musketry upon the rear of the works they had turned, but could not

enter, the horse-holes also greatly impeding their movements. Before they could get their artillery into position, they were raked "fore and aft" by no less than three forts or batteries; all these outworks having been so constructed as to command each other in turn.

Meanwhile the attack had been more successful on the north side, where the Russians had stormed and taken the English batteries, which, however, being commanded by Fort Lake, soon became untenable, and was evacuated by their temporary occupants. Thus the battle raged on; a plunging fire of grape, canister, shell, and rifles met the enemy at every point, the guns being served with the utmost coolness, composure, and dexterity. At last the Russians opened a battery upon the Tamasp and Yuksek redoubts, whilst the infantry pushed still further on in the rear of the entrenchments. At this moment Colonel Lake sent forward three battalions to stop their advance, which being concealed from the enemy by the nature of the ground, confronted him at a most opportune moment. They deployed, opened their fire, which at once checked the advance, and then charged with the bayonet, driving them steadily back, when Teesdale and Kmety led their men out of the redoubts, and charged them in the flank. This took place at half-past eleven A.M., and within ten minutes the whole force was in full retreat, raked on every side by a plunging cross-fire that laid them low by the hundred. Thus, after seven hours' determined fighting, at what may be called closest quarters, the Russians were signally repulsed. They left 6,000 dead on the field—of which 363 were within the English batteries—and 160 prisoners and wounded in the hands of the victors, whose losses were very small, considering the sanguinary nature of the struggle. They amounted to 362 killed and 631 wounded; the townspeople, who joined in the defence, losing 101.

In spite of this crushing repulse, however, Mouravieff did not abandon the siege. On the contrary, he conducted the blockade with more stringency than ever, and proved his intention of not moving till Kars had fallen by hutting his soldiers, who were then well cared for and well fed, whilst the garrison was rapidly starving and freezing to death, and hoping in vain for succour from Omar Pasha, *viâ* Georgia, or from Selim Pasha at Erzeroum. But Omar Pasha, as we have seen, was not able to obtain the men and supplies he required, or even to effect a footing at Suchoum Kaleh before October; and further delays of one sort or the other interposed, so that he was not prepared to advance till the beginning of November, and certainly had no earthly prospect of being able to reach Kars within twenty days, as he wrote to General Williams. Selim Pasha, who might have advanced, also sent a series of lying despatches to Williams, which encouraged him to hold on; and the only man who seems to have told him the truth was Consul Brant, of Erzeroum, who wrote as follows to the British ambassador at Constantinople on the 18th of November:—

"I have the honour to inform your excellency that a peasant from Kars brought me, to-day, a few lines from General Williams, of the 12th. The general evidently seems to be in the belief that Selim Pasha has received the troops promised, of whose arrival at Trebizonde, however, we have heard nothing, and his excellency has requested both Major Stewart and myself to entreat your excellency to hasten their expedition. A colonel arrived with a long letter from his excellency Vassif Pasha to Selim Pasha. The precise contents of this letter I do not know, but the object was to urge on his excellency to the relief of the garrison. Selim Pasha inspected his troops yesterday, and they mustered between 5,000 and 6,000 infantry; most of the cavalry were on duty at the outposts; they will amount to almost 2,000, chiefly regulars; and besides these they could collect 1,500 or 2,000 Bashi-Bazouks, if not more. The troops are in good health, well armed and clothed, and have lately received four months' pay; and I have no hesitation in saying, that such a force, under an active and brave general, could relieve Kars; but I have seen enough of Selim Pasha to have discovered that he is neither active, nor energetic, nor brave, and I have long feared that he would not advance. He has a new excuse for delay every day; to-day it was that he must wait a change of weather. It is much finer than we had any reason to expect at this season; beautifully clear, though a little cold at night; and I can only say, that as finer weather cannot be expected before next summer, it is evident his excellency will not leave Erzeroum. * * * The Russians cannot have many troops be-



BOMBARDMENT OF KARS

fore Kars; I should think not more than 22,000, and they are discouraged, and have no heart to fight; but in the camp, it is said that General Mouravieff is of so obstinate a character that he will never abandon the siege, even though he should risk his own life and the destruction of his whole army by a desperate assault, or by frost or famine. He has put his troops into huts, which are well constructed, and, having plenty of firewood, they can stand the frost for some time yet—and too long, alas! for the safety of the garrison at Kars, which in the last extremity can do nothing but surrender; for, without cavalry, and without horses for their guns, they could never, I imagine, cut their way through the enemy, who is still superior in numbers, taking into account his numerous cavalry and artillery. Omar Pasha is too slow in his movements to hope anything from him. About twelve days ago his excellency was still on the coast, and, although he had gained a victory, I suppose he will require time before he can resume his advance."

Consul Brant's prognostications turned out quite correct; and on the following day he received a letter from Williams, showing that he too had abandoned all hope, and that he would try to retreat over the mountains, *viâ* Olti, when he could no longer hold out, which could not fail to be very soon; for, by that time, there had been no animal food except horse-flesh, which the Moslems would not eat, for more than seven weeks. A faint hope was raised, on the 12th of November, by the arrival of a despatch from Selim Pasha, stating that he had defeated the Russians near Bazajet, and was advancing on Kars; and, four days later, cannon having been heard in the direction of Ardahan, the garrison fondly believed succour was nigh, and actually proposed a sortie to assist the approaching army, which, however, never approached. On the 20th, Williams debated in council as to the practicability of a retreat over the mountains; but it was agreed that, in their weak state, and unprovided with cavalry, or horses for their artillery, the attempt would be disastrous in the face of 12,000 Russian cavalry. On the 23rd, the Russians threw a few shells into the camp at Karli Tabia, and an attack being considered imminent, the troops were called under arms, but only a few dozen responded to the call. Snow had already fallen, and the men lay all about the ground, dead, dying, or numbed and motionless from the effects of cold and hunger conjoined. A few battalions of Russians might, on that day, have taken the place. Finally, the same morning a despatch arrived from Selim Pasha, saying that he would have left Erzeroum on the 16th, and would speedily be under the walls of Kars; but this atrocious lie was counter-balanced by a note of Consul Brant's, in cipher, stating—"Selim Pasha will not advance, though Major Stuart is doing his best to make him. Omar Pasha has scarcely advanced beyond Suchoum Kaleh. I fear you have no hope but in yourselves; you can depend on no help from this quarter."

This despatch was clear and decided. Williams quickly made up his mind what to do; called a council of war, and laid the facts before the pashas and the rest of the British officers. They all agreed that further resistance was useless; and that, as a retreat had already been pronounced impossible, nothing remained but a surrender. The soldiers were dying at the rate of 100 a-day of starvation alone. They were mere skeletons, incapable of fighting or flying. The women brought their children to the general's barn for food, and there they left them; and the city was strewed with the dead and dying.

Thus, on the 24th, Major Teesdale was sent, under a flag of truce, to General Mouravieff, to arrange for a meeting between him and General Williams to settle upon the terms of surrender. The interview was agreed to, and the following day the two generals met, and the capitulation signed; the garrison marching out with the honours of war, and becoming prisoners; the officers retaining their swords. On the 28th the garrison marched out; 8,000 becoming prisoners of war, and 6,000 irregular troops allowed to depart.

Thus ended the siege of Kars, Nov. 28th, 1855; and, with this episode, the interest of the war in Asia Minor came to an end. Of Omar Pasha's expedition into the Caucasus, which could have no importance except as a diversion for the relief of Kars, it is not necessary to say more than that it was a complete failure, and forced to retreat back to the sea-coast. As to the influence of this movement of Omar Pasha on affairs before Kars, the following words

of General Mouravieff himself will best show. He said:—"As soon as I found Omar Pasha at Suchoum Kaleh, I had no doubt of the result of the campaign. I was much obliged to Omar Pasha for going in that direction."

CHAPTER XX.

CONTINENTAL POLICY IN THE SPRING OF 1855; PROFFERED MEDIATION OF AUSTRIA; FURTHER TREATY BETWEEN AUSTRIA AND THE ALLIES; TREATY BETWEEN SARDINIA AND THE ALLIES; DEPARTURE OF SARDINIAN TROOPS FOR THE CRIMEA; ANOTHER CONFERENCE AT VIENNA, MARCH TO APRIL, 1855.

As it became evident that the reduction of Sebastopol and humiliation of Russia was a more difficult task than was imagined, and as the easy success of the Turkish army on the Danube had seemed to foreshadow, the allies left no stone unturned to secure the more effectual co-operation of Austria. They were able to work upon the Austrians by the fact of the real intentions of Russia having at last been demonstrated to have been the annexation of the Danubian principalities, Moldavia and Wallachia. The possession, however, of these provinces would have been a standing menace against the Austrian empire; and thus the Austrian government were far more inclined to co-operate with the allies, than would have been the case had there not been this danger. At the same time, however, Austria was very much disinclined to risk turning Russia from a lukewarm and interested friend into a declared enemy. As usual, she endeavoured to play the dangerous game of serving two masters.

At this stage of indecision, the balance was turned in favour of the allies, partly from a jealousy of Germany—Prussia—the court and nobility of which were in favour of Russia; and partly on account of the urgent remonstrances of the Vatican, the pope feeling bound to support Napoleon III., as he had ostensibly taken up arms for the protection, and to insist on the privileges, of the Catholics in the East, whose liberties the Russian emperor and church had assailed. As far as Austria was concerned, the war had now become a religious war, in which the Catholic and Romanic races were ranged on the one side, in the persons and armies of Napoleon III. and the Emperor Franz Joseph, against Orthodox Russia and Protestant Prussia on the other, in the persons of the Czar and King Frederick William. The fruits of the seed then sown have since become apparent in the Austro-Prussian war, the unification of Italy, and the Franco-German war. All these events have sprung from the principles formed during the Crimean war. Could Austria have seen into the future, she would probably have been as decidedly in favour of Russia, as she ultimately was against her. But the future was then hidden; and, owing to the influences we have pointed out, she drew more towards the allies in proportion as she became convinced of the true intentions of Russia in reference to Roumania; and as Frederick William and the Prussian "Junkers"—nobility—drew closer to Russia.

It is advisable here to point out the nature of the relations between Prussia and Russia. History is made up of a succession of dramas; and the Germano-Muscovite drama not being played out yet, a knowledge of the foregoing acts is necessary for the proper comprehension of the final act that is now (1877) being played by Prince Bismarck and Prince Gortchakoff—by uncle and nephew, the German emperor, William III., and the Russian czar, Alexander II.

The great idea of the Germans has been national unity. This idea they have carried with them, and carried out in all countries of an inferior civilisation to their own. Where the civilisation has been of a higher political character, they have assimilated themselves easily with the population of the country of their adoption, and merged their own interests, hopes, and fears with those of this population. Such has been the case in America and England. In

countries of a lower civilisation, they have formed isolated groups, hanging closely together, and strictly observing their national habits and customs. Such has been the case in Hungary and Russia, where the provinces of Sibenbürgen and Kurland have remained essentially German, without any, or scarcely any, admixture with the surrounding elements. But when the Germans came in contact with races possessing a state-constitution, as powerful as their own, and in as high a state of civilisation, but both animated by principles opposed to their own, endless conflicts arose; as, for instance, in Italy and France. In the latter country a curious compromise was effected, and German and Frenchman united in forming the Alsatian, a people combining some of the qualities of both races, yet not to be identified with either. The process, in fact, resulted in the production of a distinct family, both process and result resembling very much the fusion and unification of the various races that produced the Englishman. In Italy, on the other hand, the opposing elements were so anti-pathetic to each other that no fusion whatever took place. There was an endless conflict between them for centuries, that did not cease till 1866, when the Germans finally gave up the struggle, and retired before the great majority of the Italian people. So strong is this reciprocal feeling still, that where the forces are equal, yet there is no fusion; and the Italian populations of Switzerland are as far from amalgamation with the German inhabitants of the same state as they were centuries ago.

Thus has arisen the great Romano-Teutonic conflict; the war between the Latin and Teutonic races and principles that has closed one of its epochs with the bloody struggle of 1870.

This conflict, however, does not further concern us; but a similar drama is being performed on the western confines of Russia, the nature of which must be explained in order to comprehend many events that have materially affected the policy of Russia, and will affect it still more powerfully as the struggle increases in intensity.

In addition to the Baltic provinces, Kurland, Livonia, and Esthonia, in which the dominating population is German, there are thousands upon thousands scattered through the Russian empire, who took up their abode in the country in a very great measure on the strength of such invitations and privileges as have been recorded on a former page.* Always an object of envy, frequently of hatred, these Germans have succeeded in obtaining and wielding an immense influence on Russian affairs, both home and foreign, and also in preserving friendly relations with Germany. These relations were still further cemented by the intermarriage of members of the royal families of Russia and Germany; and as long as the governments of both countries were of a despotic nature, they mutually assisted each other in the suppression of any insurrectionary movements. Such was the case when events led to the partition of Poland; and when Nicholas I. helped to put down the Hungarian rebellion, though other reasons may also have co-operated in deciding him to that course of action. All these considerations powerfully affected the conduct of Prussia during the Crimean war. She could not break with Russia, because she was still, in many respects, suffering from the effects of the exaltation of the popular mind produced by the events of 1848, and of which she intended to make use as soon as the opportune moment arrived. The leading Prussian statesman—of course always excepting the ultra-conservative, the younker, with his feudal ideas and pretensions—plainly saw what an immense force was surging and seething beneath the crust that had partially been broken through in isolated spots, even as the minor craters of a volcano spout forth their fiery contents before the great eruption belches out its irresistible masses. They foresaw all this, and, with great sagacity, determined not to try to attempt to stem the torrent, but to lead it, and place themselves at the head of the movement.

But they perceived just as plainly that this programme would have to be carried out in the face of Austrian opposition. As an intensely Catholic power, Austria could not but be a bitter enemy to Prussian policy in this respect; and as Austria might carry Bavaria and other Catholic portions of Germany with it, Prussia was, perforce, constrained to keep on good terms with Russia, whilst doing all she could to weaken Austria. In point of fact, owing to Austria's intimate relations with the Vatican, Prussia was obliged, much against her inclination in many respects, to identify her with the Romanic races and principles with which

* Page 257, Vol. I.

she was at bitter war. Hence, to isolate Austria, to entangle her in difficulties, and to preserve intimate relations with Russia, was for Prussia an imperative necessity: was, in fact, a vital necessity not only for Prussia, but for the whole of the liberal world, and for the emancipation of Europe from the domination of the Vatican and its principles. The fruit of the Reformation was at stake: threatened and menaced by the domineering pride that culminated centuries ago at Canossa, there was no help anywhere but in the sturdy, unflinching spirit of Germany, backed, strangely enough, by as despotic and hierarchical a state as ever existed since history began to chronicle the deeds of man.

This digression shows, plainly and truthfully, what were the motives that actuated Austria and Prussia in their conduct during the Crimean war; and may prevent some of our readers from being led astray by interested invectives against either. It also explains the reasons that induced Austria, after the occupation of the Moldavian provinces, to offer her mediation to Russia on the following basis:—

"1. That the protectorate exercised hitherto by Russia, over the principalities of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Servia, be abrogated, and transferred to the great powers collectively.

"2. That the navigation of the Danube be freed from all obstacles.

"3. That the treaty of the 13th of July, 1841, be revised by the contracting powers in concert.

"4. That Russia abstain from claiming an official protectorate over the subjects of the Sublime Porte; and that the great powers shall obtain from the Ottoman government the confirmation of the privileges accorded to its Christian subjects, without any prejudice to the independence of the Porte."

This note was accompanied by another, reserving the right of the allies to make other conditions, which had the effect, as might have been supposed, of rendering the first perfectly nugatory, as the Austrian government intended it should, they having decided to make such a show of force as to impress Europe with the idea that Vienna was mistress of the situation, and, in fact, the arbiter of Europe. And, in truth, she made a most imposing display. More than 400,000 men were called under arms, and placed in various portions of the empire and the federal fortresses of Germany. The czar at once made use of this display to excite still more the fears of Prussia, and addressed a note to the Prussian cabinet, stating, that, as the Eastern question might occasion a rupture between the two great German states, and the preservation of peace was the czar's most heartfelt desire, Russia was willing to negotiate on the basis of the note presented to her by Austria. The only difference between the Russian articles and those of the allies was contained in the 2nd article. It proposed—

"A protectorate of the principalities exercised in common by the five powers, *on the same conditions as our (Russian) treaties with the Porte have stipulated in their favour.*"

The words which we have underlined at once condemned the whole note. Russia, had it been accepted, would thus have obtained, by a side wind, all that she went to war for, which was the recognition of certain treaties, notably that of Kutschuk-Kainerdji.

As soon as it became evident that the Russian government had not yet been brought to the proper point of humility, the allies redoubled their endeavours to secure the greater co-operation of Austria. They did not succeed, however, in obtaining more than the acceptation of precautionary measures, to which Austria at last agreed, in the conviction that the occasion for carrying them out would never arise; after which she could take credit to herself towards Russia for her moderation. A treaty was therefore signed on the 2nd of December, of which we give the following articles, as they are so very characteristic of Austrian diplomacy. There is every reason to believe that the substance of this treaty was communicated to Prince Gortchakoff before Austria agreed to sign it, with an assurance that care would be taken that no eventuality should arise to oblige its being carried out by Austria. It ran as follows:—

"ART. I.—The high contracting parties engage, mutually and reciprocally, not to enter into any arrangement with the imperial court of Russia without having first deliberated thereupon in common.

"ART. II.—His majesty, the Emperor of Austria, having, in virtue of the treaty concluded on the 14th of June last with the Sublime Porte, caused the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia to be occupied by

his troops, he engages to defend the frontier of the said principalities against any return of the Russian forces; the Austrian troops shall, for this purpose, occupy the positions necessary for guaranteeing those principalities against any attack. Her majesty, the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, and his majesty, the Emperor of the French, having likewise concluded with the Sublime Porte, on the 12th of March, a treaty, which authorises them to direct their forces upon every part of the Ottoman empire, the above-mentioned occupation shall not interfere with the free movement of the Anglo-French or Ottoman troops upon the same territories against the military forces or the territory of Russia. There shall be formed at Vienna, between the plenipotentiaries of Austria, France, and Great Britain, a commission, to which Turkey shall be invited to send a plenipotentiary, and which shall be charged with examining and regulating every question relating either to the exceptional and provisional state in which the said principalities are now placed, or to the free passage of the different armies across their territory.

"ART. III.—In case hostilities break out between Austria and Russia, her majesty, the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, his majesty, the Emperor of Austria, and his majesty, the Emperor of the French, mutually promise to each other their offensive and defensive alliance in the present war, and will, for that purpose, employ, according to the requirements of the war, military and naval forces, the number, description, and destination whereof shall, if occasion should arise, be determined by subsequent arrangements.

"ART. IV.—In the case contemplated by the preceding article, the high contracting parties reciprocally engage not to entertain any overture or proposition, on the part of the imperial court of Russia, having for its object the cessation of hostilities, without having come to an understanding thereupon between themselves.

"ART. V.—In case the re-establishment of general peace, upon the basis indicated in Article I., should not be assured in the course of the present year, her majesty, the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, his majesty, the Emperor of Austria, and his majesty, the Emperor of the French, will deliberate, without delay, upon effectual means for obtaining the object of their alliance.

"ART. VI.—Great Britain, Austria, and France will jointly communicate the present treaty to the court of Prussia, and will, with satisfaction, receive its accession thereto, in case it should promise its co-operation for the accomplishment of the common object."

The presentation of this note by the Austrian government to Prince Gortchakoff, the Russian ambassador at Vienna, on the 28th of December, 1854, naturally threw Prussia still more into the arms of Russia; the more so as the German merchants were reaping a rich harvest from the lucrative trade that they were carrying on with Russia, and which led to some remonstrances on the part of the allied governments; but with no greater effect than an increase of caution in the transactions in contraband of war.

Whilst these were the relations between the great continental powers, the same principles to which we have alluded as agitating Europe were also acknowledged, and their importance recognised, by one of the most successful statesmen of modern times. Cavour, the minister of Victor Emanuel, the King of Sardinia, felt that the situation of Italy was precisely similar to that of Germany. The year '48 had also left its mark in Italy; and like the Prussian statesman, he, too, resolved not to oppose the gathering forces, but to lead them, to organise them, and use them for the unification of Italy. The papal government and its allies were, to the House of Savoy and liberal principles, what Austria and the House of Hapsburg were to Prussia and the House of Hohenzollern; whilst Austria was to Italy—as a possible enemy—what Russia was to Prussia. But there was a difference in the relations between Austria and Italy, as regarded the matter in question, which Cavour at once appreciated with rare tact. Had Austria, then in possession of a large part of Italy, been able to preserve a strict neutrality, or had abstained from entering into an alliance, however equivocal, with the allies, she would have been easily able to prevent Sardinia from taking any prominent part in the war, or the negotiations accompanying and arising out of it. But as she had already so far compromised herself with France and England, she could not, by any possible means, exclude Sardinia from the alliance she herself had joined in, although she knew perfectly well that the principles animating Cavour and his sovereign were

diametrically opposed to the interests of Austria and the principles of the Austrian government as then understood. This dilemma was eagerly made use of by Cavour as the first step towards the realisation of his long-cherished plans in regard to the unification of Italy; and on the 26th of January, 1855, a treaty was signed, admitting the King of Sardinia into the alliance formed by England and France; which was ratified fully on the 4th of March following.

The Russian government had been acquainted with the negotiations carried on previous to the ratification of the treaty, and endeavoured to weaken the blows about to be dealt against it by declaring war itself against Sardinia, which was done in a note addressed by Count Nesselrode to the various European courts, and which contains some special pleading that is interesting, as showing how very much diplomatists are frequently like schoolboys wrangling over a sugar-stick, fighting for it, and then quarrelling again as to who hit the other one first. Yet this is the way in which the business of nations is conducted. The document in question, dated February 17th, 1855, runs:—

"The court of —— will, we doubt not, share the opinion of the emperor upon the policy of his majesty, the King of Sardinia, at a moment when that sovereign, without any ostensible motive, without any legitimate cause of complaint, and without even the shadow of the smallest infringement upon the direct interest of his country, has placed at the disposal of England a *corps d'armée* of 15,000 men for the invasion of the Crimea. In taking this step the Sardinian government appears to have left it to the care of the public journals to warn us of an aggression which it has not thought fit to justify by a declaration of war. We understand the motive of this silence.

"The court of Turin, we admit it, would have had some difficulty in conciliating its policy with the natural sentiment of its country; it would have experienced equal difficulty in making its present conduct harmonise with the ancient *souvenirs* of the House of Savoy. In consulting the annals of its history, it might cite the incident of a Russian army crossing the Alps; but, it is true, it was to defend Piedmont, and not to invade it. In the councils of the cabinets of Europe, in the reign of the Emperor Alexander, of glorious memory, it was Russia again who lent her faithful support to the independence of Sardinia when the House of Savoy was again reinstated on the throne of its ancestors. Must we finally recall to mind that, at the same period, if Genoa was reunited to the kingdom of Sardinia, it was because the imperial cabinet recognised the necessity of assuring, at the same time, both the commercial prosperity and the greatness of the country which the arms of Russia had helped to deliver from a foreign yoke? But now, sinking in oblivion the lessons of the past, the court of Turin is about to direct against us, from the selfsame port of Genoa, a hostile enterprise which Russia has the conscientious satisfaction of knowing was not provoked by her.

"The attitude thus assumed by Sardinia, without a formal declaration of war, as we have stated, would make us doubt what name we ought to give to the auxiliary troops destined to invade our frontiers under the flag of a country with which we have hitherto been living at peace. However, if the court of Turin loses sight of the principles and customs consecrated by the law of nations, the emperor, for his part, is resolved to observe them. With this intention, his imperial majesty feels it incumbent upon him to declare that peace is, *de facto* and *de jure*, broken by this flagrant act of hostility, the whole blame of which recoils on the Sardinian government. We leave it to bear the entire responsibility thereof, in the face of the opinions of its subjects and the rest of Europe."

To this document Count Cavour replied with a circular, in which he repudiates any charge of a breach of international law or etiquette. It must, however, be remembered that, at the moment when Sardinia accepted the invitation of the allies to join them, war was virtually if not practically declared: and that acceptation took place on the 12th of January, though not ratified till the 26th. However, the following is the case, as stated by Count Cavour. He wrote on the 4th of March:—

"I have the honour to transmit herewith some copies of the manifesto by which the government of his majesty, the King of Sardinia, declares war to his majesty, the Emperor of Russia. [Here follow the reasons for this action.] These considerations determined his majesty to accede to the

treaty of the 10th of April, 1854. The act of accession, as well as the two conventions referring to it, having been signed on the 26th of January last, and ratified this day (March 4th), his majesty now declares war to Russia.

"His majesty has not seen, without painful surprise, that, while the act of accession, unratified, had not yet any absolute legal value, and was in no ways executory, the Emperor Nicholas, by a note of Count Nesselrode's, and in language full of bitterness, taking the initiative in hostilities, has accused him of violating the rights of nations, by sending an expedition to the Crimea without a previous declaration of war, and reproached him with forgetfulness of the marks of friendship shown in past times by Russia to Sardinia.

"Concerning the pretended violation of the rights of nations, it is sufficient to compare the date of Count Nesselrode's circular (5th of January last) with that of the ratification of the act of accession (4th of March), to be convinced of the astonishing flippancy with which the chancellor of the Russian empire has advanced so grave an accusation, and which is so inappropriate to the princes of Savoy, and, above all, to a monarch to whom the voice of the whole people has accorded the title of loyal.

"As to the reproach of ingratitude, the Emperor Nicholas, instead of recalling the marks of friendship which two of his predecessors formerly showed towards Sardinia, ought to have recollected, that, in 1848, without any personal motive, he withdrew his minister from the court of Turin, and hastily sent the Sardinian representative at St. Petersburg his passports; that, in 1849, he refused to receive the letter of notification of the accession to the throne of King Victor Emanuel II., a refusal highly injurious, which finds few precedents in the history of diplomacy, and which appears to indicate, on the part of the czar, the strange pretension to interfere in our interior affairs, affecting not to recognise the transformation, not revolutionary, but legal, which had been made in our political institutions.

"After having added these short explanations, in order to place the conduct of the king, our august sovereign, in its true light, and on referring to the motives exhibited in the accompanying manifesto, I beg you to transmit a copy of the present despatch to the minister of foreign affairs of the government to which you are accredited; and I beg you to receive, sir, the renewed assurances of my very distinguished consideration.

"C. CAVOUR."

Herewith Sardinia crossed the Rubicon, and entered upon the path that, a few years later, led her to that place to which all roads lead—even *viâ* Sebastopol—to Rome; and, on the 23rd of April, 1855, the first division of the Sardinian expedition, amounting to 7,000 men, under the command of General La Marmora, embarked for Constantinople and Balaklava.

After the Russo-Sardinian declaration of war, another attempt at arranging for peace was made at the instance of Austria, which had become seriously disquieted by the firm attitude of Prussia, the uncompromising nature of her representations at the diet, Herr von Bismarck, and the boldness of Sardinia. She was resolved that either peace should be concluded, or that any danger to herself should be averted, by giving it to be clearly understood, that in no case did she intend to take offensive action against Russia. Thus the Vienna conference was brought about, and which assembled in Vienna on the 15th of March, 1855. The Austrian plenipotentiaries were Count Buol-Schauenstein and Baron Prokesch-Osten; the English, Lord John Russell and the Earl of Westmoreland; the French, Count Drouyn de Lluys and Baron Bourqueney; the Turkish, Aarif Pasha; and the Russian, Prince Gortchakoff. The subjects for discussion were arranged as follows:—

"1. The Danubian principalities.

"2. The navigation of the Danube.

"3. The limitation of Russian power in the Black Sea.

"4. The condition of the Christian subjects of the Porte."

The wrangling over these points lasted from the 15th of March to the 26th of April, without any result, in consequence of the delays occasioned by constant references to St. Petersburg and Constantinople, and by the great divergence of interests in all concerned. The point that occasioned the greatest opposition, on the part of Russia, was the 3rd, limiting her naval power in the Black Sea. Anyhow, the conference broke up, formally, on the 26th of April; but the various plenipotentiaries still remained in Vienna, at the instigation of the Austrian ministers, who were understood to

be engaged in the drawing up of a proposal which should secure the ends in view. This wonderful proposition turned out to be a proposal that matters should be compromised by Russia's being allowed to restore the strength of her Black Sea fleet to what it had been before the outbreak of the war; but that, on the other hand, the Turks, French, and English should also be permitted to keep an equal fleet in the same sea. On these conditions Russia was prepared to join in the guarantee for the integrity of the Porte. To this proposal Lord John Russell and the French plenipotentiary allowed themselves to be persuaded to agree. The governments of France and England, however, at once refused to ratify the agreement; and, as it was evident that the negotiations were only protracted for private purposes, on the part of one or more of the powers concerned, at once broke off all further treaty, and recalled their representatives, the feeling against whom was so strong for entertaining for a moment so preposterous a proposal, that both Lord John Russell and Drouyn de Lhuys found it convenient to resign office.

The private motives were soon discovered to be Austrian; for that government, on the formal rejection of its proposal, at once declared that, the allies having first accepted the proposal through their plenipotentiaries, and then rejected it, Austria could not undertake to assume the offensive against Russia. The diplomatic campaign of 1855 had thus opened with a victory for the latter power, which had so well worked upon the fears of her neighbour in reference to the designs attributed to Napoleon and Cavour in regard to Italy. The only wonder is that Austria did not pursue a bolder policy, and cast her fate in entirely with that of Russia.

CHAPTER XXI.

CONTINUATION OF THE SIEGE OF SEBASTOPOL; CHARACTER OF THE ATTACK AND DEFENCE; THE SECOND BOMBARDMENT; ITS FAILURE.

In January, 1855, the second British parallel was opened at a distance of 1,200 yards from the Redan, whilst the French engineers busily advanced their mining operations against the Flagstaff Bastion. But in spite of the batteries in the first parallel, which enabled the men to proceed with the construction of the second in the face of the musketry-fire by day, and endless sorties by night, it was quite impossible to silence the enemy's batteries beyond this, so overwhelming was the mass of metal over which he disposed. More than ever the struggle partook of the nature of a campaign of two field-armies, one against the other, of which one was in the possession of a strong fortified position, and the other in an entrenched camp. It was no wonder, under such circumstances, that the allies were unable to reach the edge of the enemy's entrenchments in order to proceed to the assault, or that the Russians were able to repair their damaged works as fast as they were destroyed; to displace their dismounted guns by fresh ones, and flank the approaches of the French and British engineers by fresh batteries, and counter-approaches and mines. This, coupled with the rocky, stony nature of the soil, forced the allies to abandon the Vauban system of approach in its entirety, and to fortify their advances, not simply with open batteries, but with closed works, with a surrounding ditch, glacis, and flank works, in order to protect the heavy guns against sorties and attacks in force. Nor, according to Vauban's system, could the parallels be constructed continuously, but had to be furnished with wide openings from point to point, in order to allow of the advance of large bodies of troops to repel any attack in force. The want of sufficient heavy artillery also necessitated what there was to be concentrated in groups; so that there really remained nothing left but a system of undermining, or an assault, pure and simple; and that this last measure would finally have to be adopted, whatever

it might cost, gradually began to dawn upon all the commanders without exception.

Preparatory to this step, Marshal Niel proposed to centre the chief attack on the Karabelnaia suburb, but without abandoning the attack on the west. The line of approach was a long one—more than 12,000 yards, or six miles. The English works were in the centre; the French continuing them right and left, and lengthening the second British parallel towards the right, thus drawing closer to the Korniloff Bastion (Malakoff). But, as though by magic, the Russians constructed two redoubts, Selenginski and Wolinski, on Mount Sapoun, at the head of Careening Bay, which flanked the approach to the Malakoff; whilst right before the Malakoff, at a distance of 800 yards, they built up the lunette, Mamelon Vert, right before the eyes of the astonished Frenchmen, and full in front of their works. Of course, this was not accomplished without a fierce resistance and opposition on both sides; but ultimately the works were not only armed with heavy guns, but also protected by trenches and rifle-pits to within 500 yards of the French lines. The failure of the French to prevent the establishment of these works and rifle-pits was undoubtedly due to their desire to accomplish the task unaided, as sufficiently appears from Mr. Russell's account of the action of March 17, 1855, when they tried, too late, to drive the Russians out.

Mr. Russell says—"On looking at any plans of the position, an elevated mound will be observed to our right of Malakoff Tower—the Round Tower, as it was called, but which was, in reality, of horse-shoe form, and open at the back—but considerably in advance of it. This is now called the Mamelon, and the Russians occupy it every night, and throw up works upon it, intended for a large redoubt, which would be able to annoy us very materially. The left front of this they have covered with rifle-pits. To the right of this Mamelon from our position, and somewhat in advance of it again, is the square redoubt, which the Russians have thrown up on the mound they seized by the bold movement of which you received information some time ago. As the possession of the rifle-pits near these works is of great importance, and would assist the allies materially in checking the fire of the guns which the enemy may mount in their batteries, the French (to whose extreme right front, overlapping our right, these pits are opposite) made an attempt, which was unsuccessful, on Friday night, to drive out the Russians. Again they vigorously attacked the place in force; and it is with deep regret that I have to state that they met with the same result. The shot of our batteries generally drove out the Russians during the day, but at night they came back and reoccupied them, supported by large bodies of infantry. In these encounters the enemy must have had many men killed and wounded.

"These rifle-pits, which have cost both armies such a quantity of ammunition, and have led to so considerable a sacrifice on the part of our allies, are placed in front and to the right and left of the Tower of Malakoff, about 600 yards from our works. They are simple excavations in the ground, faced round with sand-bags, which are loop-holed for rifles, and banked round with the earth which has been thrown up from the pit. Each of these pits contains about ten men. They are, in fact, little forts or redoubts for offensive proceedings against the besiegers, armed with rifles instead of cannon. Practice has made the men placed in them expert; and it is likely they are picked shots, for their fire is exceedingly good; and if a man shows for a moment above the works in front of these pits, he has a small swarm of leaden hornets buzzing round his ears. At first there were only two of these pits in the particular spot of which I am speaking. After the enemy recovered possession of them the first time, they dug two more, and now they have increased the number to six, so that the force of riflemen which they hold is about sixty men. After the French were obliged to retire on Saturday morning, the Russians reoccupied these pits, and kept up a continual fusillade against every object which appeared to have life in it towards the French right. They were so well covered, and so admirably protected by the nature of the ground, that our riflemen could do nothing with them, and the French sharpshooters were equally unsuccessful. It was determined to try a round shot or two at them from one of the English batteries. The first shot struck down a portion of the bank of one of the pits; the second went slap into the sand-bags, right through the parapet, and out at the other side; and the riflemen, ignorant of Sir John Burgoyne's advice to men similarly situate—to

adhere the more obstinately to their work the more they are fired at by big guns—'bolted,' and ran across the space to their works. The French sharpshooters, who were in readiness to take advantage of this moment, at once fired on the fugitives, but did not hit one of them. All the riflemen left the pits, and they were deserted for the rest of the day, as the allies could not approach them under the guns of the works till dark. It was probable that, silent as the enemy had been, he would have opened on them at once with case and grape had they attempted to occupy them. As it was made a point of honour by General Bosquet that our allies should take these pits, a strong force of about 5,000 men at least were marched up to the base of the hills in front of our position, close to the second and light divisions, before dusk on Saturday evening, and shortly afterwards they were sent down to the advanced trenches on our right, occupied by the French. At half-past six o'clock their skirmishers and riflemen were ordered out to occupy the pits. The Zouaves advanced with their usual dash and intrepidity, but they found the Russians had anticipated them, and that the enemy were already in possession of the pits. A fierce conflict immediately commenced, but it was evident that the Russians were in great strength. The French could not drive them back from their position, notwithstanding their repeated attempts to do so. It is stated that some misapprehension led the men in the trenches to fire two heavy volleys of musketry before their comrades reached the pits, and that the enemy at once despatched a large force to the assistance of the troops already engaged with the French, so that the latter were at last forced back by the weight of fire. The contest was carried on by musketry, and the volume of the volleys which rang out incessantly for four hours and a-half, roused up the whole camp. From the almost ceaseless roll and flashing lines of light in front, one would have imagined that a general action between considerable armies was going on; and the character of the fight had something unusual about it, owing to the absence of any fire of artillery. About half-past seven o'clock the fourth division was turned out by the general, Sir John Campbell, and took up its position on the hill nearly in front of its tents, and Sir George Brown at the same time marched the light division a few hundred yards forward to the left and front of their encampment. These divisions remained under arms for nearly four hours, and were marched back when the French finally desisted from their assault on the pits. The second and third divisions were also in readiness for immediate action. Had our allies required our assistance they would have received it; but they are determined on taking and holding these pits, which, in fact, are in front of their works, without any aid. I hear that the reserve, owing to some mistake, did not come into action, and was not where the advanced troops expected to have found it at the most critical moment. The Zouaves bore the brunt of the fight. Through the night air, in the lulls of the musketry, the voices of the officers could be distinctly heard cheering on the men, and encouraging them—'*En avant, mes enfants!*' '*En avant, Zouaves!*'—and the tramp of feet and the rush of men generally followed; then a roll of musketry was heard, diminishing in volume to rapid file-firing—then a Russian cheer—then more musketry—a few dropping shots—and the voices of the officers once more. This work went on for about four hours, and the French, unassisted by their reserve, at length retired, with the loss, they say, of about 150 men killed and wounded, and a few taken prisoners.

"The French having thus failed in wresting their positions from the Russians, the latter decided to try whether they could not be more successful and drive the former out of their advanced trenches; and between 11 and 12 o'clock in the night from the 22nd to the 23rd of March, columns of Russian infantry came suddenly upon the men in the British advanced trenches, and rushed in upon them on the right with the bayonet before they were quite prepared to receive them. When they were first discerned they were close at hand, and, on being challenged, they replied with the universal shibboleth, 'Bono Franciz.' In another moment they were bayoneting the British troops, who had barely time to snatch their arms and defend themselves. Taken at a great disadvantage, and pressed by superior numbers, the assault was met with undaunted courage, the Russians being driven out at the point of the bayonet after a smart fire, and forced to retire under cover of their batteries.

"The attack seems to have been general along the line. At half-past eight P.M.

(March 23rd), the French batteries began to shell the town, while their rockets were poured every five minutes in streams into the place. At ten o'clock, the sentries in advance of Chapman's attack gave notice that the Russians were assembling in force in front of the works. The 20th, 21st, and the 57th regiments were in the trenches on the left attack, and they were, to a certain extent, prepared for the assault of the enemy. About the same time the French on the right of the British right attack, which is separated from the left attack by a deep ravine, were assailed by masses of the enemy. As they were hardly pressed, orders were given to advance the troops in a portion of the trenches, consisting of a part of the light division, to their support. On the left attack, the Russians, advancing with impetuosity through a weak part of the defence, turned the third parallel, and took it in reverse. They killed and wounded some of the men, and had advanced to the second parallel, when the covering party and the men in the trenches of the batteries came down upon them and drove them over the works after a sharp conflict. On the right the attack was more serious and sudden. The men had been ordered out to the support of the French from one part of their lines; and while they were away, the Russians came up to the flank of the works, and took them in reverse, so that they had to fight their way back to get to their position. The gallant old 7th Fusileers had to run the gauntlet of a large body of the enemy, whom they drove back *à la fourchette*. The 34th regiment had an enormous force to contend against; and as their brave colonel, Kelly, was leading them on, he was shot down, and carried off by the enemy. In the midst of the fight, Major Gordon, of the royal engineers, displayed that cool courage and presence of mind which never forsook him. With a little switch in his hand he encouraged the men to defend the trenches, and, standing up on the top of the parapet, all unarmed as he was, he hurled down stones on the Russians. He was struck by a ball, which passed through the lower part of his arm, and at the same time he received a bullet through the shoulder. After an hour's fight the enemy were driven back.

"On the British side there were seven officers killed, wounded, and taken prisoners, and about 100 men put *hors de combat*, or carried into Sebastopol. The French lost between 300 and 400 men, and fifteen officers killed, wounded, and missing. On the other hand, the enemy suffered a loss of 600 or 700 men, although they succeeded in concealing the severity of their loss by carrying off their dead and wounded, as usual. Still, the number of dead bodies lying along the front of our trenches proved that they received a heavy loss. The bodies of twelve men and of one officer remained in the trenches of the British left attack. The hill-sides below the Round Tower and the Mamelon were covered with Russian dead, mingled with the bodies of the French, and lying about among the gabions which had been knocked down in front of the French sap towards the rifle-pits in great numbers. The rifle-pits, which had been so hardly contested, were in front of the Mamelon; three of them being still occupied by the Russians, and three of them by the French; but the latter were obliged to abandon them for a time during the first rush of the enemy. The enemy opened guns from the Mamelon against the French approaches towards the pits, its fire enfilading a portion of the British lines. The Russian engineers displayed consummate ability in their works; and it was well for the allies that their artillerymen were not as expert as those who placed them in the batteries."

After this ineffectual attempt of the Russians to stop the approach of the French towards the Malakoff and the Korniloff Bastion, the works were pushed on with redoubled vigour; and on April 2nd, 1855, the British engineers had completed their third parallel, 600 yards in front from the Redan; whilst as early on the 14th and 16th of March, in the French advance on the left towards the Central Bastion, the second parallel had been lengthened to the head of the Quarantine Bay, and the batteries in it, and the third parallel, considerably strengthened. By the 8th of April, 1855, the fourth parallel in front of the Redan was completed on either side of the valley, separating Chapman's battery from Gordon's battery, at a distance of sixty yards from the Russian rifle-pits, and armed with cohorns, by means of which it was intended to drive the Russians out of the pits.

At daybreak on the 9th of April—Easter Monday—the allied batteries simultaneously opened fire on the defences, in obedience to an order from the Emperor of the French, who was just preparing for his journey to London, and wished to make that

event coincide with a notable success of his arms in the Crimea.—Thus the second bombardment of Sebastopol commenced with the fire of 508 pieces of the heaviest metal, each of which was supplied with 700 missiles, 355,600 shot and shell thus being destined to be cast into the beleaguered town. But in spite of the damage inflicted on the Russian works, the solid masonry being pounded to dust, the earthworks remained still practically intact, and all the Russian guns replaced from the fleet as soon as dismounted; whilst the losses in men daily (amounting to about 400 men, including officers), were supplied from the ranks of the 3rd Corps d'Armée (eight infantry divisions), who were fresh in the field, and sent the wounded and weakened forces to the rear on the north side of the harbour. The revetted bastions and casemates of the Korniloff Bastion, and other portions of the works, protected the men, to a great degree, from the peril of shell, shot, and rifle-balls poured upon them by the allies, whilst the reserves found a shelter in the town and suburbs, which almost procured them perfect immunity from the iron and leaden storms busting over their heads. Thus the second bombardment, undertaken more for the purpose of pleasing the French emperor and to satisfy European opinion than anything else, was a failure, as the generals in council were convinced it would be. They would not have sanctioned it at all, were it not at the same time a means of supporting the works of the engineers, and enabling them to push forward under cover of the fire, and open a fourth parallel in front of the Flagstaff Bastion at no less than 100 yards from the works. In the centre the British troops fought bravely in front of the Redan, and round the quarries before it, but were unable to effect a permanent lodgment; the French endeavouring at the same time to drive in the works on the hill at the head of Careening Bay—the redoubts Wolinski and Selenginski; and in front of the Malakoff, the Mamelon Vert, or Kamschatka Lunette, as the Russians called it. By the 6th of May, the bombardment had, as such, completely ceased. For the second time it had been proved that Sebastopol was not destined to fall without a general assault, cost what it might. That this was becoming clear, even to non-military men, may be gathered from the following letter of Mr. Russell's, on the fifth day of the bombardment:—

"Up to the present moment our batteries have succeeded in establishing a superiority of fire over the Russians; but it is not very decided, and the silence of the enemy's guns may arise, in some measure, from want of ammunition, or from confidence in the strength of their earthworks. It would seem, indeed, as if our fire was almost thrown away on the enormous mounds of earth cast up at the Redan and before the Round Tower and western batteries. The whole of the parapets of the Redan and Round Tower are jagged and pitted with holes several feet deep, where the shot have sunk; the sharp angles of the embrasures are knocked away, and the *abattis* in front is considerably damaged here and there; but the real strength of the place is unimpaired; and, as long as the Russians can find new guns, fresh supplies of ammunition, and men to fight the batteries, we are not one inch nearer to the town than we were in last October, so long as we rely alone on the fire of our artillery to make us masters of it. There are great differences of opinion among those officers to whom I have spoken respecting the chances of an assault; but there can be little doubt but that an attack on the Round Tower, the Mamelon, and the two earthworks on the south side of Inkermann, which are called by the French the batteries 1 Avril and 2 Avril, would be attended with success, if made with sufficient force, although the loss of life would be very considerable until guns could be got up to reply to the fire of the north forts, the shipping, and the bastion face of the Redan.

"Far be it from me to arrogate to myself the smallest military knowledge, or to pretend to criticise the operations of our generals; but I use the words of many officers when I say that these places are not invulnerable, and that the possession of them would most materially conduce to a successful termination of all our labours. It may be that our generals see some surer and less bloody path into Sebastopol. They may well hesitate to sacrifice the gallant fellows who must fall in such an arduous and terrible undertaking as the storming of these positions; but if Great Britain has set her heart on the reduction of the stronghold which has already cost her so much precious blood and treasure, she must be content to pay the price to the last farthing."



CHAPTER XXII.

BATTLE OF EUPATORIA; DEATH OF NICHOLAS I.; CAUSES OF HIS DEATH; STRANGE STORY; ACCESSION OF ALEXANDER II.; CONTINUATION OF THE WAR DECIDED ON.

WHILST the two chief armies were contending for the possession of Sebastopol, General Ostensacken, at the head of about 40,000 men, with some sixty pieces of artillery, attacked the Turkish and allied troops at Eupatoria, who were supported by the gun-boats, *Curaçoa*, *Valorous*, *Viper*, and *Furious*, the Turkish steamer *Schehfaer*, and the French steamer *Véloce*. The troops in possession of Eupatoria consisted of about 30,000 men, of whom 25,000 were Turks, and the rest French and English, chiefly belonging to the crews of the above-named vessels; the whole force being under the command of Omar Pasha, whose report of the battle, forwarded to Lord Raglan, is perhaps the most accurate there is. He states—"The enemy attacked Eupatoria on the morning of February 17th. The troops intended for this attack had left the camp before Sebastopol six days ago, and other troops from Perekop and Simpheropol had joined them in the night of the 16th, and the morning of the 17th, in the flat ground that lies behind the heights that are before Eupatoria. As far as one could guess, and according to the information furnished by prisoners, the enemy mustered thirty-six battalions of infantry, six regiments of cavalry, 400 Cossacks, eighty pieces of artillery in position, and some troops of horse artillery, which were in reserve. The attack commenced at daylight by a strong cannonade, during which the enemy used even 32-pounders. At first the Russians showed themselves in great force along our whole position; but seeing that our left was protected by men-of-war, which went there when the first shot was fired, they concentrated against our centre and right. I then requested the senior officer of the English royal navy to send the gun-boat *Viper* to the right, and to take up a position near the French steamer *Véloce*, and the Turkish steamer *Schehfaer*, on board of which was the Vice-admiral, Ahmed Pasha. At the same time I reinforced the right with some battalions of infantry and some pieces of artillery, which I withdrew from the left. The enemy continued his fire, without ceasing, from the position held by his artillery, supported by a powerful fire of skirmishers; and then his infantry, carrying planks and ladders, three times tried to storm the works. Each time it was repulsed, and obliged to retire under our fire; but it was enabled to effect this retrograde movement under cover of its artillery, and of heavy masses of cavalry. Our cavalry, which at the present moment only musters about 200 or 300 horses, and which charged the Russian infantry at the commencement of its retreat, did not dare to pursue it in the face of such heavy masses. The superiority in artillery and cavalry prevented our disturbing the Russians on their retreat. After four hours and a-half's fighting, they commenced retiring in three different directions—towards the bridge of Lake Sasik, towards Top Mamai, and towards the Perekop road. I have every reason to be satisfied with the conduct of my troops during the day. Although behind works only half finished, and not fully armed, they showed a bold front, and were very steady. Our losses are not very numerous, but they are to be deplored. We regret the death of Selim Pasha, lieutenant-general, commanding the Egyptian troops. We had, moreover, eighty-seven killed and 277 wounded; seventy-nine horses killed and eighteen wounded. Amongst the killed there are seven officers, and ten are wounded, amongst them Suleiman Pasha; thirteen inhabitants of the town have been killed, and eleven wounded. I consider it my duty to make honourable mention of the French detachment that is here, and of the English men-of-war, *Curaçoa*, *Furious*, *Valorous*, *Viper*, of the Turkish steamer *Schehfaer*, and of the energetic co-operation of the French steamer *Véloce*, all which contributed greatly towards frustrating the efforts of the enemy. The French detachment had four men killed, and nine wounded—amongst the latter is a naval officer. The Russians must have suffered a heavy loss. According to the report of the civil authori-

ties of the town, who had to bury the dead, their number of killed amounts to 453: their artillery lost 300 horses. They carried away a great many of their dead, and almost all their wounded. We have taken seven prisoners."

The failure of the Russians to expel the invaders from Eupatoria, besides its military interest, is also noteworthy for the curious effect it is alleged to have had on the mind of Nicholas I., whose death took place, about a fortnight afterwards, from pulmonic paralysis, according to official statements there seems to be no reason to doubt; but, according to Dr. Granville, from cerebral disease. Dr. Granville's reasons, on which he based this opinion, were contained in the following letters, published by the *Times* on March 3rd, and which we give *in extenso*, as, to say the least, a remarkable coincidence:—

"*To the Editor of the 'Times.'*

"1, Curzon Street, May Fair, March 3.

"Sir,—I commit into your hands the following letter and memorandum for publication. It is fit that the people of this country should know that, at the commencement of the diplomatic dispute with Russia, ministers were made aware of the state of mind and prospect of life of its mighty ruler. The discussions carried on with him were shaped on the usual metaphysical grounds. They should have been guided instead by a knowledge of the physical condition of the disputant.

"At every confidential interview with the British representative, up started the monomaniacal idea of '*l'homme malade—gravement malade*,' which was often repeated, 'not without excitement,' added Sir George H. Seymour. If this fact did not of itself open the eyes of ministers in January and February of 1853, the timely professional warning conveyed to them in the annexed letter not long after, might, one would think, put ministers on their guard, albeit the warning came from an humble individual. Who knows how many thousand lives since sacrificed, and millions of money squandered, might not have been saved if, on the conviction of the truth of the warning received, instead of continuing for months together all sorts of unprofitable arguments, peremptory language and peremptory action had been employed, leaving no time to the imperial and really 'sick man' for the infliction on his own devoted people, and those of the three nations allied against him, of that irreparable mischief which he has been suffered to perpetrate? It was thus that Pitt dealt with Paul: but, alas! there is no Pitt now.

"For regularity's sake I mention that three passages in the following letter, which was strictly confidential, are omitted. The first was the expression of a purely religious opinion, which, though awfully appropriate at this moment, might be considered presumptuous. The second detailed the grounds on which, during my residence of several weeks in St. Petersburg in 1849, in attendance on a high personage at the imperial court, I formed the medical opinion which I deemed it my duty to convey to the government at home: their publication at this moment would be injudicious. The third passage was an allusion to my ill-requited service in the navy, which cannot interest your readers.

"I have the honour to be your obedient servant,

"A. B. GRANVILLE, M.D."

Confidential Letter to Viscount Palmerston.

"Kissingen, Bavaria, July 6, 1853.

"My Lord,—Failing in my endeavours to meet with your lordship at the appointed interview at the House of Commons on the 22nd ult., at which I proposed to make a *vivâ voce* communication of some importance to the government, as I thought, concerning the present political discussions with Russia, I stated, in a second note written at the moment of my departure from England for this place, that I regretted the disappointment, inasmuch as the subject of the intended communication, from its delicate nature, did not admit of being committed to paper. I think so still. But, on the other hand, the necessity of the government being put in possession of the communication appears to me to become every day so much more urgent, that if it is to be of any use it must be made at once, or it will fail to direct ministers in time, as I think the communication is capable of doing, in their negotiations with Russia, and in their estimation of the one particular element which, I apprehend, has first provoked, and is since pushing on, the emperor in his present reckless course. Mine is not a



NICHOLAS I.

EMPEROR OF RUSSIA

OB. 1855

ONDON PUBLISHING AND PUBLISHERS COMPANY, LIMITED

political, but a professional communication, therefore strictly confidential. It is not conjectural, but positive, largely based on personal knowledge, and partly on imparted information accidentally obtained—it is not essential that I should say from whom, for I take the responsibility of the whole on myself, inasmuch as the whole but confirms what I have myself observed, studied, or heard on the spot.

"The Western cabinets find the conduct of the Emperor Nicholas strange, preposterous, inconsistent, unexpected. They wonder at his demands; they are startled at his state papers; they cannot comprehend their context; they recognise not in them the clear and close reasoning of the Nestor of Russian diplomacy, but rather the dictates of an iron will to which he has been made to affix his name; they view the emperor's new international principles as extravagant; they doubt if he be under the guidance of wise counsels. Yet they proceed to treat, negotiate, and speak as if none of these perplexing novelties in diplomacy existed on the part of a power hitherto considered as the model of political loyalty. The Western cabinets are in error. The health of the czar is shaken. He has been irritable, passionate, fanciful, more than usually superstitious, capricious, hasty, precipitate, and obstinate withal—all from ill-health, unskilfully treated; and of late deteriorating into a degree of cerebral excitement, which, while it takes from him the power of steady reasoning, impels him to every extravagance, in the same manner as with his father in 1800; as with Alexander, in Poland, in 1820; as with Constantine, at Warsaw, in 1830; as with Michael, at St. Petersburg, in 1848-'9. Like them, his nature feels the fatal transmission of hereditary insanity, the natural consequence of an overlooked and progressive congestion of the brain. Like them, he is hurrying to his fate, sudden death, from congestive disease. The same period of life, between forty-five and sixty years of age, sees the career of this fated family cut short. Paul, at first violent and fanatical, a perfect lunatic at forty-five years of age, is despatched at forty-seven, in 1801. Alexander dies at Taganrog in December, 1825, aged forty-eight. For five years previously his temper and his mind had at times exhibited the parental malady by his capricious and wayward manner of treating the Polish provinces. He died of congestive fever of the brain, during which he knocked down his favourite physician — Sir James Wylie, who assured me of the fact at St. Petersburg, in 1828—because he wished to apply leeches to his temples. Constantine, eccentric always, tyrannical, cruel, dies at Warsaw suddenly in July, 1831, aged fifty-two years, after having caused rebellion in the country by his harsh treatment of the cadet officers. I saw and conversed with him on the parade, and in its palace at Warsaw, in December, 1828. His looks and demeanour sufficiently denoted to a medical man what he was, and what his fate would be. It has been said that he died of cholera; again, that he had been despatched like his father. The physician in chief of the Polish military hospitals assured me, some years after, that he had died apoplectic and in a rage. Michael, after many years of suffering from the same complaints which afflict his only surviving brother — enlarged liver, deranged digestion, and fulness of blood in the head—became, in 1848-'9, intolerably irritable, violent, and tyrannical to his own officers of the artillery and engineer service, of which he was the supreme chief. In July, 1849, he consulted me at St. Petersburg. It was after he had passed in review the whole train of artillery which was leaving the capital for Hungary, at which review I was present and near him, and witnessed scenes of violent temper towards generals and aides-de-camp hardly equalled in a lunatic asylum. I found him as described above. I advised cupping, diet, non-exposure to the sun and to fatigue, the administration of suitable medicines, and the cessation from drinking steel mineral waters, of which he was fond ever since he had been at Kissingen. His physician, the younger Sir James Wylie (himself since suddenly dead), assented reluctantly, but did not carry my advice into execution. The grand-duke, in the state he was, unrelieved by any medical measure or proper treatment, joined the army, rode out in the sun, and fell from his horse apoplectic in September, 1849, aged forty-eight. To complete the disastrous picture of the grand-children of Catharine, their mother, Maria of Würtemberg, a most exemplary princess, died apoplectic in November, 1829, scarcely more than sixty-five years of age. The attack, mistaken for weakness, was treated

with stimulants and bark by her physician, Ruhl, and bleeding was only had recourse to when the mistake was discovered—but too late to save. The meek and mild Elizabeth had, but a short time before, followed her imperial partner, Alexander, to the grave, in the still fresh years of womanhood, fifty years of age.

"During my second sojourn in St. Petersburg, in 1849, for a period of ten weeks * * * * What the opinion was of the emperor's health—what acts of his came to my knowledge, which bespoke eccentricity—what were the sentiments of his physician, Dr. Mandt, who, homœopathist as he is, and exercising a most peremptory influence over his master, leaves him, nevertheless, unrelieved, except by mystical drops and globules—what transpired of political doctrines and opinions, or, in fine, what I gathered afterwards at Moscow on all co-equal points, must be left to your lordship's conjecture,—not difficult after all I have divulged. To go further would be like a breach of trust, and of that I shall never be guilty. In all I have related there is nothing that had been committed to me as a privileged communication; while the imperative requirements of the moment calling for its immediate divulgement, I hesitate not to make it, under the firmest conviction that my fears and anticipations will be surely realised. If so, then the method of dealing with an all-powerful sovereign so visited must differ from the more regular mode of transacting business between government and government. For this purpose it is—to put her majesty's ministers on their guard accordingly, that I have determined to place in your lordship's hands the present professional information, which must be considered as so strictly confidential that I shall not sign it with my name.

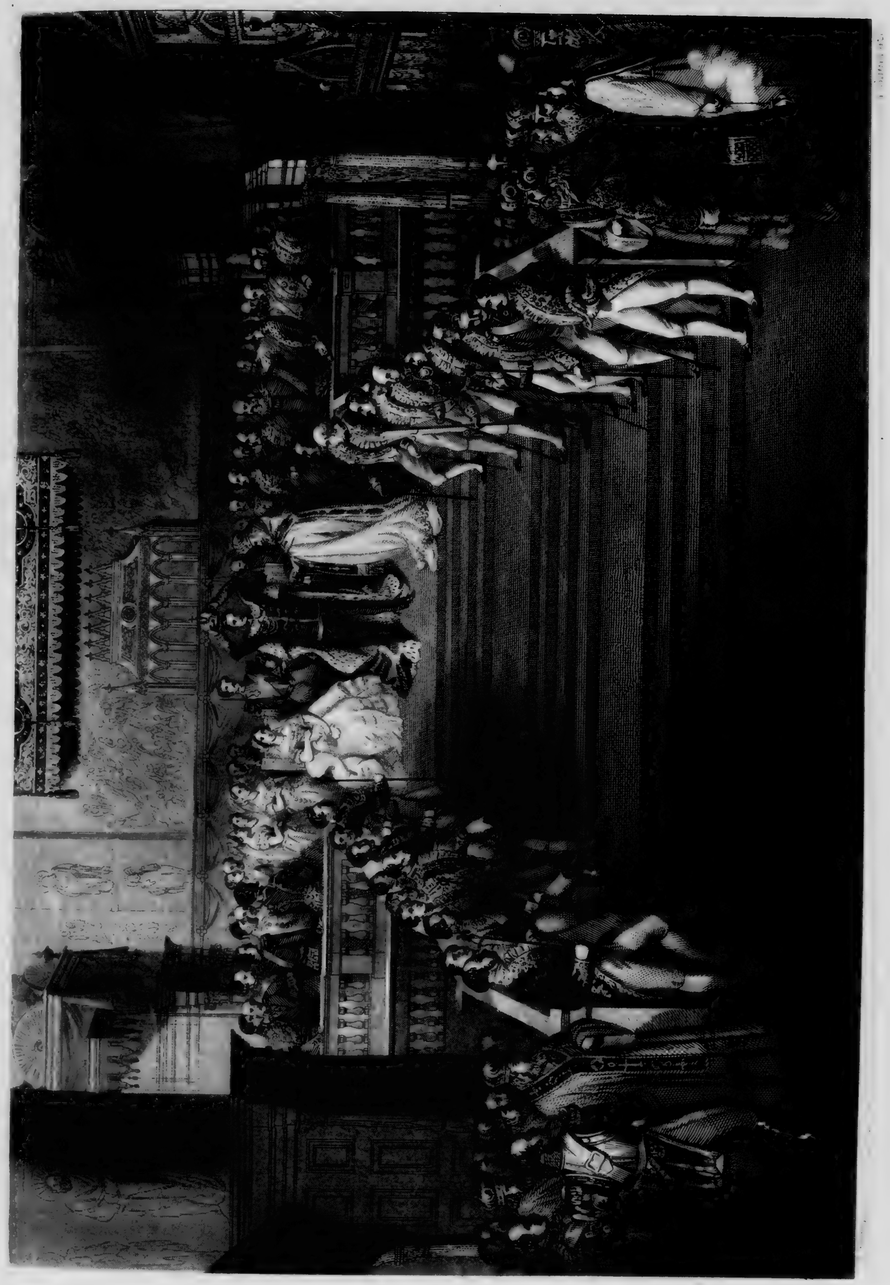
"That I have selected your lordship as the channel of my communication, rather than the Minister of Foreign Affairs, to whom more properly it should have been addressed, will at once appear natural to your lordship. In my capacity of once, and for some years, your lordship's physician (though not now honoured with that title), your lordship has known me personally, and is convinced that what my pen commits to paper, may be taken as coming from an honourable man and your obedient servant.

"N.B.—An acknowledgment of the receipt of this letter came by return of post in Lord Palmerston's handwriting.

"*Memorandum.*—At an interview with Lord Palmerston, February 23, 1854, on matters of a private nature, his lordship was pleased to ask me, before we separated, whether I still adhered to my opinion and prediction. I replied, that before July 1855 (the emperor would then be fifty-nine years old), what I had anticipated would happen. 'Let but a few reverses overtake the emperor,' I added, 'and his death, like that of all his brothers, will be sudden.' It has proved so. Alma, Inkermann, Balaklava, shook the mighty brain: Eupatoria completed the stroke, which has anticipated my prognosis only by a few weeks.

"A. B. G."

It was hoped that the death of the czar would entail the speedy conclusion of peace; but the only effect it had on the Russian garrison at Sebastopol, was to open a very brisk cannonade on the day when the news was received; whilst Alexander II. fully determined to carry on the war to the bitter end. The hopes, therefore, based on the death of Nicholas, of a speedy peace, were not fulfilled; and both sides applied themselves with redoubled energy to their respective tasks. The immediate result of Alexander's accession was the recall of Prince Mentschikoff, and the appointment of Prince Gortchakoff to the command of the troops in the eastern Crimea; whilst very strict inquiries were held as to the abuses and corruptions prevailing, both in the civil and military branches of the administration.



CHAPTER XXIII.

THIRD BOMBARDMENT OF SEBASTOPOL; CAPTURE OF THE MAMELON; UNSUCCESSFUL ASSAULT; BATTLE OF THE TCHERNAIA; FINAL BOMBARDMENT AND ASSAULT; FALL OF SEBASTOPOL.

THE failure of the second bombardment encouraged the Russians as much as it disheartened the allies, and they pushed on their defensive works with such energy, that General Pelissier insisted on the necessity of quitting the semi-defensive attitude the allies had been following, and energetically taking the offensive. He was convinced that strong and determined assaults would be much more calculated to result in success far more speedily, and at no greater loss, than the investing and bombarding policy hitherto adopted. This opinion was shared by many of the officers, but discountenanced by Marshal Canrobert, who was, as it were, placed between three cross-fires—the urgent expostulations of the assaulting theorists, the more careful policy of Lord Raglan, and the instructions received from Paris; especially from Napoleon, who but imperfectly understood the situation. Canrobert, however, so far acceded to Pelissier's designs as to permit him to assault the outworks of the centre bastion, regarding which Pelissier had written to him as follows:—"This work has been greatly enlarged, and soon it will be united with, and form a part of, the body of the place, and require a siege like the rest—a veritable siege, involving sacrifices really greater than the *coup de main* that I have proposed to you, and which our officers consider necessary for the security of our trenches and of our batteries. If it rested with me to decide, I should not hesitate. The ardour of the Russians in thus pushing forward to create this obstacle, and in working even when under a hot fire of artillery and musketry, shows what importance they attach to this new work. It forewarns us of the attention that we ought to pay to the matter: and the Russians thus extending themselves towards the Quarantine, it is not to be doubted that it is an advanced line of defence which they are establishing, with most daring activity. Day and night they are to be seen working unceasingly. If we do not march upon them, the enemy, emboldened thereby, will be able to march upon us."

The result of the attack, which took place on May 1st, was the occupation of the work after a most determined assault, the Russians endeavouring next day to regain possession of the lost ground, but unsuccessfully, all their efforts wrecking on the determined resistance of the Foreign Legion, which had relieved the storming party.

On May 19th, Pelissier succeeded to the command-in-chief (Canrobert having resigned it) over the French forces, and thus was inaugurated the new policy, according to which, under a fierce cannonade, the southern side of Sebastopol was to be stormed in force along the whole of the line. To this end, all preparations, with the exception of an expedition to the eastern shores of the Crimea, now tended, and at half-past two o'clock, on June 6th, 1855, a tremendous cannonade was opened along the whole line from 457 pieces of artillery. The numbers of the allies, including the Sardinian contingent, which did good work, and reanimated the flagging spirit of the invaders, now amounted to no less than 175,000 men; the Russian troops not quite so many, but not far off that number. The cannonade lasted for twenty-seven hours without interruption; and on the 7th of June, 40,000 men proceeded to the attack of the Mamelon Vert, the redoubts Selenginski and Wolinski—the works on the Karabelnaia—whilst the British troops attacked the quarries in front of the Redan. Russell thus tells the tale of the assault:—

"An immense concourse of officers and men were gathered all the afternoon round the flagstaff on Cathcart's Hill, and streamed along the spines of the three heights which wind towards Sebastopol from the English encampment. The fire on our side, which had continued since daybreak quietly and soberly, assumed a sudden fury about three o'clock, and was kept up from that hour to the critical moment with great activity. The affair itself came off but little after the anticipated time. Between five and six Lord Raglan and his staff took up a conspicuous position on the edge of the

hill below the Limekiln, where it commands very plainly our four-gun battery, and looks straight into the teeth of the Redan. A flagstaff was erected with threatening ostentation shortly before he came down, and a little angle of rude wall was as hastily thrown up as a breastwork. The man with the signal-rockets was in attendance; but there was a pause yet for a while. Sir Colin Campbell was observed to place himself on the next summit, still nearer to the enemy, 'commonly called,' to use a legal phrase, the Green-hill. His appearance drew some fire, and the shells dropped and flashed close by, but without disconcerting his purpose of having a thorough good look-out place. It was about half-past six when the head of the French attacking column came into view from these two spots, as it climbed its arduous road to the Mamelon. A rocket was instantly thrown up as the signal of our diversion, and as instantly the small force of our men detached for the post of honour made a rush at the quarries. After one slight check they drove out the Russians, and, turning round the gabions, commenced making themselves snug; but the interest was so entirely concentrated upon the more exciting scene, full in view upon the right, that they had to wait a good while before attention was directed to their conflict.

"The French went up the steep to the Mamelon in most beautiful style and in loose order, and every straining eye was upon their movements, which the declining daylight did not throw out into bold relief. Still their figures, like light shadows flitting across the dun barrier of earthworks, were seen to mount up unfailingly—were seen running, climbing, scrambling like skirmishers up the slopes on to the body of the work, amid a plunging fire from the guns, which, owing to their loose formation, did them as yet little damage. As an officer, who saw Bosquet wave them on, said at the moment, 'They went in like a clever pack of hounds.' In a moment some of these dim wraiths shone out clear against the sky. The Zouaves were upon the parapet firing down into the place from above; the next moment a flag was up as a rallying-point and defiance, and was seen to sway hither and thither, now up, now down, as the tide of battle raged round it; and now like a swarm they were in the heart of the Mamelon, and a fierce hand-to-hand encounter, here with the musket, there with the bayonet, was evident. It was seven minutes and a-half from the commencement of the enterprise. Then there came a rush through the angle where they had entered, and there was a momentary confusion outside. Groups, some idle, some busy, some wounded, were collected on the hither side, standing in shelter, and now and then to the far corner a shell flew from the English battery facing it. But hardly had the need of support become manifest, and a gun or two again flashed from the embrasure against them, than there was another run in, another sharp bayonet fight inside; and this time the Russians went out, spiking their guns. Twice the Russians made head against the current, for they had a large mass of troops in reserve, covered by the guns of the Round Tower. Twice they were forced back by the onsweeping flood of French, who fought as if they had eyes upon them to sketch the swift event in detail. For ten minutes or so the quick flash and roll of small arms had declared that the uncertain fight waxed and waned inside the enclosure. Then the back door, if one may use a humble metaphor, was burst open. The noise of the conflict went away down the descent on the side towards the town, and the arena grew larger. It was apparent, by the space over which the battle spread, that the Russians had been reinforced. When the higher ground again became the seat of action—when there came the second rush of the French back upon their supports, for the former one was a mere reflux or eddy of the stream—when rocket after rocket went up ominously from the French general's position, and seemed to emphasise by their repetition some very plain command, we began to get nervous. It was growing darker and darker, too, so that with our glasses we could with difficulty distinguish the actual state of affairs. There was even a dispute for some time as to whether our allies were going in or out of the work, and the staff themselves were by no means clear as to what was going on. At last, through the twilight, we discerned that the French were pouring in. After the interval of doubt, our ears could gather that the swell and babble of the fight was once more rolling down the inner face of the hill, and that the Russians were conclusively beaten. 'They are well into it this time,' says one to another, handing over





the glass. The musket-flashes were no more to be seen within it. There was no more lightning of the heavy guns from the embrasures. A shapeless hump upon a hill, the Mamelon, was an extinct volcano, until such time as it should please us to call it again into action. Then, at last, the more hidden struggle of our own men in the hollow on the left came uppermost. 'How are our fellows getting on?' says one. 'Oh! take my word for it, they're all right,' says another. And they were, so far as the occupation and retention of the quarries was concerned, but had nevertheless to fight all night, and repel six successive attacks of the Russians, who displayed the most singular pertinacity and recklessness of life."

The assault having been so far a complete success, it is to be deplored that the orders which came from Paris to storm the chief works on the 18th of June, in order to celebrate the anniversary of Waterloo, were obeyed before Pelissier had properly seized the Russian left. The orders were, however, peremptory; and, much against their will, the allies proceeded to carry them out, and alter in a hurry the dispositions which had been formed. The consequence was, that General Mayran, who was to turn and distract the fire of the Careening Bay works and ships, was discovered by the Russians, and obliged to commence his share of the assault fully half-an-hour before the time resolved upon—a fact that has been made use of to imply that Lord Raglan gave the orders to advance half-an-hour *after* the signal appointed. The consequence was, that though the French actually entered the Malakoff, they were unable to retain possession of it, and were driven out again; whilst Brigadier-General Eyre, who had succeeded in occupying the houses in front of the Gordon battery, was also forced to retreat after having held the position from 4 A.M. to 9 P.M. In short, the result was a decided and disastrous repulse; and ten days later (June 28th), Lord Raglan succumbed to an attack of cholera, brought on by the exposure and anxiety he had been subjected to. He was succeeded in the command by Sir James Simpson.

All efforts, throughout the rest of June and July, were now concentrated on the works against the Malakoff and Redan; and so deliberate was the approach, that the Russians decided to make one more supreme effort to raise the siege; and on August 16th, made an attack, under General Liprandi, on the allied position along the river Tchernaia; but Prince Gortchakoff, instead of employing the whole of his forces, or at least three-quarters, only sent about one-quarter into action—the result being a decided repulse, attended with great loss; amongst the killed being the author of the plan of attack, General Read, and Major-General de Weimarn.

By this time the contending forces, within and without the walls of Sebastopol, were so close to each other, that the average loss of the allies was between 300 and 350 killed and wounded every day; whilst the Russians generally lost twice, and on some days, more than three times the number. At the beginning of September, the French were within thirty-five to fifty-five yards of the Russian works in front of the Flagstaff and Central Bastions; whilst the English approaches reached to within 270 yards of the Redan.

By September 8th everything was in readiness to commence the great assault. On both sides there were about 700 heavy guns in play since the 5th; and at mid-day on the 8th, the signal was given for the assault on the Malakoff and the Little Redan by the French. They were both carried at the first attack; but the latter lost again soon; the former alternately falling into the hands of the French and Russians till about three o'clock, when it was definitely in the hands of the French. At half-past twelve the British forces advanced on the Redan, carried it, but lost it again in consequence of insufficient support, and were obliged to content themselves with directing a concentrated fire upon it from all possible points. This failure of the British commander to carry the Redan, enabled the garrison to assist their comrades against the French in the Little Redan. In consequence, General Pelissier sent to inquire of General Simpson whether he intended to renew the attack. The reply was, that he was too exhausted, but would do so the first thing the next day. But when day dawned, it was discovered, by an engineer who crept up to the Redan, that it was abandoned; and so, in fact, was the whole southern side of Sebastopol, the Russians having retreated during the night.

With the fall of the southern side of Sebastopol, the war was practically at an end, and the treaty of peace concluded at

Paris on March 30th, 1856. So far we have dealt simply with the operations of the allies before Sebastopol; which, though not belonging especially to the history of Russia, have, however, had such an influence on the future relations between Russia and the Western powers, that a short description of them was necessary, and justified by the importance of the issues raised and terminated by the war. We now propose giving an account of the life at Sebastopol during the siege, drawn from Russian sources, but which we have every reason to believe faithful, and not exaggerated.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE INTERIOR OF SEBASTOPOL DURING THE SIEGE; BRAVERY OF THE TROOPS; ANECDOTES OF THE DEFENCE.

THE characteristic features of Russian history during the two decades that have elapsed since the Crimean war was brought to a close, may fitly be designated as threefold:—The internal development of the nation, its successful progress in Central Asia, and its gradual emancipation from the bonds imposed upon it by the treaty of Paris, signed on the 30th of March, 1856. At the same time the whole period has been one of regeneration, in which the emancipation of the serfs stands forth so boldly as to furnish an indelible landmark in the history of the empire; whence dates the death of the old feudal system, and the birth of a truly national life, struggling into existence through the tangled masses of traditions and superstitions that have been weighing upon it for ages. On this regeneration, the Crimean war, or rather, speaking from a Russian point of view, the defence of Sebastopol, has had an immense influence. The one idea that has pervaded Russia since then, has been the fixed determination to regain the ground she then lost, and shake off the shackels of what she considered as derogatory a tutelage as any ever imposed upon her enemies, the Turks. For this purpose the Russian statesmen resolved to prepare the coming generation by all the means in their power; by the development of industry, the organisation of the army and navy, and the emancipation and education of the masses, whose birth was ushered in by the roar of the cannon thundering from the walls of the beleaguered city. The legend of the nation's future life was revenge for Sebastopol; and towards this end everything tended, even as, at the present day, revenge for Alsace is the great motive power in the life of the French nation, which patiently and perseveringly submits to the greatest burdens for the ultimate attainment of its ends. And, curiously enough, whilst the fall of Sebastopol was hailed, on the one hand, as the dawn of an epoch of peace that would allow Turkey to develop her resources, and led to the investment of some two hundred millions sterling in Turkish securities, the same confidence was manifested in Russia, and another two hundred millions sterling invested there also. Thus conqueror and conquered were equally benefited by the fall of the Russian fortress; for at that time the sensible principle of making the aggressor pay the damages of war had not yet been adopted, and Europe was still unaware of the absurdity she was committing in supplying two inveterate enemies with unlimited funds in consequence of one and the same event. Or, to put the matter in another way, whilst the Western nations incurred a vast expense to put a stop to Russia's plans for aggrandisement in the East, they not only bore the whole expenses of the war, but actually, within the course of a very few years, advanced, in about equal portions to the two combatants, a sum exceeding the French indemnity in amount.

If the fall of Sebastopol thus exercised so vast an influence abroad, it may be imagined how important a part it must have played in the subsequent development of the empire. It will therefore be highly interesting to know how the defence of Sebastopol has been regarded by the Russians themselves, and

has come to be one of the chief levers in the regeneration of their country: and, fortunately, we are enabled to form an excellent idea of the spirit in which it has been, and still is, regarded, by the publication, in 1872 and 1873, under the auspices of the Grand Duke, of the "Sevastopolskii Sbornik,"* a collection of narratives emanating from the defenders themselves. Circulars were addressed to the officers, and advertisements made public, begging everyone who had anything to communicate, in the shape of documents, letters, or personal observations, to send them to the committee charged with the duty of selection, verification, and publication of the matter thus collected. They were told not to mind the style or form, but simply to adhere to the truth, and state their views with the fullest frankness. This appeal was responded to with the greatest enthusiasm. Communications poured in upon the committee from all corners of the empire: letters written on the bastions, under fire of the enemies' guns, and by the light of lurid conflagrations; anecdotes, complaints, accusations; defences of this, that, and the other general; scientific accounts and adventures, nearly overwhelmed the committee, which spent over six months merely in arranging this heterogeneous mass of correspondence. The result was thus eminently satisfactory, as showing in what spirit the defence of Sebastopol was conducted at the time, and in what spirit it was still regarded by the public at large; for in such patriarchal society as that of Russia, the views of the fathers are still those of the children—in all, at least, that touches the honour of the nation. And what is especially noteworthy, is the fact, that in all these recitals, the dominant idea is, that the Western nations were the aggressors, waging a wanton war upon holy Russia; whilst the Russians appear as the patriotic heroes, resisting this attack to the last drop of their blood; for when Mentschikoff's troops entered Sebastopol, after the battle of the Alma, the Russians saw themselves invaded for the first time since 1812, and regarded this second invasion as similar in character to that of Napoleon I. The inhabitants were stupefied at the double news of the disembarkment of the allies and the defeat of the army; for the Crimea, protected by a powerful fleet and one of the strongest fortresses in the world, was held to be better protected against invasion than any other province of the empire; and now the enemy, who was thought to be so far away, was not only actually at the very gates of the town, but had defeated the flower of the Russian army in what was considered an impregnable position. No wonder that the usual cry of "Treason" was raised. Every unknown face was regarded with suspicion—every stranger taken for a spy. An adjutant of the commander-in-chief, who had gone to see a friend in rather an out-of-the-way quarter, was at once arrested, and narrowly escaped being lynched by the infuriated mob. It was seriously stated in Sebastopol, that Mentschikoff had been heard to say—"I meant to sell Sebastopol; but the English would not pay me enough." This absurd accusation was repeatedly made in St. Petersburg, not only by the inhabitants of Sebastopol, but also by military men of some rank. Still, after the first moments of panic and confusion had given way to better sense, the interval between the battle of the Alma and the arrival of the advance posts of the allies was energetically employed in throwing up earthworks, constructing bastions and redoubts, and connecting the Redan and Malakoff with the other works by covered ways and trenches. For, in truth, the fortress had been neglected for many years; and, had the allies been able to attack it at once, there is no doubt, as Marshal Niel has affirmed, that it would have succumbed. But thousands and thousands of willing hands repaired in a few days the neglect of years; and, as a sample of the enthusiasm and energy with which the work was prosecuted, it may be mentioned, that one of the batteries was entirely constructed by the prostitutes of the town, and was called, to the end of the siege, Batterie des Demoiselles.

As is well known, a portion of the fleet was sunk at the mouth of the harbour, after the armament had been withdrawn to be mounted on the ramparts. By this means 15,000 sailors were added to the defensive forces of the place, and, under their commanders, Korniloff, Istomine, Nakhimoff, and Pamphiloff, became the soul of the defence. A curious incident connected with the sinking of the fleet, shows the depth of superstition, degenerated

* "Sevastopolskii Sbornik: Sbornik roukopiseï predstavlennykh ego imperatorskomou vysotchestvou, gosoudariou nasliednikou Tsezarévitchou o Sevastopolskoï oboronié Sevastopoltsami." St. Petersburg, 1872-'73, 3 vols. in 8vo.

into a habit, of the Russian people. The largest of the vessels sunk, the *Twelve Apostles*, obstinately refused to go to the bottom in spite of the holes that had been knocked in her, and, in consequence, a shot was fired at her between wind and water. But still she would not sink, and kept on raising her bows and stern alternately like a restive horse. Then it was suddenly remembered that an image of St. Peter, which was highly venerated by the crew, had been left behind in one of the cabins, and a boat was at once manned, and the forsaken image brought triumphantly to shore. Thereupon the pious vessel settled down resignedly to its duty, and was seen no more.

Whilst these preparations were going on, the majority of the population who could afford it, sought refuge in Simpheropol and Odessa; whilst the remainder awaited the appearance of the enemy with undisguised anxiety—a prey to the wildest rumours and superstitious fears. Thus the story ran, one day, that the sentinel at the Quarantine had been surprised by a woman suddenly rushing up to him, begging him to conceal her, and deny that he had seen her if anyone should ask after her. Scarcely had the sentinel complied with her request, when a horseman, mounted on a black horse, came galloping up, followed by another clad in a red cloak, and a third dressed in white, and armed with a variety of weapons. They all three asked the soldier if he had seen the woman. On his replying in the negative, they all disappeared as rapidly as they had come. The fugitive then, coming out of her hiding-place, informed the sentinel, that the black horseman signified that not one stone would remain on the other in Sebastopol; the red one, that the town would be visited by fire and blood; and the white one, that Sebastopol would arise from its ashes more beautiful and stronger than ever. This story created an immense excitement, and for several days crowds of people went down to the Quarantine to hear the tale from the sentinel's own lips; but, as is usually the case in such matters, the sentinel could not be found; and after awhile, more material visitors came in the shape of a hail of shot and shell from the 126 pieces which opened fire upon the town on the 17th of October, from the batteries erected by the allies since their appearance on the 27th of September, 1854. Thus commenced that strange series of combats, unprecedented in the annals of modern warfare, that are commonly called the Siege of Sebastopol. But inasmuch as the very first condition of a siege consists in the surrounding of the place, and Sebastopol was not invested for much more than a third of its circumference, the struggle must be regarded as less of a siege than that of two rival armies for the possession of the towns they were respectively occupying and watching over. "We have now," wrote Captain Lesli to his wife, "got two Sebastopols defying each other; our own, and that of the enemy with their countless huts, barracks, and trenches, and even their own railway." Thus the besiegers were met in their trenches and mines by the besieged in their counter-mines; now it was the besieged who attacked, now it was the besiegers. Whilst the allies were hundreds of miles distant from their native shores, yet they were, in point of fact, virtually nearer to their homes than the Russians were to Russia; for, being masters of the seas, their steamers supplied them much more rapidly with reinforcements and war-material than could the lumbering waggons of the Russians, which had to traverse nearly as many hundreds of miles by wretched and often impassable roads. Thus, in reality, the allies might almost be said to have been fighting on their own soil, and that nothing but an insufficiency of men prevented them from terminating the war in less than half the time that was eventually requisite. Under these circumstances the defence of the Russians was really excellent. It was offensive as much as it was defensive; whilst the manner in which the Russian wielded his pickaxe and spade was simply admirable. It requires no slight amount of moral courage, or unexampled discipline, to work day and night under a hail of whizzing projectiles without being sustained by the excitement of returning the fire, which was so effective, that by the end of the siege, there were only fourteen houses left standing in Sebastopol, out of a total of 2,247.

At the same time, however, the besiegers were hard pushed; and even during the calmest days of the siege, never lost less than forty a day. The bombardments in May and June cost, daily, 300 to 400 men. That of the 17th of August, 1,500; and during the five following days, over 5,000; the same number falling on the day of the final assault: whilst, from the 17th of

August to the 8th of September, the Russian fire put, by artillery only, over 18,000 men *hors de combat*. Each bombardment was as murderous as a battle. In some of the batteries, the company in charge had to be relieved several times a day. As many as eight and ten shots fell round one piece at a time; and one day as many as 70,000 shells and bombs were sent into the town; and the explosions of magazines, ammunition carts, &c., were so incessant, that old soldiers like Semiakin declared the fire made their heads swim; whilst Gortchakoff described it, in his official report, simply as "hell-fire." The 21st regiment, as appears from the Russian official report, lost 43 officers out of 50, and 2,000 men out of 3,000. The Olonetz regiment was reduced to less than half its effective force. One day, Prince Sviatopolk-Mirski, on leaving the hospital, met a trumpeter of his regiment. "Well," said he, "and how is the battalion getting on?" At first the man would not reply: at last he said, "What can you expect. One saucepan is big enough to cook the dinner for the lot of us. There are not fifty of us left."

The difficulty of filling up these gaps was very great. In the summer and autumn days the steppes were burnt up by the heat, and men and cattle half choked with clouds of dust and fine sand, that would lie, on windless days, two to three inches thick on such roads as were then practicable. In the winter all this dust was transformed into bottomless mire, and the roads cut up into ruts as deep, in many places, as two feet; frequently, in fact, above the axle; so that it generally took thirteen or fourteen horses to accomplish a distance of eight miles. Nor did things improve much when the frost set in, and the ruts were transformed into rigid grooves, out of which the *arabas*, or waggons, could not be extricated without unloading. The consequence was, that, as long as possible, the trains of carts had to be driven alongside the road till the earth was again cut up; so that, for miles and miles, the tracks had a breadth of cut-up rutty soil of 300 and 400 yards. The villages for a hundred miles around were deserted, not so much from fear of the allies as of the pillaging bands of Tartars, who were by no means reconciled to Russian rule. Yet, in spite of all these drawbacks, the spirit of the population was excellent; for, although the Russian peasant is, on the whole, a peaceful, home-loving individual, and averse from over-exertion, the will of the czar and the church are two forces he implicitly obeys; and in this war, which was purely a political war, and not a war of races, no means were spared to impress upon the peasant the fact, that the country was being wantonly attacked, as in 1812, and to represent it as a holy crusade against the Turk and his heretical and schismatical allies, the English and French. In countless appeals, the emperor and the bishops called upon their flocks to rise and defend "the holy land, where flows the river in which St. Vladimir was baptised, with sword in hand and the cross on their hearts." The miracle-working image of St. Sergius, of which countless copies were despatched from the monastery of Tvoitra, was said to have undertaken the protection of its worshippers "from steel, fire, and lead;" and so many were the bands of volunteers, that, had the means of communication been better, the government could have placed twice as many men on the field of battle, and have overwhelmed the allies by sheer force of numbers. This must be remembered when estimating the powers of the Russians at the present day. Then it took as much as three months to transport a regiment from a spot whence they can now be brought into action in six days.

Meanwhile, whilst the allies were continually throwing up fresh works, the Russians kept up with them till the outworks formed an intricate maze of trenches, batteries, and bastions, which was peculiarly fatal to the fresh troops, who were unacquainted with the localities both of their own defences and those of the enemy. As is the custom during a siege, a man is told-off in every battery to watch the enemy's fire, and give notice to his comrades of the coming shell. Thus, on all sides, were heard the cries: "A shell for the battery St. Sergius!"—"A shot for the Fourth!"—"For us! look out!" These warnings were well understood by the old hands of the batteries, who at once took the necessary precautions. But the fresh hands were quite at sea. One of the officers thus gives his experience of his first shell:—

"Do you know what to do in case a shell comes for us?" asked his major. "Oh yes," was the reply, "I must throw

myself flat down on the ground as soon as possible." At that moment the look-out cried, "A shell for us!" "Yes," said the major, "she is coming straight upon us." So saying, he seized the new arrival by the arm, and began dodging about till he suddenly threw him down to the right; whilst the shell, after striking the ground, and tearing up a couple of planks of the platform two or three steps to the left, went on hissing and whizzing a second or two till it exploded with a tremendous report, but fortunately without killing any of the men. They were all old hands, and knew how to shelter themselves. The fresh arrivals, on the contrary, who had no friendly major at hand, suffered terribly.

As the enemy's lines advanced more and more towards the Russian works, the fire became still more deadly and continuous. There was no rest, day or night, for the defenders. The air was thick with smoke and the dust raised by the shells, which, often burying themselves in the earth-works, blew out showers of stones, dust, and gravel all round, and greatly added to the danger and confusion. At night, when the fire had ceased, there were the damaged works to be repaired, the embrasures freed from *débris*, and fresh earth to be thrown on the armoured roofs of the powder magazines; there were fires to be extinguished, ammunition brought to the front, disabled pieces to be removed, and fresh ones substituted: all which operations, as the lines came closer to each other, became more and more dangerous, on account of the noise arousing the enemy's attention. Lieutenant-Colonel Rosine relates, that bringing one single fresh piece into position, might cost him no less than forty men. The men got tired of the cries, "Look out! a shell for us!" Indifference to the danger grew with their familiarity with it. They would fall asleep standing, in spite of the cannonade; and, on being expostulated with, replied, "If we are to die, well and good; but let us sleep." The cannonade was becoming monotonous, and death, more or less, as a matter of course. Breakfast was served in the batteries at 10 A.M.; but as often as not, the bearer was killed on the way, and the viands strewn about the streets, which bore such reassuring names as the Valley of Death; the Street of the Wounded; Hell's Gate; and the Devil's Lane. Whenever an officer invited his comrades to dinner on some festive occasion—such as a birthday, or the arrival of a chest of provisions from home—it was very seldom that one or more of the invited did not fail to put in an appearance; and sometimes even the host himself was killed before the soup was placed on the table. The sight of the mangled corpses produced one strange effect, which is frequently noticed in the pages of the "Sevastopolskii Sbornik;" it produced an aversion to meat. Nothing can be more significant of the terrible carnage than this fact: and it is within our personal knowledge, that many officers became, and still are, vegetarians to the present day in consequence. On one of these "festive" occasions, the host was killed by a fragment of shell just as he was drinking to the emperor's health; and almost at the same moment another shot passed through the room, taking off his brother's head. "But what were we to do?" wrote one of the guests; "we had no food all day; and had we not taken what was before us, we should have had to fast till next day. We could not indulge in the luxury of sorrow under such circumstances. So we removed the two bodies and resumed our meal, which, of course, *had all grown cold in the meantime.*"

That the wounded should, under such circumstances, receive but scant sympathy, might be expected. Everything was done to prevent them from crying out when they were hit. Poor mutilated wretches were roughly told to hold their tongues. Of course, this was done to prevent the bad impression their shrieks produced on their comrades. Thus, when one of the officers had his collar-bone and jaw smashed by a piece of shell, and involuntarily gave a cry of agony, one of his comrades exclaimed: "What are you making that noise for?"—whilst Lieutenant Sabourof, picking up a piece of straw, held it before the wounded man's nose, and said, "That's all you received, and you dare to make a row like that!" A general laugh followed this sally, in which the victim himself joined at last.

If the batteries presented such a scene of incessant carnage, it may be imagined what the hospitals were like, in spite of such institutions as "Gonchine's," a house devoted to incurables. Thus, when the surgeons exclaimed, after a cursory inspection of the victim, "Take him to Gonchine's," the sufferer knew that that was the last stage to the cemetery. The hospitals were under

the direction of the celebrated Pirogof, who, however much he might have been admired by his scientific colleagues, was universally dreaded by the patients. His appearance in any of the wards was known to be the signal of some painful and dangerous operation, and was in itself sufficient to cause a relapse. Lieutenant-Colonel Rosine gives an account of the fears of his friend Stankievich, who was laid up with a fractured leg. One day Pirogof appeared with all his assistants, and approached his bed. "How's this leg getting on?" he asked curtly. "Excellently," replied the patient, and with an herculean effort he raised his injured limb—thus, as he subsequently remarked, saving his leg. On one occasion, when the fire of the allies was at its height, and litter upon litter was brought in with mutilated victims, one of the officers in charge was told by Pirogof to come with him. All his other assistants were fully occupied. One of the patients had had two fingers shot off; and without chloroform, or any other preparation, Pirogof at once commenced the amputation of the mangled stumps. The patient shrieked with agony. "If you don't hold your tongue," cried Pirogof with an oath, "I'll take the whole arm off." That day several barrows full of amputated members were taken out of the hospital.

The dead were collected every morning, and taken down to the port, to be buried on the other side of the harbour. The officer who was charged with the duty of seeing them ferried across, received the appropriate name of Charon. The bodies, during the nightly bombardments, were placed in an angle of the bastion, beneath a lamp and the image of some saint. A lighted taper was placed in their hands, and there they remained for collection in the morning; though sometimes, such was the pressure of the work, they were left till they were lying three deep.

But, in spite of all these horrors, the Russians kept up their spirits well; and, all things considered, there was a surprising absence of grumbling. The example of their officers contributed in no small degree to this desirable frame of mind. One of them was especially notorious for his daring and reckless love of fun. One day, in the midst of a heavy fire, he climbed up on to the parapet, and lying on his back, stretched both his legs into the air above his head, and cried, "Here goes for a full pension!" After numberless exploits of this kind, he was one of the very few who did not get a scratch during the whole siege. The sailors and their leaders, above all, were indefatigable and incorrigible in their reckless bravery. Four admirals—Korniloff, Istomine, Nakhimoff, and Paul Stepanovich—were killed one after the other. Of these Nakhimoff was the most noted. In 1822, he had circumnavigated the globe with Lazaref; in 1828, he took a share in the battle of Navarino; and finally, it was he who destroyed the Turkish fleet at Sinope in 1853. It was with great difficulty that he was persuaded not to attack the allied fleet before sinking his own at the entrance to the port. Wherever he went he aroused the greatest enthusiasm; and when implored not to expose himself so much to the enemy's fire, he told his advisers not to talk nonsense, as though the allies had nothing better to do than bring their cannon to bear upon him. Colonel Bulmerincq relates of him:—"One day the admiral asked me to take him to the Schwartz battery, and to take him by the shortest way. Leaving by the right flank of the bastion instead of going by the outer wall, which was not more than four feet high, and commanded by the French tirailleurs, I conducted him and his numerous suite behind the batteries. Suddenly he turned round and exclaimed, 'Where are you taking me to? I don't intend to hide about in holes and corners. Kindly lead us by the shortest way along the outer wall.' I told him my reasons, but he refused to listen to them. 'My name is Nakhimof,' he simply replied; 'I always go the shortest way.' So we went the shortest way, and lost three men before we had got to the end of it." Paul Stepanovich was killed in a similar manner, after having resisted all entreaties to retire from a place where he was needlessly exposing himself.

Prisoners were not often made. To the Turks quarter was never given; as a general rule, "there was no time to look after the enemy's wounded"—a mild way of saying that they were left to die, or put out of their misery. In no case did the *Plastouns* ever make a prisoner, or succour a wounded man, or leave a man to take his chance of living, if they had a chance of despatching him. These *Plastouns* were a sort of free corps — the *franctireurs* of the Crimea. They were mostly Cossacks of the Don, and had learned their trade of nocturnal ex-

ploits and cold-blooded butchery in the Caucasian war. *Plastoun* means, to lie down. In America they would doubtless be called "Lie-downs," their method of procedure being to sally out at dusk, and burrowing in the abandoned pits and holes formed by explosions, to pick off any outposts, and procure all the information possible. Being thoroughly acquainted with the locality, they generally escaped scot-free, whilst inflicting a vast amount of loss on the enemy. Thus one of them asserts, and it is believed, without exaggeration, that he alone killed fifty-six men during the siege. By day they slept, or related their adventures, until, with approaching night, they sallied out again on their murderous work.

Whilst the soldiers were thus battling night and day, the civil population, though small, bravely bore its share of the dangers and privations. The women used to come, day after day, to bring their husbands what food they could, especially the sailors' wives; whilst the higher classes employed their time in nursing the wounded; one of them, Prascovia Ivanovna, rivalling Florence Nightingale in devotion and disregard of danger. Less fortunate than her English colleague, she was killed by a shell at the foot of the Malakoff, whilst tending one of the wounded, who were lying in heaps around her. The Russian ladies, according to unanimous testimony, exhibited rare courage during the whole of this trying period. They never omitted their afternoon promenade; the sentinels posted about the streets giving them the direction of the shells, and telling them how to avoid being struck. Every evening the band played opposite the Karovski monument; and the only thing that disturbed their equanimity were the English Congreve rockets, which, however, were more noisy and alarming than dangerous. But perhaps nothing was more striking than the spirit in which the very children regarded the infernal scene around them. Their favourite amusement was the construction of ramparts of snow, bastions with mimic embrasures, which were defended by our party and attacked by the other—one representing the allies, the other the Russians. Their projectiles were hollow bones filled with the powder, and furnished with the bits of slow matches, that were but too abundant; and great was the delight when one of the assailants was wounded by one of those improvised shells, and the blood flowed from the wound. He would then be taken to the ambulance, where the girls would carefully wrap up his finger with rags; whilst another youth would lead him to the prison, and hand him over to the gaoler. These combats were sometimes so fiercely waged, that, on more than one occasion, the wounds inflicted were beyond the skill of the youthful surgeons, and the victims had to be taken to the hospital in all earnest.

Thus months and months passed away: yet, in spite of all the carnage and bloodshed, in spite of the herculean efforts made on both sides, no prospect of a termination of the struggle, one way or the other, was to be discerned. Besiegers and besieged were tired of the vain efforts they were both making to escape from the tangle they were in. Gradually, the Russians became convinced, that unless they were relieved they must succumb in the end, as one fortification after the other was pounded to dust; whilst the allies, on the other hand, could not but look with dismay on the prospect of continuing the war after they should have succeeded in gaining possession of the fortress that had withstood them so long. The men and officers of the allies were beginning to lose their interest in the strife; whilst the Russians were becoming more and more fanatical and savage. The allied troops were spending their blood for a political principle, in which, as individuals, they had no interest; but the Russian felt that he was fighting for his home and family. The last blow was the successful assault of the Malakoff, the tower in which sixty Russians had so bravely withstood the incessant attacks of overwhelming forces. In the latter days of the siege the sufferings increased tenfold, and despair began to be felt, especially when the news arrived of the defeat of the Russians on the Tchernaia, by the combined forces of the French and Sardinians, on the 16th of August, 1856. At last, the redoubled efforts of the allies began to convince General Todleben, that unless the siege was raised, the fall of the town would be inevitable. It was not; and on the 8th of September, 1856, the city and south side of the fortifications were taken, the Russian forces achieving a brilliant retreat, and uniting with the field forces.

Now, from these recitals by Russians themselves, several things are apparent. They show the unquestioning discipline of

the men, and a hardness of character, combined with a callous indifference to suffering in others, that seems to be a peculiarity of the Slav races. But, at the same time, the siege had a powerful effect in diminishing the gulf that separated the serf from his owner. When man and master had so long shared the same privations, the same coarse food—when the "noble" appeared divested of all the usual paraphernalia of rank in his naked humanity, it was inevitable that he should lose some of the *prestige* that made him a superior being in the eyes of his servant. On the other hand, many of the "nobles" came to regard their serfs as something better than beasts of burden, and to treat them as fellow-creatures in spite of their inferiority. Thus Captain Lesli, a naval officer, wrote to his sister during the siege:—"There is one thing you must do, my dear Nadia, and I hope it will give you pleasure to do it, as it will be coupling the name of our dear brother Eugene (killed at Sebastopol) with an act of eternal gratitude. You must induce our father to give Fetis his freedom for his long and devoted service to my brother. *One soul less is of no account;* and in exchange, Eugene's memory will be preserved and honoured for ever in Fetis's family. I have already written to papa, to tell him that, if I die here, my last prayer will be—Give my Ivan his freedom."—Nothing can show more forcibly than this letter in what light the owners of the soil regarded their serfs. Body and soul, they were theirs. And that the enormity of the wrong done to them was felt in a hazy sort of way by the captain, is proved by his making his slave's liberation the last and dearest wish of his life. Not only that; but those who plausibly argue that the serf was better off as a a serf, and had no wish for his freedom, are crushingly refuted when the captain assures his sister that his brother's name will be honoured for ever in the liberated serf's household. Evidently Captain Lesli and his brother were good and kind masters, and loved by their serfs; yet no greater reward could he devise for them than their liberation from serfdom. Nor was this an isolated instance. Many and many a serf gained his liberty from similar causes; and there is no doubt but that the fraternisation compelled by the bombs and shells of the allies, was a powerful agent in promoting the emancipation of the serfs by the emperor.

From a military point of view, both the attack and defence of Sebastopol were failures: the former from causes this is no place to enter upon; the latter from want of means of rapid communication, and inferiority of armament both as regards small arms and artillery; though it is true that, considering the vast amount of metal flung into the town by the allies, either their pieces were highly inaccurate, the ammunition bad, or the cannon badly worked; for, according to reliable statistics on the subject, it appears that it took 83⅓ heavy shot or shell to kill one man. The Minie rifle, however, was infinitely superior to the Russian musket; and it was, no doubt, due to this circumstance that the allies were able to counterbalance the disadvantage they laboured under from inferiority of numbers. But want of means of locomotion was the one glaring defect that impressed itself on the Russian mind. There was plenty of material, animate and inanimate, to be had, but it was mostly in the wrong place and unavailable for use. It was clear that this defect must be remedied before Russia could throw down the gauntlet to any power commanding the sea; and thus, as we shall see, one of the first cares of the Russian government was to improve and extend its net-work of railways, and devote more attention than hitherto to the high-roads.

Furthermore, it was proved, by the course the war took, that Sebastopol was really of little use as a protection as long as the Black Sea was open to all comers. As long as the Dardanelles were in the hands of another power, Russia would always be open to attack, and liable to invasion, by any power holding the seas. This is the real meaning of the phrase about Constantinople being the high-road to India. If Russia was in possession of the Dardanelles, she would be absolutely secure against any attack, except through Austria and Prussia. If proof of this assertion is needed, attention need only be directed to the operations of the British fleet in the Baltic, which was absolutely unable to accomplish anything. Supposing the Dardanelles in the hands of Russia, and she declares war against England, or moves upon India, unless England secured the active alliance of Austria or Prussia, she would be utterly unable to inflict a single blow on Russia, except by disembarking an army in Turkey—if Turkey allowed it—and attacking that

small strip of Russian territory that follows, for a short distance, the lower course of the Danube, and its myriad of channels and swamps. Practically, the thing would be impossible without an army of 800,000 men, and corresponding stores. This conviction, which must be palpable to the meanest understanding, was forced upon Russia at an immense cost of blood and treasure; and it is no wonder that the Emperor Nicholas endeavoured, by the treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi, to protect this vulnerable spot in the Russian heel. Thus the possession of the Dardanelles has become an article of political faith in Russia, and all the military and naval authorities combine in demanding it, as the only means of rendering Russia absolutely invulnerable by her sea-coasts. Why she should be invulnerable, and whether she should be allowed to become so, is another question, which most other nations are inclined to answer in the negative. But, from the Russian point of view, the possession or control of the Straits is, undoubtedly, a necessity—is recognised as such throughout Russia, and will be strained after on every occasion, and until she has obtained it, or lost all hopes of ever succeeding. That she, therefore, eagerly seized the first opportunity of repudiating the treaty that kept her out of the Black Sea, was natural and inevitable; but because the state of Western Europe then prevented any power to interfere with reasonable hopes of success, that is scarcely a reason why Russia should be allowed to advance, unimpeded, on the path she has marked out for herself, as leading to invulnerability and a boundless field for the exercise of boundless ambition in Europe as well as in Asia.

Thus the Emperor Alexander entered upon his inheritance with a Past to undo, and a Future to unravel. Whilst the task his father undertook had still further increased its gigantic proportions, the means at his disposal had dwindled down to nothing, and years and years of labour and expense would be necessary before he could hope to gain the power to cut the Gordian knot, if haply it could not be solved by diplomatic means; though there can scarcely be a score of men within the limits of the Russian empire who would entertain such hopes, knowing, as they do, that were the Turks to vanish from the face of the earth, they would be no nearer the accomplishment of their desires than before, inasmuch as it is with the whole of Europe they would eventually, directly or indirectly, have to contend. It is true, the emperor might have entered upon another course. He might have abandoned the tradition of the invulnerability of Russia, and have been content to leave the dangerous spot unprotected, relying on the justice of nations not to take advantage of it whilst developing the immense resources the empire already contained. This would certainly have been the wisest course. No nation in Europe has the slightest interest in waging war upon Russia, or molesting her in any way; and consequently, every attack she makes or threatens, however it may be cloaked with high-sounding sentiment, is regarded as an act of wanton aggression, which immediately unites those nations which consider their interests in the East endangered by any advance of Russia southwards, with a more or less openly or secretly hostile league against her.

CHAPTER XXV.

PROGRESS OF EDUCATION SINCE 1856.

AMONG the many unexpected results arising from the siege of Sebastopol, not the least important was the interchange of thoughts, views, and opinions, between the inhabitants of widely differing and remote portions of the empire. Denizens of the northern and eastern provinces compared notes, for the first time, with those of the more favoured districts in the south and west; whilst comparison could not fail to be made of the condition of the people of the Western nations and their own by the prisoners



CEMETERY OF THE SMOLENSKO CHURCH

ON THE VASILI OSTROFF NEAR PETERSBURG

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whom the fortune of war led into other countries. That these comparisons were highly unfavourable to Russia was to be expected, the result being a very wide-spread dissatisfaction throughout all classes of the empire; though, of course, this dissatisfaction varied greatly as to its causes. The officers were highly dissatisfied with both their social and pecuniary position. It could not well be otherwise when, for instance, promotion to a generalship from a colonelcy was regarded as a serious pecuniary loss, inasmuch as the colonel, having the control of the supply of certain stores, was able to considerably augment his income by what must probably now be called "commissions." From this source of pecuniary benefit the general was excluded. On the other hand, the men began to ask themselves why the rest of the civilised world should be free and independent, and they alone not be able to come and go at will, or even call their souls their own. But when they returned to their remote homesteads, the old routine was too strong for them; and, falling unconsciously into their old habits and customs, they might long have waited for their emancipation from serfdom had it depended on their unity and agitation.

But, fortunately for them, the chief reason for their emancipation lay in quite another direction. The complaints and suggestions made after the close of the war, combined with the difficulties they had experienced during its progress, induced the government to inquire into the causes of one and the other; and in the main they arrived at the conclusion, that the possession of vast estates owned by few, whilst producing sufficient to enable them to live in luxury, was the cause of their being but half-worked, in consequence of no one having an interest in developing them to their full extent. The landowner, in short, looked less to the state of his lands, than to the serf, to supply him with his needs; and as these were generally sufficiently supplied, it was indifferent to him that the same result might have been obtained from the produce of one quarter of his estate, under his personal supervision and direction. He left all that to his steward; the steward procured the necessary income; the serfs produced it; and, beyond that, not a soul cared whether one acre could be made to do the work of two or not. The consequence was, that the serf managed to clothe and feed himself, and be his own tailor, shoemaker, builder, carriage and harness-maker, splitting his energies up into a multitude of objects, and remaining in a state of utter stagnation, feeling no requirements, and creating no demand for the products of combined and organised labour; whilst the landowner, the "noble," either spent the whole of his time and income in the capitals of Europe, or wasted the produce of a year in a visit of three or four months to St. Petersburg or Paris; after which he would hibernate on his domains, in a state of semi-intoxication, for the rest of the year, or amuse himself with hunting, and the introduction amongst his peasantry of the pursuits he had learned in the green-rooms and equivocal quarters of Paris and Vienna.

The government could, therefore, no longer resist the conclusion, that the soil was only worked to a fraction of its capabilities, in consequence of the workers having no interest in it; and that, as a further consequence, there were no demands to stimulate trade and industry, and no money to pay for these demands even if they existed. These were the true causes that led to the promulgation of the laws of emancipation in 1861; laws which, denounced by those whose interests were attacked as certain to lead to revolution, were proved, by the absence of all serious opposition, to have been imperatively needed.

By these laws, every community received the right of local self-government almost to the same extent as that accorded to the American township. The inhabitants elect their own council and their own Staroshte (Elder, or Mayor), who, with the council, not only exercises the local administration, but also judicial powers in the first instance. Local disputes as to boundaries, rights of pasture, wages, &c., are all settled by the Staroshte and the council. In fact, as liberal an autonomy was granted to the community as that enjoyed in Switzerland. But so immense a stride from absolute and the most servile dependence to absolute independence could not be expected to bear fruit immediately, nor to work quite satisfactorily for at least a couple of generations. The most extraordinary decisions were pronounced, which graphically exemplify the utter state of barbarism in which the lower classes of the empire were plunged. For instance, an inhabitant of Elisavetgrad

accused a certain Euphrosine M. of having failed in her conjugal duties towards her husband, who, though no proof was brought to substantiate the charge, believed in its truth. The council was convoked under the presidency of the Staroshte, and induced by the husband to pronounce sentence without the wife being allowed to defend herself. The sentence was, that she should be walked naked through the village, and in that state receive fifteen strokes with a stick. The sentence was executed to the letter one severe frosty day in October. This is not one of the hearsay tales about Russians knouting their wives to make them "love their spouses the more," but a case authenticated by the British consul at St. Petersburg, and cited by him in his report in the Blue Book of 1870, entitled, "Reports from her majesty's representatives respecting the tenure of land in the several countries of Europe." On another occasion, there was a violent dispute between two of the inhabitants regarding the loss of a pig that had tumbled down a pit in one of the disputant's yards. The decision was, that as the pig was still eatable, and would have been eaten at some time or the other, his owner could not claim any compensation; whilst the other one was enjoined to fill his pit up, lest any of the inhabitants fall into it. The objection of the one, that the pig would have increased in weight and value, was met by the reply, that the cost of feeding and keeping would have counterbalanced that advantage; whilst the complaint of the other, that the pig had no business in his yard, was summarily disposed of by the indignant observation, that he ought to be thankful it was only a pig that had fallen into the hole, and not one of his own children.

Still more extraordinary were the proceedings recently taken in regard to the Moslem Tartars inhabiting one of the villages near the Caucasian frontier. It appears that one or two of these Moslems had adopted the Greek religion, but had abjured it, and returned to their old faith. The clergy, however, would not permit this recantation, and, treating them still as Christians, invoked the assistance of the authorities in virtue of the law, that every Russian subject must attend divine service, and communicate a certain number of times in the year. And not only were the two or three renegades proceeded against, but the whole of the Moslem inhabitants of the place. In vain they protested that they never had abjured their religion; and that even if they had done so at one time, they were Moslems now. It was all of no avail; they were told they must submit. Hereupon they appealed to the next municipal council. This body, after due examination, came to the conclusion that, though they had not yet been converted to the Greek ritual, still they ought to be, and a commission of clergy was nominated to undertake their conversion; whilst the appellants were ordered forthwith to hearken to the persuasion of the said commission, and to obey them under pain of confiscation of their property. The Moslems, however, would not yield; the consequence being that they were forbidden to leave the village, and their property placed under public administration. But perhaps the most original decision was that touching the paternity of a child. The mother acknowledged that she had yielded to several of the inhabitants, or at any rate, asserted that she had; whereupon the Staroshte decided that all of them should contribute a certain sum towards the maintenance of the infant who was thus endowed by this Solomonic decision with several legal fathers.

Instances might be multiplied, to an indefinite extent, of the strange results produced by this sudden leap from irresponsible serfdom to responsible citizenship. They were inevitable until the people had received some education; and it was naturally one of the first cares of the government to establish a system which should at once provide the masses with elementary instruction.

The first efforts of any Russian government to instruct the masses, only date from the days of Peter the Great, who endeavoured to introduce the system he had seen pursued with such advantage in Holland. In 1714, he created a number of schools for arithmetic, obligatory for persons belonging to the higher classes; and in 1715 and 1719, made them obligatory for all classes, excepting the nobility. These measures, however, excited the most vehement opposition. The councils of the various towns overwhelmed him with petitions, asking for the suppression of these schools as dangerous to the State. In 1744, there was not a single pupil of the middle classes to be found in them; and none at all when, some time afterwards, establishments had been specially endowed for the clergy and nobility.

In 1775, Catharine II. ordered the establishment of schools in every town and village. The contributions to be paid by the parents was fixed at a minimum, in order that the instruction should be within the reach of the poorest; but, unfortunately, the ukase remained a dead letter. Everything was wanting: buildings, masters, books, and money. Since then, the government has made spasmodic efforts, from time to time, to introduce now one system, now another, but always with results that may be described as practically *nil.* In 1782, a committee, under the presidency of M. Zavadovski, proposed the institution of two classes of schools—one with a course of four years for the more well-to-do classes, and another with a course of two years' instruction for the masses. In 1786, a law was passed, requiring everyone who wished to establish a school in any town, to pass an examination as to his qualifications. In 1803, the higher-class schools were transformed into gymnasia, on the model of the German establishments; and whilst the primary schools, in the days of Catharine, received their instruction on the basis of a book, called the *Book of the Duties of Men and Citizens*, they were now furnished with a work containing reading-lessons on the subjects of agriculture, physics, and hygiene. In 1804, fresh efforts were made to establish schools on lands belonging to the State and the nobility; but there were no means forthcoming, and again the project came to nought. At last, the clergy, stung by the reproaches made against them for their neglect of their flocks, made a sudden effort in 1806, with such success, that in the province of Novgorod alone, 106 schools were established and ministered to by the clergy. Unfortunately, two years later, there was not one left.

At last, it began to be understood, that if the serfs were not allowed to think for themselves on any other subject, it was scarcely likely that they would take the initiative, or any interest, in the establishment of schools; and that if the government took everything else into its hands, it must take the schools too, and not expect the people to educate themselves for other persons' benefit. Thus, in 1835, a law subjected all existing schools to the inspection of specially appointed officers, to whom a school district was awarded, which frequently comprised several boroughs. A model school was established by the State in some of these districts, as an example for the others and the parishes to follow; but the result was still highly unsatisfactory.

After the emancipation of the serfs in 1860, an imperial commission was appointed, under the presidency of M. Taneef, to elaborate a scheme of primary instruction; and in 1862, M. Taneef submitted to the emperor a "Plan for the Organisation of Popular Instruction." This plan, on the face of it, was very plausible, and certainly seemed calculated to meet the requirements of the case; but still it was asking far too much from a people just emerged from the depths of serfdom. The report estimated the expenses as follows:—

	Towns.	Villages.
Master's salary	250 roubles.	150 roubles.
Salary for religious instructor	80 ,,	50 ,,
Books and stationery	70 ,,	50 ,,
Total	400 roubles.	250 roubles.

To this had to be added, for the village schools, a certain sum for firing, and a grant to the teacher for lodging, which brought up the amount to £40. It was estimated that this outlay would be defrayed by 200 families contributing 4*s.* each per annum; or reckoning it by individuals, by 800 persons paying 1*s.* a head. But though this sum, and even more, is willingly paid by such liberal populations as those of America, Switzerland, and Denmark, for the education of their children, it is considerable compared to the sums demanded by other nations of Europe. Thus the sum paid per head in Norway is 1*s.* 2½*d.*; Sweden, 1*s.*; France, 1*s.* 0½*d.*; Spain, 9*d.*; Greece, 9*d.*; Italy, 5*d.*; Portugal, 2¼*d.*

But it must be remembered, that in Russia, 800 people, on an average, would occupy eight small hamlets in a circumference of some twenty square versts. The density of the population is so low, that there are only about sixteen inhabitants to the square mile. Under these circumstances, the children, especially during the winter and spring months, when the snows begin to melt, would only be able to attend school regularly from the hamlets in the immediate vicinity of the school. The others would thus be paying without deriving any advantage from the outlay, which would naturally be unjust and provoke great dissatisfaction. In consequence, it was found impossible to estab-

lish a system of primary or parochial schools, as in Germany and France, and thus the matter again drifted into a series of convulsive and spasmodic efforts.

No greater proof of the debasing effects of serfdom could be afforded, than this impossibility of establishing the simplest system of primary education. Russian apologists, of course, at once point to the difficulties cited above, arising from the dissemination of the people over large tracts of ground, to the climate, and other natural impediments. But there is a country where the natural obstacles, if anything, were still greater, and yet did not prevent the nation from learning to read, write, and cipher—Norway. In Norway the population is still sparser than in Russia, there being no more than six inhabitants to the square mile; whilst the soil, cut up by high mountains, deep valleys, fiords, and plateaux, offers still greater impediments to regular school attendance than in Russia, whilst the climate is to the full quite as severe. Two or three farms are here hidden away in a wilderness of stone, and no other habitation near them for miles and miles. Still there is not a single Norwegian who cannot read and write at least; whilst, generally speaking, the peasantry have a very fair education indeed, and certainly know more of the rest of the world than the rest of the world knows about them.

This desirable result was obtained by the institution of the *Flyttante Skola*—the flitting or ambulatory school. Several villages or hamlets unite, and subscribe a certain sum each to pay the teacher, who then makes his round through the district, spending a certain time in each hamlet. Each farm in each separate hamlet lodges and feeds him in turn, the pupils from the other houses assembling under the one roof for instruction. Not being over-many—often not more than five or six—the teacher has them better in hand, and can pay more regard to their individual capacities than if he had them all together. His visit to one hamlet ended, the children have to prepare their tasks against his return; and thus the year's instruction is dealt out in doses at certain intervals, with a suitable period for digestion between each. By this device alone, popular instruction was first introduced in Norway. In 1840, there were 7,133 ambulatory schools, and only 200 fixed schools. The benefits derived from this education were so manifest to the peasantry, that they determined to make fresh sacrifices; and thus, in 1866, there were only 2,345 ambulatory, but no less than 4,000 fixed schools.

Such was the encouraging results obtained by an independent peasantry; and there is no doubt but that the same system whereby they were achieved in Norway, would work equally satisfactorily in Russia.

But the proposition to introduce this system, placed the Russian government in a cruel difficulty. The system was admirable; the results were admirable; but unfortunately they were too admirable. How was the ambulatory schoolmaster to be placed under proper inspection and due supervision? To nominate an ambulatory inspector to accompany each ambulatory teacher on his scholastic rounds, would be far too expensive. And if that was not done, what guarantee was there that the ambulatory Dominie might not become an ambulatory revolutionist, and disseminate the wildest and most pernicious heresies and doctrines amongst the untutored peasantry. The thing could not be dreamt of. The peasant must undoubtedly be educated up to that point when his education would benefit the State in its peculiar plans; but beyond that it must not go.

In fact, by the end of 1873, the Russian government—or the emperor, or the nobility—had become alarmed at even the small strides that education was then making; for the Emperor Alexander addressed a rescript to Count Dmitri Tolstoi, the Minister of Public Instruction; in which, after rapidly sketching the progress education had been making of late years, he insisted on the urgency of providing a vigilant control over the schools established, in order to ensure the proper teaching of the principles of faith, morals, and civic duties towards the State. Then, continuing, he says—"That which, according to my views, ought to advance the healthy education of the young generation, must not be allowed to become the engine of a demoralisation of the people, of which some symptoms may already be discovered. To maintain popular education in a truly religious and moral spirit, is the duty, not only of the clergy, but of all enlightened men, and particularly of the Russian nobility, whom I call upon to act as guardians of our public schools, and to preserve them from dangerous and corrupting influences. Special rights will thus be conferred upon the nobility in their quality of patrons of the primary schools of their districts; and the Minister of Public Instruction, in concert with the Minister of the Interior, is invited to come to an understanding with them, in order to profit by the active part they are destined to take in this great and holy work."

This rescript was addressed by the emperor to Count Tolstoi on December 15th, 1873, in consequence of the endless representations made to him, that Socialism, Radicalism, and all kinds of atheistical doctrines, were being disseminated. But if, as there is sufficient reason for believing, this rescript, addressed to the nobility, was the work of the nobility itself, there is not much doubt but that it has been obeyed to the best of its power. Anyhow, but little has been done in spite of the large results figuring in imperial ukases; for in Russia, as in the neighbouring State (Turkey), an imperial ukase is of about equal value with an imperial Hatt in matters of liberal reform. Thus, in 1870, Count Tolstoi demanded an augmentation of the educational fund, amounting to 200,000 roubles; but he only obtained half the sum. The sum total expended on primary schools throughout the empire, in 1871, amounted to a sum, in round figures, of £400,000; of which £180,000 were provided by the parishes and municipalities; £120,000 by the provincial treasuries, and £100,000 by the State. Besides these sums for the primary schools, the State has contributed £30,000 out of £50,000 to defray the expenses of the normal schools.

That these insignificant sums were wholly inadequate to leaven the concentrated ignorance of 65,000,000 souls, is self-evident. Thus the general report, issued in 1871 by the Minister of Public Instruction, shows that only fourteen out of the thirty-four provinces, where the Zemstvos (provincial councils) have been established, sent in very incomplete reports. In these fourteen provinces, the most civilised, and the most densely inhabited of Slavonic Russia—to wit: St. Petersburg, Moscow, Poltava, Tver, Kostroma, Kherson, Jaroslav, Ekaterinoslav, Charkof, Tambof, Orel, Kasan, Symbirsk, and Penza—with 20,425,294 inhabitants—there were only, in January, 1870, 4,247 schools with 4,982 teachers, of whom 3,516 were priests, and 143,385 pupils; that is to say, one pupil to 142 inhabitants! In Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Saxony, and Switzerland, there is one pupil to every six inhabitants. In the country districts, the few schools that do exist, are held in buildings quite unfit for the purpose; even in the vestibules of the prisons they are often located. Thus, in 1871, there was not a single school in the whole district of Tsaritsins (Sdratof government), because all the buildings in which they had been located had been condemned by the authorities as dangerous, and sold for demolition. In addition, the State grants, small as they are, are distributed in the most extraordinarily unequal manner. Thus, whilst some enjoy a subsidy varying from 600 to 1,200 roubles, there are some, as in the district of Gdovsk, St. Petersburg, that only receive fifty, twenty-five, or even ten roubles a-year; whilst the average total amount received by all the primary schools from all sources, does not exceed 142 roubles, or say £20 per annum.

The total number of primary schools throughout European Russia, in 1872, was, in round figures, 24,000, with 875,000 pupils. Thus, with a population of 65,000,000 souls, there is only one pupil to every seventy-five of the inhabitants; the proportion in Upper Canada and America being 1.4; in Denmark and Saxony, 1.6; in Italy, 1.19; in Greece, 1.20; in Portugal, 1.40; and even in Servia, 1.48.

On the other hand, the government has been devoting more attention to the establishment of normal or training schools for teachers. The object hereof is evident. It is to assure a supply of thoroughly orthodox and loyal preceptors, whom the State can always keep well in hand, and not risk the propagation of principles it disapproves of. Thus the State pays 14,810 roubles per annum to the normal school at Kieff, besides a grant of 63,000 for the construction of a suitable building. That at Kasan has already cost 89,433 roubles; and it cannot be denied, that as far as materials and school appliances go, they cannot be surpassed by those of any other country. The only question is, as to their application; and up till now, the reply is very doubtful and equivocal; for according to the most recent official reports, not more than 9 per 100 of the rural classes have any knowledge of reading and writing.

But it must not be forgotten that Russia is still suffering from the Tartar

invasion: not only that, but she has also a considerable Tartar population, mixed with Bashkirs and Kirghiz, for the benefit of whom the training-schools of Kasan and Irkutsk have been established. In addition, a man of considerable talent and energy, M. Raddof, has been appointed special inspector of the Tartar and kindred schools, for the use of which he has published a series of manuals for the study of Russian and arithmetic; whilst in the higher branches, must be noted the Academy of Oriental Languages, or Institute Lazaref, which is provided with nine chairs for the study of the Armenian, Arabic, Georgian, Persian, Turkish, Turco-Tartar, and Tartar languages, Oriental history, and calligraphy. The benefits resulting from this institution was highly appreciated during the campaign in Khiva, two officers of the expedition having, from their knowledge of the language and history of the country, succeeded in penetrating into the town, and procuring the plans of the fortifications, and other information that largely contributed to the success of the invading army.

Middle-class instruction in Russia has been introduced on the German model, and is provided by the gymnasia and the professional, or, as we should say, classical and commercial schools.

The former include in their curriculum the study of Greek, Latin, French, German, and the higher mathematics; the latter, discarding the ancient languages, concentrate their efforts on pure and applied mathematics, drawing, chemistry, theoretical and practical, and on modern languages. As soon as the government had published its programme, the number of applications for the establishment of these schools, and offers to assist in their formation, was very satisfactory. More than forty of the provincial governments and municipalities applied, twenty-four of them furnishing cash to the amount of 290,000 roubles, and twelve offering suitable localities of considerable value. Thus Kieff offered a building of the value of £10,000; Krasnovfimsk, one of £2,500; and Borissoglebsk, one representing a value of £16,000. Sorapoul offered an annual subsidy of £2,000; Kramevtabug, £2,400; Rossievi, £1,800. But, unhappily, the readiness thus exhibited by even the most distant provinces of the empire to assist in the work of education, was annulled and counterbalanced by the inertia, or financial incapacity of the government to take advantage of the spirit thus evoked; and at the end of 1871, there were no more than thirty-seven commercial schools throughout the whole empire, with 128 gymnasia and thirty-nine progymnasia.

Naturally, the promotion of education was availed of for the further Russification of Poland. In 1871, there was only one gymnasium in Poland where instruction was not given in Russian; and since then, we believe that this establishment has been abolished. No provision at all is thus made for teaching the children their own mother tongue. In the Baltic provinces, of which Dorpat is the scholastic and intellectual centre, German is the language of instruction, the Russian tongue being taught by Germans. But on the pretext that these Germans are not sufficiently masters of Russian to teach it, the government has created six scholarships to prepare Russian masters for the Dorpat district, and has opened two gymnasia, called the Alexander Gymnasia, at Riga and Revel, where the instructional tongue is Russian.

Since 1871, the progress has been slow as far as the government is concerned, in spite of the decree issued shortly after the institution of universal military service, making primary instruction compulsory, and ordering the establishment of some 24,000 primary schools on the Prussian system. The decree has remained, more or less, a dead letter, as the same difficulty—a scattered population over a vast expanse of territory—still impedes the successful execution of the scheme.

The most remarkable and noteworthy feature in all these attempts to provide Russia with a thorough educational system, is the eager readiness of the people—a readiness that amounts to a formal thirst for instruction—to do all in their power to promote the cause; and still more remarkable is the care devoted to the education of the girls belonging to the well-to-do classes. The government has rightly appreciated the dangers that must inevitably result if the future mothers of the nation are brought up in ignorance, or left, as in France and other Catholic countries, to the care of nuns, and to spend their youth in the convents, where they become so impregnated with ultramontane ideas, that they either lead a life of opposition more or less overt to their

husbands, or subject them to the clerical influence, directly or indirectly, that they otherwise would recoil from and repel. Thus gymnasia for girls have been founded by the municipalities, or by private individuals, under State inspection, to which government has made a grant, which rose from 50,000 roubles in 1870, to 150,000 in 1874, which is divided amongst 226 schools, costing a sum total of £100,000, and furnishing a thorough education to 23,469 pupils.

For the highest branches of education, Russia has eight universities on the Prussian model: St. Petersburg, Moscow, Dorpat, Warsaw, Kieff, Odessa, Charkof, and Karow, with (in 1874) 512 professors and 6,779 students, of whom 1,430 were assisted by a full scholarship, 2,208 with half-scholarship, and 1,732 with temporary funds. Thus 5,370, out of 6,799 students, belonged to the lower classes, who were unable to defray the expenses of their education. This is highly significant of the state of Russian society. It is the reverse of what is the case in England. Here it is the aristocracy who are the first to appreciate the benefits of the knowledge and thorough education that enables them to play such a prominent part in their country's history; there it is the democracy that is eager to profit by the advantages placed at its disposal. This explains the fears entertained by the Russian government and nobility of revolutionary ideas becoming popular in Russia, and the outcry that has recently been raised of the spread of Socialistic ideas throughout the empire; the plain truth being, that the lower and middle classes are rapidly progressing, whilst the nobility—or rather the large estate-owners, the Boyards, for nobility, in our sense of the word, cannot be said to exist in Russia—is remaining stationary, which, in an age like the present, is equivalent to retrogression.

The question is of the highest importance, not only for Russia, but for the whole of Europe, and a considerable portion of Asia. The Slav institutions are by nature democratic—one might almost say republican—and eminently fitted for the establishment of a constitutional monarchy, republicanism in a monarchical frame, or republicanism pure and simple. Consequently, a despotic government like that of St. Petersburg, finds itself in a most awkward predicament when it sees, on the one hand, that universal compulsory education is an unavoidable complement to universal compulsory military service; whilst, on the other hand, it plays into the hands of the democratic and anti-military party, and furnishes that party with the means it most desires for its eventual emancipation.

The question is of importance for Europe, inasmuch as it cannot be immaterial to Western civilisation, whether a population of some 80,000,000 of souls become the unquestioning engine of an irresponsible despotic power, or an enlightened and sufficiently peaceable community, that will turn out a benefit rather than a danger for Europe. For it must be remembered that, according to the military system now introduced into Russia, the ruler of the country will be able, when the system is once fully developed, to dispose of an assemblage of armies, numbering between three and four millions of men, who will become easier and easier to manipulate and concentrate, as the railway system becomes more and more extended. Consequently, as long as there is any doubt as to the immediate use to which the results of general education in Russia may be put, Europe is bound to view with distrust any attempts, either at an extension of the frontiers, or a protective system, that would close the empire to the introduction of those principles of free-trade and international duties which Western Europe is in the main agreed upon.

This is as true a picture as can be procured of the state of popular education in Russia since the Crimean war; but the picture would be imperfect without some account of the manner in which the nobility is brought up, and, above all, the women.

In the imperial Chancellery there is a department called the Department of the Empress Marie, which is charged with the administration of the immense funds bequeathed by various empresses—notably Catharine the Great and Marie Fedorovna (Princess Sophie of Würtemberg)—to the establishments founded for the education of the higher classes. In a despotic State of such utter artificiality as Russia, it is not sufficient to train the people—the *canaille*—into systematised and unquestioning submission to the imperial will, but the nobility also must be fashioned after a certain model, in order to prevent certain members from following out their personal ambition by training a portion of the lower classes to their own purposes, and opening a way to that abhorrence of despotic governments, an Opposition. An Opposition there must

not be; consequently, there must be no opening left for the formation of teachers who might be tempted to organise one. As the emperor is the theoretical source of all that is bad, so, on the other hand, must he be the theoretical source of all that is good. Thus the Russian government, fully recognising the great influence exercised by women on politics in every country, decided still further to increase this influence, and hold it for its own purposes, by giving the women a thorough education suitable for the purpose, and practically to make them superior, in pliancy of intellect and political knowledge, to their future husbands. The part played by Russian ladies in Europe alone demonstrates this principle. Some of the most frequented "salons" in London, Paris, Vienna, Florence, Rome, Berlin, are those of Russian ladies: the traditional Russian "spy" is more frequently a lady than a man. In such troublous times as those of the Polish rebellion in 1863-'64, the Russian ladies rendered the government more services almost than did the army, by their energy, foresight, and indefatigable collection of information. To achieve these results, there are a number of institutions, of which the principal are those of Paul, Nicholas, and the order of St. Catharine; the society for the education of girls of the nobility (Alexander), at the convent of Smolna; the Patriotic Academy, and Elizabeth School, at St. Petersburg. At Moscow there are four such establishments in the House of Education (Vospitalnyidome), the largest and finest building in the town; and in the rest of the empire there are about twenty other such institutions, including one at Svkutsk in Siberia.

All these establishments and boarding-schools are conducted on a strict system of supervision, under which the girls grow up, until they are turned out, duly fashioned and shaped to order, at the age of nineteen or twenty. Twelve years of such discipline, getting up, eating, drinking, walking, learning, and going to bed again at fixed hours, for the sixth part of one's life, cannot but have a lasting influence in the events of the other five parts. The object, however, of the system is accomplished. The ladies it produces are perfect in the arts of society. One cannot have a more agreeable drawing-room or ball-room companion than a Russian lady. She is well-versed in German and French literature, and speaks both languages perfectly. She can talk upon music or upon art, and the hours pass away rapidly. But when one analyses afterwards the cause of the charm afforded by this intercourse, it becomes apparent that the results are of a very paltry nature, and that the secret of her influence consists in the art she has acquired of making everything she speaks about assume a personal tinge. The conversation that began about the excellences of a Beethoven's sonata has rapidly degenerated into a desultory talk about Chopin's or Schulhoff's mazurkas, and the peculiarities, scandals, and anecdotes about the musician, the vagaries of Wagner, the foibles of Liszt for the Princess Wittgenstein, &c. Beginning a conversation with a dissertation on some new or ancient work of literature, one always ends with tales of authorial wickednesses and peccadilloes. The private life of George Elliot, Miss Braddon, George Sand, Balzac, or Spielhagen, has infinitely more charm for the Russian "salon" than their works. When this principle is extended to the diplomatic world, it may easily be imagined what charm the subject possesses for every one. Prince this and that, Count So-and-so, Earl this, and Duke the other, are handled quite irrespective of their public merits or demerits, and solely according to their foibles and weaknesses, or worse. Such confidences beget confidence; and thus the Russian lady becomes the repository of a mass of details relating to the private life of notable personages, that are frequently of the greatest service to the government, and furnish the basis for those intrigues for which Russians are so noted.

A few instances may be instructive. A matter of some importance required elucidation a few years ago—during the Carlist war, in fact. The Russian government wished to know what course a certain power was taking in France with reference to the Carlist movement. This power had two highly-accomplished agents in France—one in Paris, the other in the south of France—who were entirely in the confidence of the power in question as to their policy on the subject, and thus attention was bestowed on these two gentlemen to such an extent, that within a few weeks the Russian Foreign Office was fully supplied with all the information it desired. And this is how it was accomplished. Both the agents in question were highly susceptible to female charms, and each had formed a *liaison* with a married lady,

the more so as both were enabled to extract much information regarding French policy from their charmers. This fact was soon discovered by the Russian ladies who had taken the matter in hand; and thus, on a fitting opportunity, the French baroness and the French marquise were given to understand, by their Russian friends, that their little "distractions" were known to them, and that they would do well to take them into their confidence;—all this done, of course, in a sympathetic way, and with much praise of the talented object of the marquise's admiration. And, confidence begetting confidence, the news required passed from baroness and marquise to St. Petersburg, and was the cause of the czar's refusal to recognise the Spanish republic.

On another occasion, when similar information was required, the subject for operation was on intimate terms with two ladies, to whom, however, he was wise enough to make no confidences whatever. But our Russian lady managed matters by informing one of the gentleman's intrigue with her rival, and by this means succeeded in obtaining the key to the cypher used by the official in question to communicate with his government.

Such cases are, of course, but the extreme of the system; but they would not be possible without the system which enables a government to make the lowest offices of the detective compatible with the dignity of the aristocrat.

Thus highly talented and accomplished, well versed in the art of making "society" a field for diplomatic endeavours, the Russian ladies fully equalled the demands made upon them by the system of education in vogue. As a natural consequence of this system, the establishments in question are highly exclusive. No girl is admitted to them who is not the daughter of a colonel or a Councillor of State at least. At the St. Elizabeth Academy, even those who pay the full price must be the daughters of the hereditary nobility; the scholarships are reserved for the daughters of ladies of the Order of St. Elizabeth and captains of the staff. The only academy which is not so strict in the admission of pupils is that of St. Paul, where girls of all ranks are admitted whose fathers are not subject to the poll-tax. A *bourgeois* (mecktchanine) or citizen whose citizenship is well established, or a merchant belonging to a guild, is allowed to send his daughter to the establishment; but its doors are inexorably closed to the daughter of a peasant or a farmer, of no matter what wealth or standing.

At the same time, it must not be forgotten, that the Russian "nobility" who frequent these establishments, belong to that impecunious aristocracy that gains its livelihood in the lower branches of the military and civil service. It includes the by far greater part of the *bureaucracy* which, in spite of the bribery and corruption still prevailing, would otherwise be quite unable to live at all. Their daughters, educated in these establishments, have frequently—a very large per-centage in fact—to take situations as governesses, chaperones, housekeepers, companions, &c.; and in this respect are of service to the government also, as a means of propagating the principles they have been taught. They generally take away with them a great respect for the imperial Court, and look upon themselves, in a great measure, as belonging to that Court. For on leaving school, they are received in the imperial palaces at Tsarskoe-Selo or Peterhof, to receive their prizes or diplomas, and to offer up their thanks to their imperial patrons and patronesses. Thus, in many of the imperial apartments, the walls are hung with the portraits, single or in groups, of the pupils that have left the schools under the imperial protection; and thus they all feel, that though not the vase itself, at any rate they have dwelt with it, and under the shadow of the czar and czarina.

Such was the state of female education in the higher classes up to 1855. Then, however, the present empress, Maximilienne of Hesse-Darmstadt—or, by her Russian name, Maria Alexandrowna—imbued with the German traditions in regard to education, endeavoured to extend the field for female instruction in Russia, and proceeded to the establishment of the gymnasia, of which mention has been already made. A sketch of the organisation of these schools may be interesting: it is, at any rate, instructive.

At the head of the whole system stands Prince Alexander Peter of Oldenburg, the husband of one of the emperor's nieces, and who pursues his avocation with such devotion, that he may frequently be seen studying the details and working of some gymnasium on the spot. The smallest matters are not beneath his consideration. Thus he

published lately a circular, in which he complained that the scholars were not sufficiently acquainted with the metre of the verses and poetry they had to recite. At the head of each gymnasium there is an inspectrice (Nadziratelnitza) and a male official, with the title of Superior (Natchalnik), except at St. Petersburg, where the eight gymnasia are under the supreme supervision of one especial official, and the "Superior" of each establishment is simply a class inspector. At Moscow the four gymnasia are placed also under the supervision of one "Superior." The duties of the Natchalnik, or Superior, consist in the choice of masters and mistresses for the different classes, their dismissal, and seeing that the rules and regulations are properly carried out. The Nadziratelnitza has to see to the health of the pupils, their good conduct, morals, and manners. They are generally of good family—some even princesses—and have been chosen less for their pedagogical attainments than for their social position and accomplishments, in furtherance of the principle already mentioned, of making the Russian lady *par excellence* an ornament of society, and a help to the Court and government. Superiors and inspectrices are nominated by the curators, and approved of by the empress through the Prince of Oldenburg. The curators, in turn, are nominated by the emperor or empress personally, and are chosen on account of their wealth and position. Thus Prince Troubetzkoi is the curator (Papetchitel) of the Moscow gymnasia. The curators also nominate another class of officials to what is more or less an honorary position—surveillants or nablioditel. They are persons who devote either a portion of their wealth or their time to the benefit of the establishment.

Under the inspectrice there is also a sub-inspectrice, or *dame de classe*, for each class, whose duty it is to keep the pupils in due discipline towards their mistresses, and to be present during all the lessons given by the male teachers. Her functions, in fact, correspond to those of the Spanish *duenna*, or the British "watch-dog." The masters are generally the professors of the boys' gymnasia, and are remunerated at the rate of fifty roubles per lesson per week for the year. Thus, a master who gives eight lessons a-week, would receive 400 roubles per annum. The remuneration of the mistresses of the lower classes is just half—twenty-five roubles per lesson per week for the year; so that to gain 400 roubles she would have to give sixteen lessons a-week, instead of only eight. When, however, their capabilities are equal to the task, they are allowed to give instruction to the upper classes, and then they receive the full fifty roubles. Unfortunately for the ladies, there are but few places where they are able to attain the higher position, in consequence of the great competition, one vacancy often bringing forward over a hundred candidates.

The Natchalniks receive a salary varying between 2,668 roubles and 900 roubles a year; the Nadziratelnitzas, or inspectrices, receive from 750 to 1,180 roubles per annum; an inspector, 1,000 to 1,350; and the *duennas*, 400 to 700. Thus, whilst the superior officials and the masters are well paid, the mistresses are far from being so. It is a pedagogical axiom that no master is able to give more than twenty lessons a week: that represents, in Russia, a salary of 1,000 roubles, say £350 per annum. But for a woman to gain this sum, she would have to give forty lessons a-week; which is impossible, or, if possible, not worth anything at all. No lady can live on 500 roubles (£175) a-year in St. Petersburg, where living is dearer even than in Paris, and keep up the position she is expected to. But this sum is quite sufficient in the country towns; and as a matter of fact, no master or mistress is allowed to give more than twenty lessons a-week; so that the maximum salary for masters and mistresses of the higher classes is 1,000 roubles a-year, and that of the mistresses of the lower classes, 500.

Such are the elements of which the administration of the female gymnasia is composed. Now as to the pupils themselves and their curricula.

Each gymnasium is composed of a preparatory school and seven classes. A girl of eight years of age—which is the average age for entering the seventh class—must pass an examination in arithmetic, and must be able to read and write, not only Russian, but French and German. Under such a system, it is not surprising that the Russians should be such excellent linguists. Of these seven classes, none may contain more than forty pupils; if there are more, the class is divided into *parallels*, each, of course, following the same course of instruction. The hours of

attendance are from 9 A.M. to 2.30 P.M.; *i. e.*, five and a-half hours. Each lesson lasts about fifty minutes, with half-an-hour for lunch at twelve o'clock. The three first hours are devoted to French, German, history, arithmetic, geography, physics, and religion; the others in writing, drawing, sewing, singing, and dancing. Lunch is brought by the pupils themselves; and in some of the establishments there is a buffet provided with tea, chocolate, or bouillon. At 2.30 they are sent home, with their tasks set for the following day. The holidays last during the hottest months of the year; *i. e.*, from the 16th of June to the 7th of August. Promotion from one class to another depends upon the pupils passing a strict examination. If they do not pass it, they have to remain in the class year after year. If, after three years, they are still in the same class, they are dismissed, and sent to their parents to do what they can with them. On the other hand, those who have passed satisfactorily all classes, receive a certificate giving them the right to act as teachers without any further examination in public or private schools.

Much attention is justly bestowed on the accommodation and cleanliness of the school localities and their appurtenances. Especially noteworthy are the play-rooms, which, in a severe climate like Russia, take the place of our play-grounds. They are large, airy rooms, with waxed parquet floors, white varnished walls of spotless purity, and one or two large white porcelain stoves, the never-failing portraits of the czar, czarina, and Prince Oldenburg adorning the walls. In the class-rooms—the pupils sitting during the whole lesson, and only rising when answering questions, reciting, &c.—the tables are of white varnished wood, the absence of blots, smears, or "carvings" giving one a very favourable idea of Russian school-manners. Each establishment has its collections of natural objects, physical instruments, drawing models and copies, and its library. Maps are hung in every class-room, and the inevitable black-board is kept scrupulously black, and not in an everlasting whity-grey smear, as in British establishments.

It will be seen that the imperial family is directly connected with these establishments, and devote much personal care to them; and being thus an imperial institution, there is always a career open to the teachers and professors. They enjoy all the privileges of State servants, such as pensions and elevations of rank, and are considered as specially worthy recipients of orders and titles. Scarcely a month passes without some professor being made an Aulic Councillor; and, in short, education is not looked upon by any class as an unremunerative or paltry occupation, but, on the contrary, as a profession in itself leading to considerable emoluments and honours.

Perhaps nothing can give a better idea of the progress the cause of education and liberal ideas has made in Russia, than the following extract from the official pedagogical journal, the *Pedagoshitcheskii Listok*, in 1873—a journal, be it remembered, that is under government control, and is, in fact, a government organ. It says—

"As to those people who object to *compromising their aristocratic dignity* by allowing their children to consort at school with the daughters of bakers, tailors, and shopkeepers, they are not in a fit condition to give us any valid reason for their conduct. They can only make use of hackneyed phrases that are out of date. They refuse to see that, in opposing equality before the law, universal military service, and the abolition of class privileges, they are swimming against the stream; and that, to influence the country, they must live with the country, and gain its confidence.

"As for us, we must confess that the danger from the mixing of the upper and lower classes is not to the former, but to the latter. The poor children who see their richer companions dressed with extravagant luxury, accompanied by footmen to carry their books and slates, or who are brought to the school-doors in sumptuous carriages, whose conversation is of balls, parties, theatres, dress, &c., place much more temptation and danger in the path of the poor, than an occasional coarse word or awkward gesture of some cobbler's daughter. From such things the rich are safe; the poor, on the other hand, have a hard battle to overcome, and to become convinced that merit does not consist in the possession of a velvet dress or a golden watch, but in those personal qualities resulting from a cultivated intellect and a high code of morals."

With this extract we may fitly close our review of the progress education is making in Russia, and has made since the close of the Crimean war. A conflict is being waged,

of which the issue cannot be doubtful; though how long it will be before the movement has borne lasting fruit is, of course, a question that does not wholly depend either on the Russian people or the Russian Court.

CHAPTER XXVI.

LIBERATION OF THE SERFS; OPPOSITION TO REFORM; ITS SUCCESSFUL ACCOMPLISHMENT.

THE Emperor Nicholas may be said to have been the last Khan of Tartary. He and his traditional enemy, the Sultan of Turkey, were the only two Asiatic sovereigns left in Europe. Nicholas did all he could to surround his empire with a Chinese wall, not built of stones or bricks, but of protective duties and fiscal measures, and guarded it with a chain of unquestioning, narrow-minded bureaucrats. He hated railways, he had a horror of the press, he put the nation into uniform, ticketed and numbered the individuals as so many parts of a machine—a cog-wheel here, a lever there—and sat on the safety-valve till the boilers were on the point of bursting, and death took the control of the engine out of his hands, and handed it over to the czarewitch, Alexander II., who mounted the throne on the 2nd of March, 1855.

Education, travel, and last, but by no means least, the infusion of German blood in his veins, had made Alexander II. a very different being to his father. He was intelligent, imbued with Western ideas, industrious, even-tempered, and yet firm and energetic—dogged almost in the pursuit of what he had once fixed on and determined to achieve. There was every necessity for these qualities at the time of his accession. The country was groaning under the taxes levied upon it; the demands of the army for reinforcements were draining the rural districts of their cultivators, commerce was nearly destroyed, Sebastopol fallen, and, practically, Russia was lying at the feet of Europe, unless she was prepared for a war *à l'outrance*, in which, though she would no doubt have been ultimately successful—for the allies were in almost as bad a plight as herself—the internal ruin of the country would have been far more disastrous than an apparently humiliating peace, though involving the loss of her *prestige*, the supremacy of the Black Sea, of part of Bessarabia, and the abandonment of her plans on Constantinople.

No slight moral courage was requisite to face such an alternative, and to yield in a day what it would take a generation to regain. The temptation to continue the struggle was very great; but Alexander, by the advice of his Prussian relatives, which powerfully backed his own inclination, and with the conviction that if the war lasted much longer, though it were to terminate in his favour, would render the accomplishment of his desires impossible, only waited for a favourable opportunity to commence negotiations for peace. This opportunity was offered when the Russian arms were successful at Kars, and Austria offered her mediation. He accepted the treaty of Paris, concluded March 30th, 1856, and thereby gave a rare proof of moderation and of consideration for the welfare of his people. It is quite certain that none of his predecessors would have yielded in consequence of what, after all, was but a small loss to the ruler of 80,000,000 of souls; and which, besides, had only been accomplished with great difficulty by the two strongest and richest nations of Europe, assisted by two others directly, and indirectly by a third—Austria. And also, apart from the humiliation involved in yielding, and the opprobrium attaching to a surrender before all resources were exhausted, the operations Alexander had in view were far greater, and presented far more obstacles than a continuation of the war to the knife presented. Exhausted as the country would have been, it might have been still more firmly bound by the fetters of an absolute despotism for at least the

next fifty years, whilst Russian military *prestige* would have been saved. But, as we have said, the temptation was resisted; and, immediately after the conclusion of peace, Alexander took in hand the work of reform, whence dates a new era in Russian history and the history of civilisation.

Among the first acts following his accession, were—the amnesty accorded to the Poles; a thorough reorganisation of the army and commissariat departments, with the appointment of responsible officers, and the establishment of checks on the corruption, bribery, and peculation that were rampant throughout all branches of the State service; and, finally, the abrogation of the law compelling the public instructors and masters to clothe themselves in uniform. In fact, he put an end to the military despotism of which Nicholas was the incarnation, only reserving to himself the supreme and absolute control of the church and public instruction. These were but the preliminaries to the most ample reforms he contemplated after his coronation, which was delayed till September 7th, 1856—a delay in a great measure owing to his desire to become thoroughly acquainted with the best means of commemorating the day. Thus, in his ukase announcing his coronation, he decreed the rewards and medals for the army; suspended the conscription for four years; diminished the taxes in proportion to the diminution of the population; released the debtors to the excise, and other tax-officers of the State, from all their debts and arrears up to January 1st, 1856; granted free pardons for lesser infringements of the law; and either sensibly commuted the sentences of the Siberian exiles, or gave them their full liberty, subject to certain conditions. He also turned his immediate attention to the improvement of the roads; abolished the heavy taxes on travellers, and projected a number of railways; whilst guaranteeing 5 per cent. to the shareholders of the companies who constructed them. The only line working, on his accession, was the St. Petersburg-Moscow railway.

Having seen to these immediate wants, he made a journey through the empire, to see with his own eyes what could be done to achieve his great intention—the liberation of the serfs. He consulted the chief men of the country on the spot, took note of their objections or suggestions, and, on his return, appointed a committee to furnish a plan by which his object would be best attained. In November, 1857, this plan was published in the shape of an imperial rescript, calling upon the governors of the provinces to convoke the nobility, and to arrange with them for the affranchisement of the serfs within six months.

The publication of this order, and the convocation of the nobility, produced a violent agitation throughout the empire, and the project was as much endangered by the ignorance of the serfs as by the opposition of the clergy and a large section of the nobility; for, anticipating their freedom as it were, and forming extravagant ideas as to the benefits that were awaiting them, the peasantry broke out into all kinds of excesses, and wanted to break down all the old laws and barriers before the new ones had been framed or created. There was, consequently, a great outcry; but being supported by the more enlightened portion of the populace, by the universities, schools, and, above all, by the white clergy,* the commotion gradually subsided, and the refractory nobility began to make concessions. Of course, as soon as this was done, their opposition was broken, and the truth proved once more of the old French proverb, *Femme qui e'coute et forteresse qui parlement sont perdues.* (The woman who listens and the fortress that treats are lost.) They were willing to agree to the personal enfranchisement of the serf, but would hear nothing of any territorial concessions. But the emperor was inflexible; he recognised the nobility's proprietary rights in the soil, but insisted on the peasantry obtaining a residence, and sufficient land to subsist on. This decision led to the institution of a committee charged with the duty of forming a report on the projects and proposals emanating from the provincial assemblies convoked by the imperial rescript. There were 301 of these projects, filling eighteen large volumes, which, in turn, were condensed by a second committee, and the result taken as the basis for the definitive discussions. Finally, in the face of the most strenuous opposition on the part of the higher nobility, Alexander succeeded in carrying the measure, opposing every objection by the remark, that the enfran-

* The white and black clergy will be treated of hereafter, in our account of the constitution of the Russian church.

chisement of the serf, without giving him his house and enough land to live on, would be creating a dangerous proletariat, besides being in itself a crying injustice, which would avenge itself a hundred-fold. Thus, on the 1st of March, 1861, the ukase was published, granting every serf his freedom, a house to dwell in, and fields of varying extent to cultivate, which he had to pay for on a certain scale, and for which the government opened him a credit, of which he availed himself to a very large extent. The debt of the serfs to the government now amounts to an enormous sum. Nor is it very likely that it will ever be paid off.

By this measure, 22,000,000 of ordinary serfs, 3,000,000 belonging to various appanages, and 23,000,000 to the crown, were freed on one day, and supplied with the means of existence. In point of fact, the greatest despot of modern times, the tyrant of the 19th century, had done that of his own free-will what the Communists and Socialists of less favoured Western nations are vainly striving to obtain—a division of the soil. That the nobility in Russia still have much more than the emancipated serf, does not affect the argument at all; as were the soil of England, France, or any of the Western nations — except, perhaps, Spain—to be divided amongst their populations, the individual would have no more than the serf at present possesses: in some cases he would have less. So remarkable a consummation requires some examination, and the working of the measure some study, as showing to what results it has already led, or is likely to lead. At the same time, all the conditions must be fairly stated, and the restraints be mentioned that are still imposed upon the liberty of the serf—restraints that have their origin chiefly in the nomadic propensities of the Russian, and which are very strongly developed; and, secondly, in the exigencies of the system of universal military service. These restraints are contained in the following nine articles:—

"ART. 1. No peasant is allowed to remove from his native village, except on condition of abandoning for ever his landed property to the community.

"ART. 2. If the community refuses to accept it, he must give it up to the lord of the manor.

"ART. 3. He must have fulfilled his military duties.

"ART. 4. He must have paid all his taxes, even the total amount of the current year, no matter at what period of the year he wishes to leave.

"ART. 5. He must satisfy the communal administration that he has fulfilled all his legal obligations.

"ART. 6. He must be free from all magisterial or judicial prosecution.

"ART. 7. He must have provided for the wants of any members of his family he leaves behind him.

"ART. 8.—He must have paid all the arrears due to the lord of the manor on the ground that has been allotted to him.

"ART. 9.—Finally, he must produce a certificate from the authorities of the commune to which he is about to remove, proving that he has acquired a plot of ground not further away than ten miles from the village, and of double the extent of that which he formerly possessed."

It is evident that these regulations detract very considerably from the advantages accorded by the emancipation ukase. They fix the peasant to his original plot, and root him there in an almost ineradicable manner. They reduce the benefits accruing from the measure very nearly to the level of a simple moral advantage, the profitable and material development of which depends entirely on the capacity of the peasant to work it out. To form an idea of the probabilities or improbabilities of his success, a few words must be devoted to the communal system in Russia, the backbone of whatever national life exists in the country.

The whole of Great Russia—*i.e.*, Slavic Russia—is divided into communes, cantons, and districts. The commune is really an association, somewhat resembling a monastic community as far as the ownership of the soil is concerned. Individual property cannot be said to exist—*i.e*, landed property. The soil is divided into as many lots as there are households; and as these households are constantly varying in number with the decease and marriage of the individuals, the lots are re-distributed every three years, when every household receives its re-adjusted share of arable land, of garden land, pasture, and forest land, and is valued according to its quality and distance from the centre of the village. The re-distribution is conducted by the village council, composed of the heads of the families, presided over by the mayor, whom they elect for a term of three years, with

the title of Staroshte, or Elder. During his term of office, the Staroshte wields an almost unlimited power; but still the office is not in much request, as the ignorance of the peasantry saddles him with endless responsibilities, and exposes him to the most absurd charges. If it rains too much or too little—if an epidemic breaks out, or a murrain amongst the cattle—the Staroshte has generally to bear the blame. Thus there is frequently a good deal of bribery, on the part of the richer inhabitants, *not* to be elected. But once chosen, as we have said, his power is great. He is judge and jury combined; he can have offenders knouted; for although flogging is generally abolished, the privilege has been left untouched in the hands of the Staroshte, except in the case of a woman; though even in that case the general law is not always observed, as we have seen was reported by Consul Michell. With the approbation of the council, he is empowered to expel any member of the community, or call upon the police to imprison him. And even if the man be innocent of the charges laid against him, the government cannot force his own commune to take him back, nor any other commune or municipality to receive him. He becomes a pariah, and must seek a livelihood in the army or the mines. Even the verdict of a superior tribunal may be quashed by the Staroshte; and though the accused have been acquitted as innocent of the crimes laid to his charge, yet his goods, his house, and his land may be confiscated if the Staroshte, or a revision of the evidence and the verdict, should see fit to reverse the sentence. Thus the Staroshte for the time being is a greater autocrat than the czar himself, and in his way wields more power. He and his communes are beyond the reach of the State, except as regards the military service and the taxes, regarding which all questions are settled by the ministries of war and finance communicating direct with the Staroshte. The Minister of War demands so-and-so many recruits, according to the returns of the village in question, and the Minister of Finance such-and-such a sum; and the Staroshte, aided by the council, complies with the order after deciding upon the share each household has to contribute. Thus the fiscal system of the empire is extremely simple—so simple, that it amounts, in reality, to a poll-tax—so simple, that it is quite Asiatic; and, stranger still, quite Turkish; for that is the system pursued by the Porte—the only difference being, that there is not so much local extortion and official peculation now as there used to be in Russia. Yet still injustice enough is done. The richer peasants manage to gain all sorts of advantages with impunity; on the other hand, a richer peasant, who may have excited the hatred or jealousy of a section of his neighbours, or of the Staroshte himself, will be burdened with more land than he can work on account of scarcity of labour, and for which he is obliged to pay rent. His only chance is to sub-let to his poorest neighbours, and risk getting any rent from them or not. Thus what interest has the peasant in developing and improving the land he cultivates, when he knows that every three years it may be taken from him, and other land, in quite a different situation, be substituted? It is impossible for him to conceive any affection for his temporary property, and thus the peasant's agriculture remains on the very lowest footing. Practically bound to the soil, he has no interest in it; theoretically free, he is practically a prisoner, subject to denunciation by his enemies, to punishment by the Staroshte, without any appeal or any refuge but the army, which he hates, or a living death in the mines of the Ural or Siberia. Thus, in its present form, and under existing conditions, the commune is nothing but a hydra-headed autocracy, at the mercy of the head autocrat, be that autocrat the czar or an impersonal government.

Still, in spite of all these drawbacks, it cannot be said that even yet the peasant is conscious of them. His devotion to old habits and customs, his superstitious reverence for "authority," produce the same results as the kismet—it is ordained—of the Turks. In this sense, the Russian is quite as much of a fatalist as his Mussulman enemies. A command has but to be uttered in the tone of authority, to ensure unquestioning obedience. Of this peculiarity, and as an instance of their bottomless superstition, Mr. Wallace relates the following story:—

"One winter evening there appeared in a peasant's cottage a female figure draped in white robes, as St. Barbara is generally represented. Introducing herself as the saint, she sat down and commenced an edifying discourse. Before long the cottage was besieged by an inquisitive but reverential

throng, from which not one soul in that village stayed away. About midnight she arose, announcing that she was going to fetch St. Nicholas, but said that no one was to leave the place till she returned. So the pious and awe-struck villagers remained rooted to the spot, expecting the saint's return. They went on expecting till sunrise, when they discovered that she must have gone a very long journey, as she had taken a number of their horses with her."

Superstition and drunkenness are the two great faults of Russian peasants, with the concomitant results in the indulgence of them—indifference and laziness.

Now, whilst the peasant of to-day, or the serf of yesterday, enjoys, as we have seen, an absolute freedom from State interference beyond the matters of military services and taxes, whilst his commune almost amounts to a free state within its boundaries, the municipalities can scarcely be said to have any independent existence at all. They are subjected to all the imperial laws, and to the meddling and tyrannical authority of an irresponsible secret police. It is not difficult to see the reason of this. There is always a certain amount of independent thought and activity going on amongst educated citizens and townsfolk, which, on the theory of despotism, has to be kept in bounds by such measures as private denunciation, palace decrees, and a secret police executive. In the villages and communes, these bonds are so effectually kept by their constitution and the fathomless ignorance of the inhabitants, that the State has no reason for interference. The only privilege that is scantily recognised by the imperial government, is that of citizenship—*bourgeoisie*. But although the citizen may buy, sell, pursue any profession or trade, and be a member of any corporation, when his choice is once made, he is bound to it as firmly as the peasant is to the soil. There are endless difficulties to be overcome before he can leave one guild or enter another. Having once decided upon his trade or occupation, he is ticketed and labelled as such in the civil and municipal register to the end of his days.

Thus the population of every town is divided officially into three classes—the *Tsak*, the *Guild*, and the *Tchin*. The first includes all the artisans and workmen. They pay a certain sum annually—not a large one—to the corporation, elect their administrator, and settle their affairs amongst themselves. The members of the guilds pay a tax to the State for the licence to buy and sell, and, till recently, for exemption from military service. The *Tchin*, finally, is a rank of fourteen degrees, commencing with the student, and ending with that of Councillor of State. It would be much the same if in England we were to make the titles of mister, esquire, reverend, doctor, professor, head master, R.A., so-and-so many legal degrees of social rank, none of which could be assumed without legal municipal and State authority.

Now presuming that a peasant, after having complied with the regulations we have already described, and having all his papers in order, wishes to establish himself—say, in Kieff—for the purpose of selling the produce he has arranged to buy from the friends of his native village, he finds, on his arrival, that the cost and difficulty in entering a guild is far beyond his means. His plan has therefore failed. He cannot return to his village, for he has surrendered all his property and rights there. Thus, unless he intends to run the risk of being arrested by the first policeman who chooses to do so, as a vagabond, and be packed off to the army or to the mines, or government dockyards, he must try to obtain admission into the Tsak; and, once there, it is as difficult to get out of it as it was to get into it, or get out of the commune. However, presuming that he has succeeded in being admitted into the Tsak, he then tries for admission into an Artel.

The principles on which the communes are based in rural districts, applied to town life, produced this Artel. Like the commune, it was originally intended for the common protection of its members against the encroachments and oppressions of a despotic power; and, like the commune, it is now used by a despotic government to further its own despotic ends. The institution dates back to a very remote period, and is one that was generally adopted by brigands, banditti, and highway robbers. It also exists, in a modified form, at Cairo, Alexandria, and other Egyptian cities, where it has been adopted by the Berbers or Berberines. The principle of the Artel is, that all its members give up the whole of their earnings, from whatever source, even to the extent of presents and legacies, to the common fund. All the members are

collectively responsible for each individual; every member is bound to obey the president, who is elected by the members themselves; and each member must accept the employment for which he is designated by the president. The rules absolutely prohibit all drinking, swearing, and gambling. Each member must regard the other as his brother, and no member can give up his place to another except by general consent. The funds thus provided by the members are divided in equal parts, and handed over to the members after the deductions for working expenses, which are very small.

The fee for entering the Artel is considerable, amounting on an average to 1,000 roubles, or about £350, which may, however, under certain conditions, be paid by instalments. Thus, having once entered the Artel, the member has lost all right to choose his own occupation: a situation is found for him, and his earnings go to the common fund. The guarantees afforded by this institution are highly appreciated by the community at large. The wealthy classes get all their servants from the Artel. If a banker or merchant is in want of a clerk, he sends for the president, and selects any name from his list, for the whole society being collectively responsible for each individual member, the banker has no hesitation whatever in confiding the cash-box to his care. If, as very rarely happens, the clerk should abscond, the banker gives notice of his loss, which is at once made good, and another clerk supplied. The other members, of course, do all their best to discover the culprit. If captured, as is generally the case, he is delivered to the police, and packed off, without more ado, to the mines or Siberia.

Now, however admirable this institution of the Artel may be under certain conditions, and to a certain extent—say, in the shape of a voluntary mutual guaranteeing society—it is difficult to conceive anything more arbitrary and tyrannical, or more calculated to stifle individual energy, capabilities, and ambition, than this form of democratic despotism. It is *not* a voluntary association. Every citizen *must* belong to one of the three grades—the *Tsak*, the *Guild*, or *Tchin;* and, practically, every beginner in town life must enter the Artel. Thus the clerk who earns 500 roubles a year, must share his gains with the servant who only earns 50, or with the man who earns nothing at all. There is thus absolutely no scope for independent action or progress. All that the clerk can do to better his condition is to spend less of his share, until he has saved up sufficient to enable him to enter a guild, and start in business on his own account—a case that but very rarely happens. If he has succeeded in attaining this desirable consummation, he is comparatively no freeer than he was before. He cannot remove from one street to another without the permission of the police, and personally attending at the address *bureau* to rectify the change. All the members of the guild watch over him, especially his enemies. The president of the guild watches over the whole community, and the police watches over the president. Now supposing one member to be obnoxious to another one, and the president happen to agree with the latter, the discontented member denounces his enemy to the police, who inquire of the president as to the truth of the charges, and if they are confirmed, arrest the accused, and send him off to prison, or the mines, with a trial or without a trial, according to the nature of the accusation, without any further ceremony.

Thus, in point of fact, the citizen is absolutely at the mercy of the secret police. A notorious case occurred about a year ago in Odessa, one of the principal merchants there having been spirited off in the night without even the formality of a trial, or a statement to his family of the nature of the accusation brought against him. The chief man in the empire, after the emperor, is the head of the secret police. This post, until recently, was in the hands of Count Schouvaloff, the present ambassador of Russia in London. This official has the right of access to the emperor at any hour; whilst this privilege, being extremely limited in other cases, indicates the esteem in which the individual is held, and his importance. The right of audience with the emperor, in the case of other officials, is determined beforehand. Thus the Ministers of the Interior, of Public Instruction and Finance, are only allowed one audience a week: the Ministers of War and Foreign Affairs have one audience a-day, at a fixed hour; but the Minister of Police may enter the czar's apartments at any hour of the day, and his bedroom at any hour of the night. The power of this official has been modified in some degree by the establishment of tribunals and law courts which

are independent of the police; but he still has the power to quash a verdict, and exile the man who has been acquitted by these tribunals as an administrative measure. In short, a simple suspicion is still sufficient to send the suspected person to Siberia; and in such a case, there is not a tribunal or a judge who would dare to raise his voice against so arbitrary an act, in defence of the victim.

This sketch sufficiently shows what has been the nature of the reforms instituted by the emperor since the Crimean war. He may have been animated by the most laudable desires to ameliorate the condition of his people; or he may have promulgated them knowing that they would remain more or less abortive. It may, of course, be said that he has sown the seed, and cannot be held responsible for the nature of the ground he has had to cast it upon. That is very true; but when a man sows a crop of corn on barren rock, he must claim the admiration of the world, or assume the credit of having done his best to produce a harvest where he knew, or ought to have known, that there was no chance of its ever taking root. Therein lies the whole gist of the question as regards the future of Russia. To impartial observers, it seems that the first thing to be done would have been the breaking up of the soil before sowing the seed. All these institutions should have been deprived of government recognition, and not continue to be localised as they still are, but be left to stand on their own merits as voluntary associations formed to meet the exigencies of the case.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE RIVAL RACES OF RUSSIA; FINNS, SLAVS, AND TARTARS; THEIR COMPARATIVE MERITS.

THE foregoing account of the social state of Russia, as regards education and local administration, since the Crimean war, has to be supplemented by an account of the religious and political forces that are now agitating the empire. But before proceeding to this subject, it will be profitable to glance at the elements of which the Russian empire is composed—a subject that has but recently received some of the attention it merits, and which is still imperfectly understood. Neither the real significance of the influence of the clergy, or the Panslavonic movement, can be properly appreciated until the elements they have to deal with are fully known and comprehended.

The immense empire of the Russias—both European and Asiatic—is specially adapted by nature for the establishment of an homogeneous nation, and is most peculiarly fitted for that process of assimilation which is a characteristic of all great nations. This may sound rather paradoxical when the great number of different races and tongues prevalent in the Russian empire is taken into consideration. It might be objected that similar circumstances, in the case of the Austrian empire, are rapidly tending to its disintegration; as is also the case in Turkey, the chaotic state of which, owing to its rival races, must, in course of time, lead to the complete decomposition of the empire. The reply to this apparent paradox is, that, in common parlance, one man's meat is another man's poison; or that it does not follow, because a certain state of affairs in one country leads to its national destruction, that a similar state in another country should lead to the same results.

The key to the enigma lies in the configuration of the country. The whole of European Russia, with which alone we are now dealing, occupies a vast but slightly elevated plateau, stretching from the White Sea to the Black Sea and the Caucasus, and from the Ural in the east, to the Carpathian and mountains of Siebenbürgen in the west. Practically, the whole of this vast extent of country is one plain, the elevation of the various water-sheds being so slight, that many rivers run, as it were, in couples for long distances before they mingle their waters. Within the limits


RUSSIA in EUROPE
BLACK SEA
ARCTIC OCEAN
SEA OF AZOV
CASPIAN SEA
GULF OF OB
Longitude 25 East From Greenwich 45

thus defined by nature there are vast resources; but these resources, both vegetable and mineral, are spread over a very large extent of territory, and present the aspect of patches scattered over the whole expanse, at varying distances from each other. Thus one district may be very rich in agricultural produce, but be utterly destitute of minerals; another may be rich in minerals, but scantily furnished with agricultural produce, and both districts be separated by a wide expanse of pasture and grass-land. The consequences of these natural features to the various races that peopled the country at various periods were two-fold. First of all, the resources of one district alone did not suffice for the requirements of its population, who were then obliged to depend on those of another district. The nomadic tribes depended on the population of the agricultural districts for their corn, and on the inhabitants of the mineral and the industrial districts for their implements; whilst both the latter depended on the first for their supply of cattle. The satisfaction of these requirements could only be attained either by the rival communities or races agreeing to live in harmony together, or by one race wielding rule over all the others; for the second consequence of the configuration of the country to the inhabitants, was the impossibility of concentrating the various races or sections in defensible positions, owing to the entire absence of natural boundaries to mark off one from the other. The district of each section was open on all sides to all the others; and thus all the various races were forced, of necessity, to combine under one rule, and to submit to one government, whilst retaining their local peculiarities under pain of falling an easy prey to foreign aggressors, until, at any rate, the day should dawn when the millennium would enable them all to live in peace and good-will with one another, without the aid of such Old-Adam contrivances as despotic constitutions or republican governments.

It was thus that the absence of those geographical features which enable a nation or race to keep itself together, precluded all possibility of the establishment of a number of independent States. Unity, despotic, monarchical, or republican, was imperatively prescribed; and as was in the nature of things, the most concentrated and energetic sections, the Tartar and the Slavic, having measured their strength, divided the hegemony between them, till the Tartar succumbed to the Slav, and henceforth yielded to the slow but effectual process of assimilation. Thus Russia must inevitably always be a united nation, no matter who may wield the sceptre—Slav, Finn, German, or Tartar. Rule once established, the whole empire must acquiesce in that rule. Russia, vast as her territorial limits are, can never be divided into a number of States, as the configuration of the rest of Europe, with its many sharply-defined boundaries, not only allows, but demands. The correctness of this view is proved by the contrary that has taken place in the case of various sections of the Russian races, that have established themselves in other parts of Europe. Thus whilst the Finns inhabiting Russia have become, politically, completely merged in the empire, owing to the absence of natural fortifications; their kindred, the Magyars, occupying a well-defined centre, have preserved their independence with an energy that has been the admiration of the world. Those of the Turk race whose territory insensibly merges in that of Russia, have equally succumbed to the general law, except where the well-defined barriers, furnished by the Balkans, the Bosphorus, and the Caucasus, have enabled them to defy all attacks. Finally, the Slav race itself—the dominant race in Russia, which has there almost lost its identity to such an extent, that one section, the Poles, will not recognise them as Slavs, but designate them as Tartars—have managed to preserve their independence wherever they were assisted by the natural features of the district they occupy; as, for instance, Montenegro, Servia, and, to a very great extent, Bohemia. It is thus irrefutable, that the various races of Russia, however much they may be rivals amongst themselves, are irresistibly compelled, not only to preserve unity of government, but also to extend themselves and their territory till they have reached those geographical limits that, so to say, are indispensable for holding them together—just as the iron hoop holds the staves of the barrel together. Until these natural limits are reached, it is idle to suppose that Russia either can or will stop in her annexing course of conquest. She *must* advance till she has gained those limits. But when they are gained, when her natural boundaries form such a line of defence as the Pyrenees, the Alps, the

Balkans, or the "silver streak" in other countries, what then? Will the millennium have set in by then, or will she yield to the temptations—which will be great for a nation of some 100,000,000 souls—offered by such luxuriantly wealthy countries as Asia Minor, Persia, India, and such a pearl of strategic or commercial pearls as Constantinople? That is the great political question of the day; and to answer it, we must ask what are the limits fixed on by the Russians themselves as indispensable? And we must also ask, in case of a divergence of Russian opinion, what section of the nation is most likely to carry the other sections with it? By this means we shall arrive at a correct appreciation of the question. We know how far Russia *must* still extend her frontiers; but it is also necessary to know how far they wish to extend it themselves. We must know at what line defence will cease, and aggression commence. Therefore, let us examine the various sections, their ambitions, their powers and prospects, as they exist at the present day.

The chief races that now occupy the whole extent of the Russian empire, from the Baltic to Behring's Straits, from the frontiers of Prussia to the frontiers of Canada, are the Finns, the Tartars, the Slavs, and the Germans. All the other tribes and families, more or less differing from each other in habits, language, and features, are members of one of these races, with the exception of the Armenians, Circassians, and Georgians. These latter, however, have no special political importance as yet. The others, on the contrary, form very important elements in the constitution of the empire, which demand far more attention now that Western progress is making an advance in the empire, than was requisite before it had been opened to Western ideas by the abolishment of serfdom, and the levelling influences of the railways.

Of the four races just mentioned, the Finns are at the same time the most backward and the most forward of the rural population of Russia. The race is at its lowest in Western Siberia, where it is represented by the Ostiaks; and in the Northern Ural, by the Vogules; whilst it is at its highest in Finland proper, as represented by the Suomi; and in Hungary, by the Magyars. The whole race in Russia is divided into about a dozen different tribes, which may be classified into three or four families; of which the above-mentioned Vogules, Ostiaks, and the Samoyedes form one. Then comes the Peruvian branch in the north-east of Russia—say some 500,000 souls—the Votiaks, on the Viatka; and the Zyriaines, in the deserts of the Petchora. A third group is composed of the Volga tribes—to which the Bulgarians belong — consisting of the Tcheremisses, Tchouvaches, and the Mordvines, about 1,000,000 souls; and finally comes the stock family, the Finns of Finland, or, as they call themselves, Suomi.

Of all these branches of the family, the last is the only one that has preserved its national character, habits, and language in any degree. The rest have either been completely Russified, or are rapidly becoming so. We need therefore take no further account of the eastern branches; they have no political, but only an ethnological interest. The Suomi, however, present certain features that may possibly still affect their future, especially if the German population of Russia ever succeed in their ambitious plans for the incorporation of the Baltic provinces—the "Ostsee Provinzen"—with the rest of Germany.

The Suomi, then—the Finns proper—inhabit the Grand Duchy of Finland to the amount of some 1,600,000 souls, with another 200,000 in the neighbouring districts, including that in which St. Petersburg itself is built; and about 1,200,000 of Esthonians and Livonians in the north of Courland. There are thus nearly 3,000,000 of Finns tolerably concentrated, who have a language, a history, and a national feeling of their own; and thus it is not surprising that, until recently, the Grand Duchy of Finland should have been subjected to the rule of a military governor, with a sort of special administration, that has only been very recently abolished, and the whole of Finland absolutely incorporated with the rest of the empire. In many respects the Finn is superior to the Russian—*i.e.*, that product of Finnish, Tartar, Mongolian, and Slavish mixture of blood, that forms the Russian proper—even as the Norman, Celtic, and Anglo-Saxon mixture has produced the Englishman. The pure Finn, unadulterated by any of these foreign elements, is highly industrious, economical, honest, and tenacious. His common sense is also highly developed; and thus it is not surprising that Protestantism should have made far

more progress amongst the Finns, than amongst any of the other races of Russia. His person is more carefully attended to; his villages and towns cleaner; his houses better built than the majority of the Russian peasants; and there is a certain steadiness and consciousness of self-dignity about him, that produces a very favourable impression. He is, in short, more worthy of a political position—like that of the Swedes and Norwegians, for instance—than the majority of the other tribes constituting the empire.

The Finns thus possess qualities that would repay development; and when we consider what Prussia has done for kindred races in its north-eastern provinces, when it is remembered that the Germans claim a goodly portion of the Baltic territory, now under Russian dominion, it is quite within the range of "practical politics," that, at no very distant period, there may be a Finnish question, even as there has been a Polish and an Hungarian question. Finnish blood may be useful for regenerating "Russian" blood: but families prefer receiving regenerating blood to expending it; and thus the Finns would prefer an alliance with German blood, to a subjection to Russian blood.

The second predominating race of Russia is the one that is the standing reproach to the empire, and the one the Russians themselves are ashamed of. There is not an individual Russian that will acknowledge to having any of the blood in his veins; yet Napoleon I. was not far wrong when he said—"*Grattez le Russe et vous y trouverai le Tartar.*" (Scrape the Russian and you will find the Tartar.) The Tartar is of the same stock as the Turk, and speaks a dialect of the Turkish language. At the period of their irruption from their Asiatic wilds into Europe, they were still more barbarous and uncivilised than the Turks, inasmuch as they did not embrace Islam until after their invasion; and had no code of morals, duties, or honour whatever. Nor is it too much to say, that the Tartar, where he has preserved his race from admixture with the Slavic or Finnish races, is still just as barbarous, on the whole, as he was in the 13th century. The only difference is, that from various causes he has not the power of evil that his instincts and energies would lead him to exercise. The chief of these reasons is, that the Russian emperors never interfered with his religion. They let him follow his own rites, build his own mosques, and, to a great extent, indulge in his monastic propensities, whereby he became more and more isolated in the course of centuries, and lost, more and more, his individuality by admixture with Finn and Slav. It was never a question of Crescent and Cross between the Moslems of Russia and the Christian population. The czar was practically the head of the Moslem Church, as well as of the Orthodox Church, and thus no such conflict was possible between the votaries of the two religions, as created such a gulf as that between the Turks and Christians on the Balkan peninsula, and between the Moors and Roman Catholics of Spain.

Thus the Tartar race merged into the Russian; or disappearing rapidly, or at best but leading an insignificant existence in isolated patches, has at present no political standing whatever. It has played its part; it has been absorbed by the Russians; and now it appears that the czar thinks it time for the process to be applied to the Turk, his brother race. The process in this direction would, however, not be quite so easy; for uncivilised and savage as the Tartar may be, even he was not so convinced of the beneficial nature of Russian rule, as to regard it as an unmixed advantage; and at various periods he has preferred emigration to the lands of the Crescent, rather than to remain beneath the Russian Cross. Thus there was an emigration, on a very large scale, after the conquest of the Caucasus, when the majority of the Moslem Circassians fled to Turkey: and again, in the years 1860 to 1863, when the process of Russification was being peculiarly and actively carried on, more than 260,000 Tartars left the province of Tauris, leaving behind them nearly 800 desolate and abandoned villages, and took up their abode in Turkey; especially in Eastern Bulgaria, where they had been preceded by the Circassian refugees. These are the men, exiled Tartars and Circassians, who have been the most active perpetrators of the recent massacres in Bulgaria, and who, in committing them, had a vague idea, not quite unfounded, that they were avenging their wrongs on their former oppressors and enemies.

There is no more to be said of the Tartar as a race in Russia, distinct from the Russians. But as an objection to the argument that the Russian is a Slav, and pre-eminently

a Slav, we will simply state the fact, that of all the descendants of Genghis Khan and the Golden Horde, of the myriads that poured in from Asia, there are now no more than 1,467,000 who do not object to the appellation of Tartar. It would seem thus tolerably clear that the Russian is by this time pretty well half Tartar and half Slav; and that it entirely depends upon circumstances which half is outside or inside.

The third race—the dominant race, according to the Russians—is the Slav race; but we shall be more in accordance with facts in simply regarding the Slav as one of the races that has largely contributed to the formation of the Russian people. In fact, we may regard Russia as an immense field surrounded by various communities and races, which, distinct from each other, and railed off, as it were, from each other by natural divisions, poured a certain number of their members into this open and undivided space, there to follow out a process of "natural selection," which has resulted in the development of the Russian. That one of these outer races should claim the pre-eminence, is an accident that might have occurred to any of the others; and that the mixture thus produced should claim its descent from, and identify itself with, the most intellectual and civilised of its ancestors, is perfectly natural. When, in course of time, the negro in America will have become considerably bleached by admixture with the Saxon and Celt, it is not very probable that he will regard his black forefathers with that filial respect which ought to be their due; and, on the other hand, it is not to be expected that the pure-blooded Saxon of those future days, will regard him as a full-blooded white brother, especially if he has had to submit to him, and see the Western States invaded and oppressed by the mongrel mixture. This is the position and the relations of the pure Slavs to the Russians—the relations of Poles and Czechs to the Slavonicised Finns or the Tartarised Slavs. The Pole repudiates the Russian tainted with Tartar or Finnish blood, and ignores the Slav blood flowing in his veins; whilst in virtue of this Slav blood, the Russian claims brotherhood, not only with the Pole, but with the Czechs or Bohemians, the Croats, the Serbs, the Bulgarians, and the Montenegrins. And not only do they claim brotherhood with them, but also claim to be the eldest of the family, its head, lord, and master. This claim, as has but too often been shown, has been energetically resisted by the Poles even under Alexander's reign, in 1863-'64, and is what is known as the Panslavonic theory, which attained the height of its development at the Panslavonic congress in Moscow, in 1867.

As may be supposed, from what we have already said on the subject, that section of the Russians who have the least Slavic blood in their veins, and the most Tartar and Finnish elements, are also the most clamorous in asserting their Slavdom. They form the section known as Great Russians, numbering some 36,000,000 souls, and occupying Moscow, and the central and north-eastern portion of the empire. A second section, with more Slavic than Tartar or Finnish blood, is formed by the Little Russians, occupying the basins of the Dniester, Dnieper, and Bug, and numbering some 14,000,000 of souls; whilst a third section is composed of White Russians, who occupy the provinces of Vitebsk, Grodno, Mohilef, and Minsk, who number some 6,000,000 of souls, are comparatively full-blooded Slavs, and were always an object of dispute between the Great Russians, or Muscovites, and the Polish kings. So different are they in their degree of Slavic descent from the Great Russian, or Muscovite, that their language is, at least, as different from Russian as Dutch is from German, and that they are generally regarded as a distinct family, by the name of Russenes, or Russniaks.

Such is the composition of the Russian people, and such are the facts upon which the Great Russians—the Muscovites, who make up in number what they want in quality of Slavic blood—base their claims to unite and lead the rest of the Slavic races of Europe, and who have invented the Panslavonic question. They might just as well raise a Panmongolian question, and claim the rule and hegemony over the whole of China, Persia, Asia Minor, and a few more places. Great Britain might just as well raise a Pangermanic question, and lay claim to Denmark, Norway, Prussia, Germany, and America, in virtue of her Saxon and Norse blood; and to France and Italy, in virtue of her Norman and Roman descent. Absurdity can go no further; and, as an absurdity, it is highly amusing: but, when it is carried to the pitch of war, it becomes a criminal hobby, which Europe must not suffer to ride other people to death, instead of being ridden to death itself.

There is, however, a small weight hanging at the end of the lever of self-interest, which is a pretty long lever, that, like the weight on the safety-valve lever of a steam-engine, will probably suffice to prevent the Panslavonic boiler from blowing itself and its neighbours up, to the great distress of Europe. That weight is provided by the presence of a small, but highly influential body of Germans in the Baltic provinces, in the chief towns, in the capital, in the chief branches of the administration, and in the presence of a considerable amount of German blood in the veins of the Romanoffs. These Germans do not become Russianised; on the contrary, they Germanise the Russians, even as they Germanise the Poles, the Lithuanians, the Bohemians, and the Croats. No better proof of the inferiority—politically speaking—of the Slavs can be adduced than this. In other countries of higher political rank, as England and America, the German becomes Anglicised or Americanised: he is assimilated to the politically higher-developed races; in the case of the Slav he assimilates them.

In this fact lies the great guarantee for the future. We know that the Russian colonies of Germans will never become Russianised; that they will be protected by Germany if their liberties are threatened, or they themselves were to be oppressed as were the Poles; and we know that Pangermanism—*i.e.*, an alliance of the Anglo-Saxon races—would not only be all-sufficient to stay any westward progress of the Russians, but that it would be set in motion at once if there were any signs of a serious attempt to impose Panmongolianism or Panslavism on the rest, or any considerable portion, of Europe. But though the ultimate result of such a conflict cannot be doubtful, it is no less certain that it requires much firmness and watchfulness to prevent the Russians from attempting to try the issue by an appeal to arms, at the cost of an expensive and bloody war. Nor must it be forgotten, that in spite of all the drawbacks and disadvantages arising from the peculiar constitution of the Russian government, the germs of more liberal ideas have been sown, and are slowly taking root, and developing themselves, as the relations between Russia and Europe become more intimate.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

RURAL RUSSIA; INFLUENCE OF THE CLIMATE ON THE RUSSIAN; THE NATIONAL FOOD; RUSSIAN ENDURANCE.

WE have seen that the Russian people owe their distinctive features, in a very great measure, to the mixture of three chief races; but there also remains to be considered, the influence exercised upon them by the climate and the nature of the country. In fact, climate and natural features exercise even a greater influence on the formation of their character, their habits, and their peculiarities, than the infusion of the blood of different races into their veins; for whilst the latter is temporary, and decreases in intensity as time rolls on, the climate and the country around exercise a permanent influence upon them, and never diminishes in force. In spite of his English origin, the American has developed physically into a very different being—a change that is solely owing to the change of climate; whilst, mentally, the change has been of corresponding importance.

The severe climate is undoubtedly one of the chief influences that determine the character, mind, and body of the Russian. It does not influence him in the same way as it does the Russian bear, and send him to sleep for a considerable portion of the year, but exercises an influence that produces quite as marked results; and, in many respects, very remarkable results. Thus, of all countries where reliable statistics are collected, Russia is the one country where the mortality is greatest, the average duration of life is the shortest, and yet where the maximum duration is greatest. Thus the number of centenarians who died in one year, out of 1,000,000 inhabitants, was no less than thirty-four; and it may be

assumed that there were as many still living. On the other hand, there are not more than forty-five sexagenarians per 1,000 inhabitants; whilst the average in England is over 100. But, at the same time, the average increases in the North, where it reaches sixty-six per 1,000; whilst in the South it diminishes again to thirty per 1,000. As may be supposed, the mortality amongst infants is very great; year by year they are thinned off to an alarming extent, by exposure and by want of sufficiently nourishing food, so that it is only the most robust that survive.

But it is not only the direct action of the cold that exercises so fatal an influence on the people; it also exercises an indirect influence through the character of the food they eat, and the very precautions they have to take against the severity of the weather. Thus the long winter, when the pastures are covered with snow, greatly hinders the growth of cattle, and renders meat extremely scarce. The peasant is too poor to be able to feed them through the long winter months; he has neither stabling nor fodder for them. Consequently his meat diet is very scanty; and even now, since the emancipation of the serfs and the introduction of pigs, the peasant never tastes meat except on Sundays and a few holidays. And even then, the method they have of storing their meat appears to detract considerably from its nutritive powers; the custom being for every family to kill as much meat and fish as they will require for the winter, and to freeze it, thawing it piece by piece as it is required. The food, generally speaking, is quite vegetable, the chief article being rye, bread, porridge, and stchtchi—a soup made of fermented cabbage, and quite as nasty as it is unpronounceable. Mushrooms of various kinds, dried and fresh, and dried and salted fish, of which immense quantities are consumed, form the national diet. The luxuries are quass—a liquor made of water and fermented bread; tea, and vutki. The samovar, or copper tea-urn, is an indispensable utensil in every household, from the richest to the poorest, and is ready day and night. Vutki, a spirit made from grains, potatoes, &c., is, however, as national a beverage, and is, perhaps, as indispensable as long as the diet is so poor. The peasant does not drink it—he gulps it, one might almost say, by the pint; and as a natural consequence, the drunkenness, with all its sanitary and economic drawbacks, is enormous throughout the empire.

Then the precautions the Russian has to take to keep the cold out, make the cure almost as bad as the disease. When winter is about to set in, the first thing the peasant does is to pile up the manure all round his cottage, up to the windows. These are then hermetically sealed with a solution of mastic; an immense porcelain stove, projecting into the room, and lighted from the outside, is then heated, and the temperature of the room kept up to a tropical heat day and night, without any ventilation being provided for, or the window ever being opened. The state of this atmosphere, mixed with the exhalations of perhaps a dozen or more people, the fumes of cooking, in which garlic and onions play a great part, may be imagined; but when the thaw sets in, succeeded by another frost, and so on alternately, and the manure and the winter's refuse that has been added to it, slops, scraps, and other things, begin to thaw and penetrate the mansion, imagination is quite powerless to realise the effect.

Not less injurious to health is the habit of the Russian peasant to sleep in his clothes, consisting of wraps of coarse linen round his feet and legs, waistcoat and pantaloons of coarse cloth, or furs and a sheepskin (*Touloup*), the wool turned inside. The entomological population of these garments is as varied as it is large; and it may be doubted whether Keating's whole stock of insect powder would be sufficient to cleanse more than two Russian peasants' households. He changes his linen—when he has got any—not more than once a week or fortnight, when he takes his Russian vapour-bath, each village possessing its establishment for the purpose. The arrangements are of a very primitive nature. The bather reclines on a slanting board, and procures the steam by pouring water on a sort of furnace of red-hot stones, rubbing himself with a handful of rough rags, or shreds of beech and birch bark. This process is generally followed by a snow-bath, or a plunge into iced water, and is as drastic a stimulant as can well be imagined.

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that the vital energy of the average Russian is very low; and though they may be apparently strong, and are tall and well-built, still their actual strength is by no means proportionate to their apparent

vigour. On the other hand, their powers of endurance, in a mild, easy-going way, are very considerable. Scrofula is very prevalent: they are peculiarly liable to contagious diseases, which are very difficult to get rid of, in consequence of the low degree of vitality. Lung disease—consumption—is not so frequent as might be supposed, owing to the dryness of the atmosphere; but, on the other hand, small-pox, typhus, typhoid, and angina-pectoris cause a great mortality.

The same influences produce the same results, in a very considerable degree, even upon the upper classes. The close atmosphere of the apartments, however much it may be alleviated by the height of the rooms, and their opening into one another, and the Russian habit of continually changing night into day and day into night, produce the listlessness and pasty complexion, which they endeavour to counteract by a course of European baths—all of which are a regular rendezvous of the Russian nobility year after year. In short, Russian life, for a considerable portion of the year, is a hothouse life, and is not at all conducive to morality, which may be said to be lower in Russia than in any other European country, not even excepting Roumania. Amongst the peasantry alone, sometimes, as in the case of some of the communia, as many as twenty to thirty people are crammed promiscuously into a couple of rooms—old and young, married and single, all together. There is scarcely any sense of modesty or decency; and it is by no means an uncommon sight in summer, to see the girls and women disporting themselves in all their native simplicity on the banks of the river, in full public view.

Nature thus weighs upon the peasant in Russia with a very heavy hand; and, as a natural consequence, endurance, patience, and a certain indifference are the results. All his energies are reduced to a power of resistance—the quality that makes them such good soldiers for defence, but such bad ones where assault and dash are required. This is strikingly exemplified by one of their national games, of which we once happened to be the astonished witnesses. A stalwart Russ, some six feet high, was being "punished" by an adversary fully six inches shorter than himself, in a most atrocious fashion. The blows fell upon his head and face one after the other, being dealt with a slow swinging deliberation, and received with much apparent thankfulness. But for some moments our astonishment was too great to inquire of the admiring spectators around what it all meant. We were told, to our no less surprise, that this was a Russian boxing-match—the object being, not for the adversaries to inflict the greatest amount of punishment on each other, but to see which one received the greater number of blows before calling for quarter.

On another occasion we also witnessed a similar affair, the actors being a stalwart Boyard and a still more stalwart serf. The contest took place in the village inn, on a challenge from the Boyard. The trial was to be proceeded with by turns of three blows each, the Boyard commencing. He dealt the serf a tremendous blow full in the mouth, cutting his lips, and bruising them almost to a pulp; the second blow was dealt on his nose, which forthwith disappeared; the third closed up one of his eyes—but not a sound did the victim utter, nor did a muscle twitch in his mangled face. The Boyard now put himself in position to pass his examination; but whether he was simply acting as one of those choice dessert fruits that are put on the table on the tacit understanding that they are not to be touched, or whether the serf was too conscious of his power, we are unable satisfactorily to determine; but anyhow, the serf, having raised his fist with an ominous swing, brought it with a tremendous sweep against the edge of the massive porcelain-stove, and knocked a piece out of it the size of a man's head, observing, at the same time, that he did not wish to mess the room with the "master's" brains.

On a third occasion, whilst accompanying the Russian troops into Warsaw, after their rout of the Polish insurgent forces at Batorsch, in August, 1864, an officer was loud in his praises of the unquestioning discipline of the Russian soldier. As a proof of the truth of his assertion, he called one of the men out of the ranks, and saying, "Ivan, it is my pleasure to punish thee," dealt him a sounding box on the ear, and sent him back again. The man simply saluted, and obeyed. We remarked that we should not be surprised if the officer were to be shot in the back at the first engagement. He laughed, and called Ivan forth again, and said to him, "Ivan, why did I punish thee just now?"—"I don't

know," was the reply. "But you know I must have had a reason for it?" "Of course," the man answered; "you had an excellent reason for it." "Yes," observed the officer, "I did it to prove to this gentleman here, our old enemies of Sebastopol, that the Russian soldier is unapproachable for discipline by any other nation. Was I not right?" "By God! master, you were," replied the man, with a broad grin of triumph at us.

There is no exaggeration in these incidents. The endurance—a sort of submissive fatalism—of the common Russian is most remarkable. It is, in fact, more or less a special feature of Tartar and Slav; and being thus indifferent to suffering themselves, they are indifferent to it in others. They have no sympathy with themselves or with others. For the same reason, they are not actively cruel; it is too much trouble; it is not worth it. If told to give no quarter, they give none; but as far as they are personally concerned, they would not go three yards out of their way to give a victim the *coup de grace*. This applies, however, only to the Great Russian, the pure Muscovite. His more southern brethren are as pillaging, rapacious, and bloodthirsty a horde as ever existed, whenever they have the chance to exercise their peculiar talents in this line.

The climate and its consequences thus producing these results, it might be expected that they would be increased by the monotony of the natural features of the country. Broad plains, broad sluggishly-flowing rivers, long-stretching expanses of dense forest, with nothing to relieve the dreary flatness, whilst producing the oppressive melancholy that characterises the Russian peasant, at the same time forces him to seek some relief by an unrestrained indulgence in imagination. His mind supplies the heights, gulfs, and abysses, the fantastic shapes and forms which the scene refuses him. Thus left to revel, uncontrolled by ideas or communications with the rest of the world, his fancy takes the most grotesque form, and luxuriates in the wildest and weirdest growths of superstition and religious fervour; which, on the other hand, is also apt to degenerate into the most material Nihilism. There is no object in anything but the present. Nothing went before him, and nothing will come after him. The only thing to be considered is the satisfaction of present wants, and their enjoyment. It is the reaction of boundless ignorance and superstition. One of the avowed disciples of this "creed"—which was even represented, a few years ago, by a newspaper published abroad, under the title, "*I spit at everybody*"—on being asked what the principles of his doctrines were, replied—"Take heaven and earth, take life and death, take God and the soul, and spit upon them." Spitting, it must be observed, plays a great part in the daily life of a Russian peasant. He spits as a sign of astonishment; he spits as a sign of defiance; he spits to avert an evil omen; he spits for a fine day, and he spits against bad weather—in short, he spits for everything. The fear of the evil eye is universal; the Russian peasant attributes all his diseases to it, and generally expects the doctor to cure them by counter-incantations and magic rites, and frequently visits upon him the anger he feels for his unknown enemy, accusing the doctor of joining in the conspiracy to bewitch him. Vaccination is abhorred—the scar it leaves being regarded as the seal of Antichrist, or Satan himself, whereby the victims are to be known on the day of judgment. Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that medical men feel no special desire to settle in Russia, the general rule being that there are two in every rural district, who are supposed to visit the various villages once a year—the patients being left in the meantime to the care of the local overseer, or the image of the local saint. But, altogether, a serious illness is regarded as a divine visitation; it is the peasant's duty humbly to submit; though, for all that, the plague, cholera, and famine fill the peasant's soul with unbounded terror. But still greater than the fear of these visitations is his terror of the Red Cock, as he calls fires, which are of alarming frequency throughout the empire. They are caused by the ramshackle construction of the wooden houses, and the length of the winter, which demands so much more firing; whilst in the summer the heat is so great, that houses, forests, and meadows become as dry as tinder, and the simplest spark is sufficient to cause immense conflagrations, which at times assume the features of regular epidemics. In fact, it may be said, that every house in the country districts is sure to be burnt down, sooner or later, either by accident or by the hands of an incendiary, as an easy and





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satisfactory way of avenging himself upon his enemy. His terror of fire is so great, that, like the lightning, it is often considered as a visitation of God, against which it would be impious to contend; and thus, when a fire breaks out in a village, the peasants will very often hastily collect their household goods, their saints, unhinge the doors and windows of their houses, and abandon them to the mercy of the flames. Insurance companies are quite unable to extend their operations to the Russian villages, the peasant considering it nothing less than blasphemy to try to buy immunity from the decrees of Providence.

This superstition of the Russian peasant is, however, considerably modified by his sound common sense. When he has once discovered an error, he never falls into it, or submits to its teaching again. This peculiarity saves him from becoming an unquestioning tool in the hands of the clergy. He respects the clergy no further than their personal qualities may demand, or the authority they wield from the czar enforces. We were much struck with this feature during the visit of the Russian pilgrims to the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. On the Russian Easter, the church is thronged with devotees to witness the miracle of the Holy Fire, when each one, provided with a consecrated candle, awaits the moment when the officiating minister projects from a grating the taper which has been mysteriously kindled by fire from heaven. One of these pilgrims, after the ceremony was over, was heard ridiculing the pretensions of one of the Russian priests, and making some very unflattering comments on his greed and morals. A missionary, wishing to improve the occasion, seized the opportunity to inveigh against the priesthood, and called upon the Russian to abjure a faith professed by such unworthy leaders. But the shrewd peasant had his answer ready, and replied without hesitation—"Now that is how a head without brains would reason. For if I purchase a *samovar* which serves its purpose truly, and discover afterwards that the man who sold it to me was a scoundrel and a thief, is that any reason why I should throw my good *samovar* away? Your *samovars* may be very good, my friend; but as long as my old one satisfies my wants, I don't want to buy a new one. Sell your wares to people who have none."

Thus the Russian peasant has unbounded faith in his *icons*, or images, and will implore their assistance on every occasion, no matter what may be the immorality of the act for which he requires their aid. But if his *icon* has once disappointed him, or he discovers—to continue the old pilgrim's simile—that there is a hole in his *samovar*, he casts them aside, and calls in a new form of superstition and mysticism to take their places, and increase the number of the Raskol, or dissenting sects. Thus the Russian's mysticism, superstition, and religion, take a very material form, and the observance of the *Obriad*, or ritual, becomes the sole object of his religious life. Morals do not enter into the question; they, being of the law, are within the law, and thus a mundane institution, of the efficacy of which he is quite as well able to judge as any priest, be he black or white. He implicitly believes all he cannot understand, if uttered with authority; but as to that which is within the range of his knowledge, he allows no one to dictate to him—least of all, the priest, for whom, on the whole, he has but a very scant respect, regarding him, in some measure, as the servant of the *icon* and the czar; but otherwise, simply as one of the communal members, subject to the decisions of the majority, and obliged to submit unconditionally, as any other member would be.

CHAPTER XXIX.

CLERICAL RUSSIA.

It is related that the czar, on one of his journeys, went to attend divine service in a village church. The priest, or *pope*, who went to meet him at the threshold, was hesitating whether he should hold out his hand for the obligatory and customary kiss

to his imperial visitor, when the czar impatiently decided him, by exclaiming, "Hold out your paw, you idiot!"

This anecdote proves two things: first, that the czar is not the spiritual head of the Orthodox Church, or else it would have been the priest's duty to kiss his hand, as his superior; and, secondly, it proves the sort of estimation in which the common *pope*, or the White Clergy, are generally held.

The fact is, that the spiritual as well as the temporal affairs of the Orthodox Church are arranged by a synod—the most holy directing synod—which is nominated by the emperor, whose decisions are framed under the supervision of lay officials, appointed equally by the emperor, and approved of by him, with the imperial *exequatur* or *placet*.

This synod sits permanently at St. Petersburg, with local branches at Moscow, Kieff, and Novgorod, &c. The number of its members is not fixed, either by custom or law; but the three metropolitans of St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Kieff—and, generally speaking, the metropolitan of Novgorod—are permanent and immovable members. The Exarch of Georgia also occupies a seat by long usage and tradition. The other members are all chosen by the emperor, who nominates them for a certain period, and are four or five archbishops, bishops, or archimandrites, belonging to the Black Clergy, and two members of the White Clergy, and two arch-priests, of whom one is usually the confessor or almoner of the emperor, and the other the grand almoner of the army. Attached to the synod, there is also an official, called the procurator, who is always a layman, and is also appointed by the emperor, and who is, practically, the president, and responsible to the czar. In the days of the Emperor Nicholas this official was a cavalry officer, Count Pretassof; but since the present emperor's accession, the post is no longer so striking an example of the "church militant." All business between the emperor and the synod is conducted through this functionary. He submits the government decrees and projects to the synod, and the decrees of the synod to the emperor for his sanction. Nothing can be done, not the most trivial detail executed, before it has received his confirmation, if it in any way refers to the administration. In purely ecclesiastical matters, the members of the synod have, apparently, more liberty; but it is frequently only apparent, as current matters are disposed of by the various "*bureaux*," and the members are only called upon to sign the various documents that have been proposed; and as the press of business—that of the whole empire—is far too great to be disposed of by the synod in *banco*, the documents are taken from house to house for signature. The abuses that occur from this system are evident, and have given currency to many an anecdote. Thus, when one of the members, fresh to the business, actually began to examine the report prepared for him to sign, he was bluffly interrupted by one of his colleagues saying, "We are not here to read reports, but to sign them;" whilst on another occasion, the metropolitan of Moscow actually signed a decree it was in his interest and intention to refuse. Besides its purely ecclesiastical duties, the synod also exercises the "spiritual" censorship over all books and journals treating of religious matters, whether of the nation or of the foreign press. It has the control of the religious educational establishments, the choice of the manuals to be used, and finally decides upon the canonisation of saints. Thus the whole of the ecclesiastical affairs of the empire centre in the synod, subject to the approval of the czar and his procurator. In matters of dispute and cases of disagreement in purely ecclesiastical matters, the emperor nominates a commission, which makes its report, to be either approved of by the czar, or rejected. In point of fact, therefore, whilst the czar leaves the settlement of purely religious questions to the synod, he is the absolute head of the executive of the church; and, though not invested with any spiritual authority, yet, in virtue of his right to nominate commissions and to reject their proposals, if he thinks proper, regarding any subject, is thus the ultimate authority in anything that concerns the Orthodox Russian Church.

In exactly the same fashion, the czar is the head of all the other churches within the empire, with, of course, some few modifications as regards the more purely spiritual functions. Thus, the Armenian church, whilst preserving its patriarch, under the title of Catholicos, elected by the bishops, is placed under a synod, constituted after the model of the Orthodox Synod. Equally so the Lutherans are governed by provincial consistories, and a head consistory at St. Petersburg, controlled by an imperial procu-

rator. The Catholic Church is supervised, in the same way, by the Roman Catholic College at St. Petersburg, under the presidency of the Archbishop of Mohilef, who is the primate of the Russian Roman Catholic Church, and is independent of the Vatican, as president of the college. Each Roman Catholic diocese is placed under a branch college or consistory, which is not allowed to exercise its functions without the permission and control of the government.

But, though these various foreign churches are nominally on the same footing as the Orthodox Church, they are not so in reality; or, rather, the Orthodox Church has privileges, of the greatest importance, which they do not enjoy. Thus, though each church possesses full liberty of private and public worship, they are not allowed to make proselytes; that is the sole privilege of the Orthodox Church; and once an Orthodox Christian, always an Orthodox Christian. Every child born of Orthodox parents is, *ipso facto*, bound to the Orthodox Church for ever. Such is also the case with children of mixed marriages. The code forbids, by divers penalties, any member of the Orthodox Church to change his religion. If a person expresses his desire to leave the church, he is first admonished and exhorted by the parochial clergy; then brought before the consistory; then before the synod, and condemned to penitence in a monastery. If he still perseveres in his intended apostasy, he is liable to the loss of all his civil rights, and exile to Siberia, till he comes back to his senses.

But not only does the Orthodox Church possess this privilege of prohibiting its members to embrace any other faith, but it also forbids any foreign church from making proselytes of the menbers of another foreign church. Thus, if a Polish Jew, living in the midst of a community of Catholics, wishes to embrace the Catholic faith, he is not allowed to do so. If he wants to change his religion, he must go to the Orthodox Church. If a Mussulman wish to enter the Armenian Church in Trans-Caucasia, he cannot do so; he must apply to the Orthodox Church, which thus enjoys the sole and undisputed monopoly of sending people to heaven. They may stay outside—if originally outside—if they like. But they cannot enter paradise except through the gates of the Holy Orthodox Church. A slight relaxation of the rule is nominally made in the case of infidels; but even then a Catholic or Protestant missionary must first have the permission of the government before the conversion can be commenced; and generally, the Orthodox Church manages, somehow or other, to gain possession of the new soul. In the Caucasus, however, the Armenians are allowed to baptize Mussulmans lying at the point of death; but even then the conversion must be submitted to the imperial governor for confirmation, although the man may have died since the notification of the ceremony. If the confirmation is not granted, the conversion is null and void, and the defunct balked, after all, in his attempt to get to heaven. How he is to be made aware of this fact after his decease, the imperial confessional code does not say. Doubtless the czar has his procurator—a cavalry officer probably—at the gates of heaven to deal with such posthumous cases.

The result of these ridiculous, blasphemous, and degrading laws can be imagined. There is no moral or spiritual life in the Orthodox Church whatever; and those Anglican ministers who talk of intercommunion with the Orthodox Church, are utterly ignorant of what they are talking about. They might as well propose intercommunion with Islam, because this, that, or the other tenet of the Moslems happens to coincide with some Anglican tenet.

The Orthodox Church in Russia is nothing more than a code of ecclesiastical and national etiquette laws, to which everybody is obliged to conform to, according to his station. In the case of the lower classes it degenerates into a simple observance of a ritual, which must be submitted to as any other temporal law, and which, not satisfying the innate religious sentiment of mankind, drives its members into the arms of mysticism and superstition, and gives rise to the endless sects known in Russia by the name of Raskol.

We must now shortly examine the machinery by which this system is carried out, under the direction of the czar and synod.

The clergy is divided into two branches; of which one, like the Roman Catholic clergy, takes the vows of celibacy, and the other enters into matrimony—is practically forced to marry. The former branch is popularly called the Black Clergy, on account of the long black veil that hangs over their backs; whilst the other branch is called the White Clergy, not because they

are dressed in white garments, but because black is mixed with other colours, brown or dark blue, and in order to distinguish them from the Black Clergy.

These two divisions represent the two ranks which the clergy occupy in the social scale. The Black Clergy fill all the important posts, the White Clergy discharging the duties of simple parish priests. There is thus an inevitable and ceaseless opposition between the two, and a divergence of interests, which it is one of the chief objects of the State to reconcile and work upon.

Thus the Black Clergy is actually a monastic body—educated in monasteries, governing these monasteries, recruiting the ranks of the higher dignitaries, and generally playing that part which is played by monastic institutions all the world over; they are, in fact, the Jesuits of Russia: but then their general is no less a personage than the czar himself. They all belong to the order of St. Basil, and their establishments, owing to the system of artificial nationality prevalent in Russia, are the chief centre for the preservation and propagation of the national principles—national principles determined by the czar, either originally framed by him, or approved of by him. Of these establishments, those of Troitza, Petchevski, Simonoff, Donskoi, Solovetsk, St. George of Novgorod, the Assumption of Tver and New Jerusalem, some leagues from Moscow, are the most important. Some of these establishments are regular towns, with numerous chapels and churches, inns, and other establishments for the accommodation of pilgrims. Thus Troitza possesses fourteen churches and chapels; Solovetsk, seven; Simonoff and Donskoi, six each. Like most of the monasteries of the Orthodox Ritual, these establishments are most massively built, were formerly fortified, and were often able to play a part in the military history of the empire; as, for instance, Troitza in the case of the Polish invasion, and when Peter the Great found an effective shelter, behind its massive walls,* from the attack of the Strelitz. Even now, the positions of the Polish camp and cannon are pointed out through the embrasures from which the Russian guns answered those of their foes. The wealth of some of these monasteries, in gold, silver, and jewels, is sometimes almost fabulous. Thus the sacristy and cellars of Troitza contain an amount of vases, jewelled crosses, strings of pearls, jewelled images, and vestments embroidered with gold, silver, and jewels, that is unequalled except by the patriarchal treasury at Moscow. It may be said that there are quarts upon quarts of unmounted gems in these establishments. After Troitza, the most important of the monasteries is that of Petchevski, situated on a hill on the right bank of the Dnieper, near Kieff. The plain at the foot of the hill is literally honeycombed in all directions by subterranean galleries, and the cells in which the ancient anchorites and hermits lived and died—their cell in life becoming their tomb in death after they had been desiccated. These galleries are a favourite resort of the pilgrims, who are conducted through them by the monks in long file, each one with a taper in his hand, and kissing the skeleton fingers, shrivelled up like parchment, which are stretched out for the purpose, as it were, by the ghastly remains of the ascetics, each one seated in his particular niche, like the desiccated corpses, each bearing a tablet with the date of his decease, which travellers to Malta will remember having seen in the Capuchin convent.

These monasteries are respected according to the estimation in which their various saints and relics are held for their learning and artistic merits. Thus St. Sergius of Strelna enjoys a high respect for its sacred music and chants, which are, so to say, quite a speciality, like the famous *liqueur* of the monks of La Chartreuse. The printing-presses of Petchevski supply the greater number of devotional books in use throughout the empire; whilst other establishments are famed for their studious or more prosaic occupations, like Solovetsk, situated on an island in the White Sea, and which might almost be described as a monastic Steam Navigation Company, its members owning, manning, and working a line of steamers, chiefly, it is true, for the service of pilgrims. The other establishments are devoted to the education of the men who will hereafter be called to fulfil their duties as heads and dignitaries of the church.

The total number of these monasteries, in 1872, was 383, with 5,810 monks and 5,617 brethren. At present, there are, as nearly as possible, about 500 throughout the empire, or belonging to it in various

* See p. 131.





countries; as, for instance, the monastery at Jerusalem, and the Russian establishments on Mount Athos.

The sources whence these monasteries—the Black Clergy, in short—derive their income, may be classed under three heads: the State, estates, and offerings. The domains and estates, forest land, pasturage, arable lands, and fisheries, even after all the deductions that have been made from their property under various rulers, are still immense and unequally divided; the revenue of the higher functionaries being especially disproportionate, some of the archimandrites, of the more important houses, receiving as much as 30,000 roubles a-year.

But the income derived from their landed property, large as it is, cannot be compared with the revenue derived from the offerings presented by the pilgrims to the various images and relics, which are so highly venerated throughout Russia. In no country, not even in Spain or France, are pilgrimages conducted on so large a scale as in Russia. The chief season for these pilgrimages is Easter; and then the roads to Troitza and Petchevski, and the other shrines, are literally swarmed with troops of men and women, young and old, travelling on foot from the outermost confines of the empire: from Siberia, from the Black Sea, and the coasts of the White Sea and Caspian. They come, not by thousands nor by tens of thousands, but by hundreds of thousands; and not one comes empty-handed; and each one burns his candle, so that the trade in candles alone amounts annually to a very large sum. Before Eastertide, steamer on steamer arrives at Joppa, laden with scores of pilgrims for Jerusalem; or at Salonica for the monasteries and shrines of Mount Athos; and it may truly be said, that there is not a single Russian, man or woman, of mature age, that has not, at one time or the other, made his or her pilgrimage to some shrine or other; and, in very many cases, several pilgrimages. The revenue thus produced, great as it is, is still further increased by taking the shrine to those who cannot or will not go to it. At various periods of the year, the monks will start in procession with the figure of the saint, or the relic for which their establishment is famous, and make a tour throughout the neighbouring districts, during which they are received with open arms, are hospitably entertained, and net a large sum from the gifts showered upon them, or rather upon the image. Some of these images alone suffice to procure an ample fortune. There is a little chapel in the Nevski Perspective at St. Petersburg, that produces 400,000 roubles a-year. At Moscow there is another, against the gates of the Red Square, which separates the Kremlin from the Bazaar, which contains an image of Our Lady of Iberia, the gifts to which bring in some 200,000 roubles a-year. The image possesses a carriage and horses, in which it is driven to the houses of the rich who are too ill to go themselves to the shrine. In short, "iconolatry"—if we may be allowed to coin the word—is, in Russia, scarcely less than a form of gross idolatry, and all the more indefensible as it is carried on under the direct auspices of the government. Another source of income is also furnished by the passion of the Russians to be buried near the tomb or shrine of their favourite saint; and thus many of the richer classes, towards the presumable end of their lives, adopt the monastic gown, to be buried within the sacred precinct—a privilege for which they pay enormous sums, in the shape of entrance fees and bequests. Thus the *noblesse* of St. Petersburg make it a point of being interred in the cemetery of St. Alexander Nevski, whose relics and remains were brought from Vladimir to St. Petersburg by Peter the Great, or in the burial-grounds of the monastery of St. Sergius, at Strelna, on the shores of the Gulf of Finland. The price paid for a tomb in these places would almost cover the ground necessary with gold.

The third source of revenue, the amount granted by the State, proceeds from the estates that have been sequestrated—or rather withdrawn from the private administration of the monasteries themselves—and are now administered, and the proceeds distributed, according to the decision of the synodal and imperial authorities.

As has already been said, the members of these monasteries furnish the material whence the heads of the Orthodox Church are chosen. Each establishment contains a certain number of members who have entered it to end their days in peace; another proportion forming the standard administrative *personnel* of the house; and a third section consisting of the young men who have finished their theological education at the seminaries, have taken the

vows of celibacy, and there await their nomination to the more important posts at the disposal of czar and synod. For whilst the monasteries of other countries are purely voluntary and ecclesiastical associations, the Russian monasteries are under the absolute control of the State. They cannot even elect their own superiors; that is a privilege of the Holy Synod—which is the czar. A fresh monastery cannot be founded, not a single novice admitted to take the vows, without the imperial permission. The posts of Hegoumevos, or archimandrite, are also at the disposal of the synod; and the monasteries themselves often given to bishops or candidates for the episcopacy. In short, the monastic institutions are as subject to the emperor and the imperial *bureaucracy* as the railways, or any other department of the State. They are divided into three classes—Laures, Staovopigies, and monasteries of the first and second classes. There are four of the Laures: to wit, Troitza, near Moscow; Petchevski, at Kieff; St. Alexander Nevski, at St. Petersburg; and Potdraieff, in Volhynia.

So much for the Black Clergy, the cream of the Orthodox Church. Their humble rivals and jealous brethren, the White Clergy, have their lives cast in much less pleasant places. Until recently they were not much better than sacerdotal serfs, and formed a close and hereditary corporation: hence the Russian proverb, "Son of a priest, always a priest." They were the Levites of Christianity. The serf could not enter the corporation without the permission of his lord; the noble not without renouncing his serfs, estates, and privileges. Thus the clergy of one generation had to furnish the clergy of the next out of its own ranks; the daughter of a *pope* had to marry the son of a *pope*, and *vice versâ*. Special permission was necessary to enable a *pope's* son or daughter to marry "out of the tribe." This *caste* was broken up by Alexander II., in 1864, three years after the emancipation of the serfs. But in this respect also, as in so many others touching the reforms that have been made by Alexander, the benefits arising from the change are still, for the most part, illusory, in consequence of the passive opposition on the part of the nobles, and the inveterate admirers of the old habits and institutions. Thus, in a very great measure, the old customs still obtain, and are practically carried out throughout the empire; and will so continue till the seed has been permitted, and had time, to grow.

Thus, in the ordinary course, the pope who is blessed with a daughter and no son, retires, or leaves his *cure* to his son-in-law; and, in all cases, it is endeavoured to keep the *cure* in the family by handing it down from father to son; and so universal and unquestioned had the custom become, that, at one time, the expediency of making the curacies hereditary was seriously considered. As it is, in case of the pope's death, either one of his sons or his son-in-law succeeds him. If the latter, an arrangement was made whereby the new-comer took over his predecessor's house at a valuation, and paid a pension to his widow, and a certain sum to the other children, in lieu of their interest in the property, the widow of a pope being forbidden to re-marry, and the popes themselves prohibited to marry a widow. This custom had become so universally a matter of course, that it was necessary to pass a law, in 1867, to make the enforcement of it illegal. Still, as long as the clergy are forced to subsist on so meagre a pittance as that on which they now eke out their existence, a custom that provides for widows and orphans will not be speedily abrogated.

These customs obtain, not only in the case of the simple village priest, but are adhered to by all the ecclesiastical and sacerdotal functionaries of all degrees and any connexion with the church, from the priest down through the various ranks of deacons, minors, sacristans, and beadles, to the very bell-ringers. The posts of all are practically hereditary; and the occupants of each try to keep them in the family, and distinct from the others. There are thus quite distinct classes above and beyond the social distinctions that prevail in every country. A poor curate is not particularly esteemed anywhere; nor does he often succeed in marrying the bishop's daughter; but in Russia it is very seldom that the pope marries into the ranks above him, or that a village priest can ally himself with a town priest's daughter.

Of the education of the clergy, as a whole, the less said the better, since their salaries correspond. The great majority of parochial priests receive no more than 100 roubles a-year (*i. e.*, £33). In the western provinces, where civilisation and the clergy of rival churches are more advanced, he



receives 200 to 300 roubles (£60 to £100); but these cases are rare.

Thus the village priest has to depend on the fees for various religious ceremonies to gain a livelihood; and with the superstitious reverence of the Russian *moujik* (or peasant) for ritual observances, he might secure an ample income from this source did the synod not claim the lion's share, and take to itself the most lucrative sources of revenue. Thus the Holy Synod possesses the monopoly of selling the wax-candles, which every Russian buys at the doors of the church, and lights before the image of his special saint. On the other hand, every ecclesiastical ceremony has to be paid for. Confession, baptism, confirmation, communion, marriage, and burial, costs as much as the *pope* can get, or the celebrant is willing to pay. A regular course of bargaining has to be gone through before the amount to be paid is settled. The *moujik* tries to beat down the *pope* by all the means in his power; and, if he can, will bury his father clandestinely, to save the burial-fee. Wedding processions sometimes turn back from the church door because the pope demands a higher fee than the bridegroom is willing to pay.

Under the circumstances, no wonder that the wretched pope should try to extort as much from the peasant as he possibly can, and thus he resorts to all sorts of possible and impossible benedictions, for which he receives a few copecks. Take the building of a house. The foundations have to be blessed; the material blessed; blessed when the roof is on, and blessed when it is finished. All these blessings may bring him in half a rouble—say eighteen-pence. If a family removes, or any one is about to commence, or has concluded, an important undertaking; is going to set out on a journey, or has safely returned, the village priest is sent for to pronounce a benediction, or chant a *Te Deum*. The seed is blessed, and the crop is blessed; the doors of houses, barns, and stables are blessed; and at Christmas, Easter, and Epiphany the pope does not wait to be called, but proceeds, with his clerk, to every house, and pronounces a special blessing. In the richer houses, he just enters the antechamber, mumbles his prayers, and swings his pot of incense, and goes off with the donation that is sent out to him by the servant. The *moujik*, however, whilst eager to secure the services of the pope at as low a price as possible when he is in want of them, strenuously objects to their being forced upon him when he does not require them, and shuts up his cottage and runs away when he sees the *pope* coming, so as not to be "at home" when he arrives. The pope, however, could not afford thus to be balked of his fee, and so he used to take his wife and children, and his clerk's wife and children, and his sexton and bell-ringer's wife and children, with him on his rounds to look out for runaways, and give chase and bring them back. To such an extent did this nuisance prevail, that the synod found it necessary to issue a law forbidding the popes to raise these feminine and infantile regiments any more. Now he is therefore obliged to have recourse to other stratagems to recover his dues; such, for instance, as giving his benediction, and then, if payment is refused, to threaten to turn the blessing into a curse; and so works on the superstitious fears of the *moujik*, that he at once pays the sum demanded.

But however chary the *moujik* may be with his pecuniary gifts, he cannot be reproached with want of hospitality. Thus the pope, on his parochial rounds, is plentifully plied with *vutki;* so that, before the day is done, the most important question for him is, how to get home again; and habitual drunkenness is thus laid to his charge. The truth is, however, that to refuse a glass of spirits is regarded in Russia almost as an insult, and the *pope* is, morally and practically, obliged to conform to the common usage, on pain of being scouted as proud, and haughty, and unsociable. The consequence is, that the ability to absorb an unlimited amount of spirits, is almost of more importance to the village pope than any amount of theological learning, which is not wanted by the *moujik*, who is quite satisfied with his *icons*, to whom he confides his spiritual welfare, with every conviction of that being quite sufficient for this life and the next.

Such being the case, it is not surprising to find that the clergy in general do not enjoy any very great esteem amongst the population at large. They rank simply as would the servants of any other department of State, and are made use of, or obeyed, in the same way as any other officials are. Thus the law commands every Orthodox Christian to communicate once a-year—to "Take the Easter," as the expression goes, and to confess. Having acquitted themselves of these duties, the

lower class of officials, and the soldiers, receive a certificate from the priest that they have complied with the law; whilst, as regards the congregation at large, the priest is obliged to enter their names in a register, and furnish a list of those who have "communicated and confessed," and a black list of those who have not, to the bishops and to the Holy Synod. Thus the lists for 1873 show that 47,000,000 duly performed their religious duties. But, as a matter of fact, a very large proportion of this number never set foot inside the church at all; a small payment—or a large one—to the *pope* suffices to procure the insertion of a name in the list of the pious, and thus this ecclesiastical police regulation is evaded. Still these evasions are such as lie in the nature of the case, and are mostly practised by the dissenters. Otherwise, the due observance of the religious duties are as much a matter of etiquette amongst the official or higher classes, as the wearing of a dress-coat in the dress-circle at the opera. The communion, for instance, has none of that solemnity of preparation that is demanded and complied with in other countries. The sacrament is administered to infants in the shape of a teaspoonful of diluted wine; and as it was begun, so it is continued, as a mere matter of ritual and formality; and at Lenten time, the *noblesse* intimate to their various friends that they will not be "at home" for so-and-so many days, as they are about to "prepare" for the ceremony; after which they are complimented on the occasion of a birthday or marriage. The emperor and empress lead the way in this direction by their "communion" being specially announced in the official journal, and published by the whole press. In the same way, baptism is made a special feature of, and its anniversary celebrated instead of the birthday itself; each child having, at the same time, some patron saint awarded to him, whose shrine he is bound to honour, on the recurring anniversary, by a greater or smaller gift.

One of the results of this stiff and formal ecclesiastical system of Russia has been the production of the *Raskol*, or dissent. But it is not only one specified sect; it is rather an agglomeration of sects, and may be compared, to a certain extent, to Protestantism as distinguished from Roman Catholicism, and after taking into consideration the far greater ignorance of most of its members, compared even to the crudest and most absurd denominations that have sprung from the lap of the Reformation. But whilst Protestantism sprang from the true spirit of religion, and to free that spirit from the dead and artificial forms and fetters which an innate and mystical ritual imposed upon it, *Raskol* has rather been a multiplication of these forms, and its protests levelled rather against the form of these "forms," than against the forms themselves. All the sects of *Raskol* originate in different readings, corrections, and alterations of the Orthodox Liturgy. Thus, perhaps, the first serious schism was commenced in the 15th century, when, as a Novgorodian chronicler states, "Certain philosophers began to chant, '*O* Lord, have pity upon us!' whilst the others sang, '*Lord*, have pity upon us!'" This may seem, to the Western mind, quite insufficient to cause a serious schism; but it must be remembered that the Russian is, to a great extent, an Oriental mind, and regards every sentence in the liturgy as a magic or cabalistic formula, to alter one word of which would be to destroy its whole value and efficacy. Every gesture, every position, every word sanctioned by long usage and tradition in the ritual, has, for the Russian, the same importance as the minute observance of all the rules and details of an incantation has for the Pagan; or, to use an example in our own country, for the modern ritualist. The *Obriad* (Ritual) is, as we have already said, the essence of Russian religious life; and the word Ritualism will therefore perhaps more correctly represent the word *Raskol*, though that ritualism be not of one and the same character as the ritualism of the present day in England.

The dissensions had already become so great in the 16th century, that Vassili IV. commissioned a Greek monk, Maximus the Greek, to revise the various liturgies, and correct them; but the opposition, on the part of the clergy, was too great, and he was condemned by a council, and imprisoned for life as a heretic in a distant monastery. When, however, the invention of printing made these divergences in the manuscript liturgies still more glaringly apparent, the patriarch Nicon, a man of stern energy and inflexible will, determined to institute a reform, and had the chief Slav and Greek liturgies collected from all parts, from the chief churches of Russia, from Byzance and Mount Athos, and appointed a committee to revise them, exclude the interpolations, and frame a standard which he had adopted, by a council convoked for the purpose, as the only legal liturgy throughout the empire.

This action of the patriarch Nicon caused great agitation; and many people, monasteries, and priests, refused to adopt the new liturgy, and insisted on adhering to the version of their old manuscripts, and kept to their own readings in spite of Nicon, council, czar, and synod. Thus one sect differs from the other in the shape of the cross it uses, or the way they make the sign of the cross. One differs in the orthography of the name of Jesus; another in that of the inscription at the head of the cross; a third repeats the Hallelujah twice; another three times. Some sign themselves with two fingers; others with three fingers. Some insist that the resurrection of Lazarus was not a fact, but a parable. According to them, Lazarus represented the human soul; his death represented sin; his sisters, Martha and Mary, represent the body and soul; the tomb is the troubles of life, the resurrection conversion. Similarly, the entry of Christ into Jerusalem on an ass is also to be regarded, not as a fact, but as a parable. These, and similar differences, are adhered to with such tenacity, that it has been quite impossible to break up the sects who have made them part and parcel of their dogmas. Thus, even as a number of peasants said to the late emperor, and as they lately declared before the judges when prosecuted for celebrating clandestine rites, they will not yield up the worship handed down to them by their fathers. "Do what you like with us, transport us, imprison us; but do not ask us to abandon our faith." Thus adhering doggedly to their tenets, and quite as obstinately as the Orthodox Church to theirs, both parties are firmly convinced that they are in possession of the only true faith, and regard all foreign creeds as rank heresies, and Russia as the favoured land of God, signalled out beyond all others, and justly meriting the title of Holy Russia. To such an extent does this prejudice go, that using the Latin words *Deus* and *Pater* for God, even in Latin works, instead of the Slav *Bog*, is by some regarded as rank blasphemy, it being impossible, according to them, for the Deity to have any other name than the Slav word.

Thus the opposition which Nicon's revision of the liturgy evoked, continued unabated; but the consternation amongst the old believers—the Starovery—increased still more when, after deposing Nicon, the council confirmed the revision; and Peter the Great also began to tamper with the church, changing one thing, introducing another, and eliminating a third. Altogether, Peter the Great was, in the eyes of the Starovery, nothing less than a heretic; and when he even dared to alter the course of the sun by changing the calendar, and even attacked the age of the world itself by dating from the birth of Christ, instead of from the creation, the indignation knew no bounds, and all Peter the Great's reforms were opposed on religious grounds. The census, the registration of births and deaths, were declared to be impious and blasphemous regulations; God alone having the right to count his flock—witness the sin and punishment of David. Still more horrifying to the Starovery was the capitation-tax, or soul-tax (podouchenoï oklad), which was regarded as an actual tax on the actual soul, inasmuch as, in the interval between the days for raising the tax, a certain number of those who were taxed had died, and Peter was thus regarded as disputing with God the possession of the departed soul. Thus arose the sect of the Stranniki, whose particular creed was opposition to all government authority, and made defiance of the imperial law—no matter what the law might be—a religious duty, inasmuch as the emperor was the Antichrist of the Apocalypse. This view speedily gained over a number of fresh adherents, and a whole series of legends regarding Peter the Great were invented to support the accusation. Some contended that he was the bastard son of Nicon, the sacrilegious, and a female devil. According to others, the czar, Peter Alexievitch, had been a pious, true-believing prince; but that he had been drowned, and his shape assumed by a Jew of the race of Danof—*i.e.*, of the devil; that this impostor, after having seized the throne, had imprisoned the czarina, married a German adventuress of equally doubtful origin, and had filled Russia with a host of blasphemous foreigners, who had sold their souls to Satan for the honours showered upon them in the land of true believers. The simple contact with these functionaries was dangerous to the soul.

Having, then, discovered that Antichrist

had appeared, all the prophecies of the Apocalypse were hunted up, and made to apply to Russia and her czar. They discovered the number of the Beast in the name of Peter and his successors, each letter in the Slav alphabet possessing, as in the Greek alphabet, a numerical value, the letters in the name of Peter the Great amounting to 666. Then, by certain alterations, mystical divisions, multiplications, or additions, they discovered the same number in the names of all the succeeding rulers. Thus, by a strange chance, the letters in the word "Imperator," after eliminating the second letter, also produces the fatal 666—which is not the case with the word "Czar"—and thus, it was said, the letter "M" was the sign under which the Beast concealed himself: consequently, the Russian emperors since Peter the Great, are known to these sects by the letter or letters under which the Beast strove to hide his identity. According to them, Russia has been governed, since the date of the Council of Moscow (which upheld Nicon's revision, and excommunicated the true believers), by a series of Apocalyptical Beasts, each with the mystical number 666; and, strangely enough, this number also appears in the year of the council, 1666 A.D. And, not even content with all these proofs, the old true-believing Muscovites have discovered, that the very name of their country, Roussa, is simply the Assour or Assyria of the Bible spelt backwards, and thus the subject of the anathemas hurled against the cities of Babylon and Nineveh.

Thus the very head and fountain of the government being Satanic, everything that proceeded from it was diabolical, and Russia itself under diabolical rule. Everything that the government introduced was regarded as something Satanic; tobacco, tea, coffee, sugar, all colonial produce, was heretical and diabolical. One sect forbade the use of potatoes, having discovered that that was the fruit with which Satan tempted Eve. Tobacco was equally condemned on the basis of the words of the evangelist, that it is not that which enters the mouth of a man which defiles him, but that which goes out of him (Mark vii. 15). Another sect forbade the use of sugar, because blood was used in its manufacture, and the Scriptures prohibit the use of blood as food. Some of these true believers refused even to make use of paved roads, because they were an invention of the Antichrist. In short, the whole country was under the rule of Veelzévoulovitch—Beelzebub—and the end of the world was approaching. But though this end has been approaching ever since the days of Peter the Great, without ever appearing, the Stranniki are always able to explain the delay, and assert that its non-appearance in no way disproves the reign of the Antichrist, which may last for centuries, or come to an end to-morrow. But that it does exist, none of the Stranniki have any manner of doubt; they only disagree as to its manifestations, and the probable length and character of its reign. All this led to a broad division amongst the Raskolniks on the occasion of the imprisonment and probable murder of the only Orthodox bishop who stood up for the old liturgies—Bishop Paul, of Kolomma. Through this event the Raskolniks were deprived of any spiritual head, and found themselves unable to accept any other; for the spiritual powers having been handed down from Christ to the present time by the uninterrupted consecration of bishops, and the only truly consecrated bishops being no more, there was an end to the chain. They themselves could not consecrate a bishop; and the bishops of the Orthodox Church having irretrievably sinned by their acceptance of the new liturgy, and connivance in the reign of the Antichrist, were still less able to supply the broken link, even had they been willing. Still it was held by some that the Orthodox Church, bonded as it was to Satan, had not lost the apostolic powers of *chirotony*—the consecration of bishops, priests, and deacons by the laying on of hands—and entered into some sort of compromise with the Orthodox Church; the others, however, remained firm, and refused absolutely to yield. Thus the Raskolniks were divided into two sections—the *popovtski*, who possess priests, and the *ber popovtski*, who do without.

The latter soon lost themselves in all sorts of vagaries in their search for spiritual rest and comfort. Some instituted confession to each other, each one absolving his neighbour, and being in turn absolved by him, on the principle of one hand washing the other. In lieu of the sacramental bread and wine administered by a properly ordained priest, they "took the Easter" in the shape of raisins from the hand of a young girl. Others went even still further

in their mysticism, and pretended to obtain the Eucharist from the breast of a young virgin. Another sect spent Good Friday in absolute silence, with their mouths wide open, waiting for invisible angels to administer invisible wine out of an invisible chalice. Still wilder even were the doctrines based on the approaching end of the world. The Dietoubitski, or killers of infants, held it to be their duty to murder the innocent babe rather than let him grow up to be exposed to the temptations of the cursed and infernal government. Others, the Suffocators (Douchiltstchiki), and the Assassins (Tioukalstchiki), considered it a religious duty to prevent their friends, parents, and children from dying a natural death, and murdered them when they were dangerously ill, or at the point of death, on the pretext that the kingdom of God must be taken by force (Matt. xi. 12).

But the most universal belief amongst all the various Raskolniks is, that man, having been created in the image of God, it is nothing less than rank blasphemy to shave or cut one's beard. So strong is this belief, that in 1874, even some of the navy recruits absolutely refused to be shaved, and preferred to incur several years' punishment for insubordination rather than submit. In consequence, the government has been forced to allow certain corps in the army, which are chiefly composed of old believers, to retain their beard and moustache. Thus the faith of the true old believing Cossack of the Ural was stronger than the will of the Autorcat of all the Russias.

This sketch of the social condition of the Russian people, and their religious views, amply demonstrates how, in spite of the most liberal reforms, the government can still preserve its despotic character, on account of the means offered by which each reform can be made a dead letter of. The elements of which the bulk of the nation is composed are so divergent in their individuality, that many years must elapse before the reforms instituted can bear any fruit. The "secret societies," of which so much has recently been said, do not possess any danger for the government, insomuch as each follows a different object, and none of these objects tend towards a common point of action; although it is no doubt true that the various sections of the Raskol keep up a certain connexion with each other. Still this connexion is preserved less for the purpose of attack than for the defence of principles each particular section professes. It results in a kind of Freemasonry between them; so that if a member of one of these sects is persecuted by the government, he receives every assistance from the members of another sect, though the two may profess distinctly opposite and opposed principles.

CHAPTER XXX.

RUSSIAN ROADS AND RAILWAYS.

FOR about six months in the year, Russia has the finest roads in the world. For three months they are the worst; and for the remaining three she may be said to have none at all. The means of intercommunication in summer are, as often as not, the dry bed of a river; and where there is what may, by courtesy, be called a road, it is so thickly laid with dust, and worn into deep ruts, that traffic along it is as laborious as it is slow. In the rainy and thawing seasons, the mud is so bottomless that, practically, traffic is impossible. But during the winter, the snow—the first appearance of which is hailed with thankful delight by all classes, from the richest to the poorest—covers the whole country with a mantle that transforms the whole expanse of soil into one magnificent road, along which the sledges dart in all directions in pursuit of business or pleasure.

Still sledges are not exactly adapted for heavy traffic; nor can they be said to be a cheap means of locomotion; so that, whilst sufficing for immediate local or postal traffic, they are quite inadequate for the inter-

change of commodities, of which the producing centres are at such a distance from each other, as in Russia. Thus, though there are mineral deposits of great richness in various parts of Russia, they cannot be worked at a profit, in consequence of the absence of roads. The iron-works of Neviansk, for instance, near Ekaterinenburg, in the Ural, produce excellent steel; but it has to traverse hundreds of miles of wretched roads before it reaches the navigable Kama, and is eighteen months on the road before it reaches St. Petersburg or Moscow.

These works were founded by Peter the Great, who, whilst visiting the foundries and small-arms factories at Toula, was much struck by the figure of a gigantic smith, named Demidoff. The czar wanted to make a soldier of him; but being impressed by his intelligence and skill, he sent him to examine the metalliferous districts of the Ural, and subsequently leased and sold to him the works just mentioned at Neviansk. Since that time to the present they have been worked by the descendants of the blacksmith Demidoff, who are now one of the richest families in the empire. The mines, however, from the want of communication with the rest of the country, are quite unable to compete with foreign produce.

The same drawbacks prevent the development of the vast coal-beds that exist in various parts of the country, notably round Moscow, and in the basin of the Donetz; the only mines that return a fair profit being the mines of graphite, in Siberia; a large proportion of which is worked up into pencils, and other articles, by the celebrated German manufacturers, Faber and Handtmuth.

The rivers of Russia, however, and the very slight differences in the level of the country, were highly favourable to the construction of canals; and now the Caspian, Black Sea, and Baltic are all united by a system of water-ways, that successfully compete still with the railways, and land, transport, and bring some 25,000 vessels a year into the capital. In the matter of railways, scarcely anything had been done at the time of the American war. There was only one line from St. Petersburg to Tsarskoe-Selo, about twenty miles long; the line joining Moscow to St. Petersburg, a distance of about 380 miles, and which was begun in 1842, not having been completed until 1861.

But after the close of the American war, the government at once proceeded to the development of its railway system, acting on the principle of combining strategic with commercial advantages, if possible; but, above all, to look to the strategic side first, and afterwards to the commercial side. In accordance with this principle, it was decided that the Russian lines should be nine centimétres wider than the German lines, so as to prevent their being worked by the German engines and rolling-stock, in case of war. The impediments placed in the way of commerce by this system, through necessitating the unloading and reloading of the cars, was quite ignored in favour of the supposed strategic advantages, which are more apparent than real; for, first of all, the system cuts both ways; as, though the Germans may not be able to use their rolling-stock on Russian lines, still, neither can the Russians use their engines on the Prussian lines. Besides which, there is no great difficulty in adapting the lines to the engines, or rolling-stock to the lines; so that important commercial requirements have been sacrificed to strategical crotchets. In the same way, the line from Moscow to Theodosia in the Crimea, *viâ* Kursk and the Lower Dineper, left Odessa on one side; which is much the same thing as if a line were constructed from Birmingham to Woolwich or Chatham without touching London.

However, the gauge having thus been decided on in spite of all the representations made by the mercantile classes, a ukase was issued on February 7th, 1857, authorising the formation of the Russian Railway Company, for the construction of a network of lines joining St. Petersburg to Warsaw, with a junction at Wilna for Königsberg and the Prussian frontier; from Moscow to Nijni-Novgorod; from Moscow to Theodosia in the Crimea, *viâ* Kursk, with a transverse branch to Libau on the Baltic. "By this means," said the ukase, "a railway will traverse twenty-six governments, connecting three capitals, our principal rivers, the centres of agricultural produce, and two ports, one on the Baltic, and one on the Black Sea, which are open nearly all the year round." This network, representing a total length of about 4,000 versts, the company engaged to construct in ten years, under a government guarantee of 5 per cent., and the monopoly of the lines for eighty-five years. The company at once

set to work, employing, in 1859, over 60,000 men on the works; and in 1861, the St. Petersburg-Warsaw, and in 1862, the Moscow-Novgorod lines were completed and working. Disputes, however, arose between the government and the company. The capital had been fixed at 275,000,000 roubles, which it was proposed should be raised by loan. The first issue for 75,000,000 was fully subscribed, in 1857, in Russia and Holland; but in London it was a complete failure. The following year another issue of 35,000,000 was made; but, owing to the high price of money, and the government also entering the market with a government loan, the operation was conducted at a loss, and recriminations arising between the company and the government, the former was placed under government administration, and the construction of the other lines taken out of its hands. Still the work was rapidly proceeded with; and in quick succession followed the construction of the lines Riga-Dunaberg-Revel; Odessa-Tsoritsin; from Warsaw to Moscow, *viâ* Minsk and Smolensk; from Moscow to Tsaritsin, and Moscow-Odessa, with branches to Taganrog on the Sea of Azoff, and to Jassy *viâ* Balta. A line was also constructed from Poli to Tiflis, and which it is intended to continue, *viâ* Elisabethpol, to the Caspian at Baku.

Altogether, it may be said that, in the twenty years that have now elapsed since the Crimean war, the requirements of what may be called "railway strategy" have been fully satisfied in Russia. The great strategic centres have all been connected with the capitals, and with each other; Kertch, Theodosia, and Kieff in the south; Sweaborg and Cronstadt in the north; and in the west, the formidable quadrilateral of Warsaw, Zamose, Svangorod, Brzesc-Rilewski, and, above all, Modlin. The latter fortress, situated at the junction of the Bug and the Vistula, without any civil population beyond that necessary for the garrison, is the very model of a stronghold. Immense, gloomy, and silent, equally powerful for attack or defence, it is a standing menace to Europe: it is the Metz of Russia; and, like Metz, it will one day be the scene of sanguinary combats between Muscovite and Teuton. It may be regarded as the strategic terminus of the Russian system in the west; whilst the Black Sea and Baltic fortresses effectually protect its flanks.

But whilst the strategic necessities of the empire have been thus provided for, the commercial requirements still demand much attention. Above all, must be mentioned the want of cross-roads and properly macadamised high-roads. The two great obstacles to the achievement of this object are—first of all, the scarcity of sufficiently hard stone in Great Russia; and, secondly, the commercial system, which prevents anything like popular action in the matter. Want of funds greatly hampers the government; and the sums that are voted are but too frequently misapplied, embezzled in one way or the other, and generally insufficient, very large amounts being necessary for the construction and repair of bridges, which are very numerous, and seriously damaged every year by the ice. The cost of material is great; and though the engineering difficulties are unimportant, still there is more work to be done in the matter of deep foundations than there would be in more temperate climates, where the frost does not penetrate so deeply into the earth. The iron-work also has to be of a superior quality, as the inferior sorts become quite brittle under the intense frost. Unfortunately, the contractors of the various works have taken advantage of this circumstance with a keen eye to future "repairing" contracts. In fact, the Russian lines have cost more, in spite of their easy construction, than have even the most expensive Indian lines. Tales are told of cargoes of rails being unshipped at Odessa, paid for there, re-shipped at Kertch, and unshipped again and paid twice over at Odessa. Roads that were given by contract to be macadamised with granite, have been treated with soft limestone that a dog-cart would grind to powder. Such, in fact, is the state of the roads and of the administration, that, when the emperor goes on one of his journeys of inspection, the roads he has to travel by are specially prepared by the crown peasants, and all circulation forbidden upon them for weeks before he starts: and very good care is taken not to let the czar know it.

CHAPTER XXXI.

RUSSIAN COMMERCE; THE GREAT FAIR OF NIJNI-NOVGOROD; MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE FAIR; THE SUGAR TRADE.

THE international fairs and markets in Western Europe by no means possess the importance attached to them in former times. Modern economical development has superseded them. Their rise, in the middle ages, was favoured by the staple law enjoyed by some privileged towns. The great uncertainty of the laws, difficulty of transport, small credit—all this caused and furthered the practice of sending goods in large quantities to certain places at certain times. In the selection of places, besides the most favourable situation, the period of the church festivals, when large multitudes of people were assembled, was of great influence. In Western Europe, the development of the towns has kept pace with the development of industry and intercourse; but in the eastern part of continental Europe, in Russia, the economical conditions of the country, affected by natural and political influences, have taken another course. That immense plain, extending over 17 degrees of latitude, varying from the most luxuriant fertility to the desert Tundras, was not equally favourable for the formation of towns. Under Peter the Great, Russia first pushed forward as far as the sea. Moscow was, and still is, the real capital of the great empire: the ancient Hanseatic town, Novgorod, never recovered.

In the middle of the 14th century, during the rule of the khans of Kasan, in Tartary, we observe, in the summer-time, north of the many-towered, picturesquely-situated capital of Tartary, the growth of a large fair, where merchants, coming from the north and from the south, from the east and from the west, exchanged the products of Central Asia for those of Europe. The Russian princes, however, wished to bring the new Slavonian rule into repute with regard to trade and commerce also. Vasili Iwanowitsch instituted a fair in his dominions, on the right bank of the Volga, at the mouth of the Szora; at the same time forbidding the Russian merchants to attend the Kasan fair. Later, when the rule of the Crescent had been forced to yield to the Greek Cross in Kasan also, the fair was transferred to the neighbourhood of the cloister dedicated to the great Russian patron saint, Makarieff; and, to this day, they point out to the traveller on the Volga, twelve miles below Nijni, or Nischnei, on the left bank of the river, the spot where the Makarieff fair was held. Although the fair was then held in the dry season, at Midsummer, it was still too much exposed here to the inundations of the Volga. When, therefore, in 1816, the fair-booths were destroyed by fire, the government resolved to transfer the fair—or, as it is called in Russian, the yearly market (a word probably derived from the Hanseatic times)—to its present situation. Scarcely could a more favourable position be found for a fair, where the exchange of merchandise from European Russia, and the products of Western Europe, are to be effected with the North and Central Asia. It lies at the confluence of the Aka, or Oka, and the Volga—that great artery of commerce, which, together with its tributary rivers, represents a navigable watercourse of about 8,000 miles, and which is itself navigable for steamers for a distance of 1,000 miles, from Nischow to Astrachan. Nischnei is nearly the mathematical centre of Russia in Europe. It also lies half-way between two of the most important towns of Middle Russia, Moscow, and Kasan. But, most important of all, it is the centre of the greatest river-system of European Russia—the Don and the Dnieper in the south, the Duna in the middle parts of the empire, and the Neva and Dwina in the north. Through the lakes, which abound in the interior of Russia, and, in the last ten years, through the railways, the transport of goods is still further facilitated along these different rivers. Besides this, Nischnei lies in the midst of the most industrial and populous governments—Moscow, Smolensk, Koslow, Tula, Twer, Yaraslow, Kostroma, and Nischegovrod. Here the cotton and iron trades have developed themselves on a great scale; to which may be added the active home-industry which occupies the population during the long winter. For fifteen years



Nischnei has been united with Moscow by a railway; but the transport by water still remains the most considerable. Even in winter, the endless trains of sledges going to Yebit, the great winter fair beyond the Ural, when possible, choose the ice-track of the river as the most convenient.

Late in the spring, when the melting snow, flowing eastward from the Ural, swells the numerous rivers, the traders set out, on rude conveyances, for the Volga, where the tugs await them, to carry them and their goods up the river. From seven to eight hundred steamers navigate the Volga; and, when we consider that the barges drawn by them may contain from eighty to a hundred thousand or more puds (the pud = $10\frac{2}{3}$ kilogrammes), we may form an estimate of the amount of merchandise moving on the great streams of Russia. On the Caspian Sea, also, we find the steamers of the great Russian companies, conveying the imports from Trans-Caucasia and Persia, by way of Baku and Asterabad. The only favourable season for holding the fair is at Midsummer. The commencement of this fair, and of the church services on the 17th of July, is officially announced by the hoisting of a flag; it ends after pay-day, two months later, on the 16th of September.

The aspect of the fair has often been described; but, as we have found by personal observation, not always correctly. The market-town is not exactly in the town of Nischnei, but on the opposite bank, on a point of land called the Strejelka, formed by the confluence of the river Aka with the Volga. A pleasing and charming picture presents itself on arriving, by railway, on the left bank of the Aka. From the mountains on the opposite shore, the green towers, with their cupolas and glittering crosses, meet the eye, rising above the white walls of the town of Nischnei, lying beyond in the plain, whilst the industrial and commercial suburbs stretch along the river. As, on the one side, the town and the mountain-ridge form a picturesque background for the fair, so, on the other, the best view of it is obtained in the upper town, from the height of Grebeschock, or from the tower raised to the memory of a former governor, Mouraview. Both streams, of a considerable width, are covered with numerous vessels, and several steamers. Among the confusion of roofs, towers, and gables below, the eye is first struck by a bridge of boats, nearly 900 yards long, leading across the Aka from Nischnei to the market-town. It is constructed of beams resting on pontoons. From the other side of the river the tumult of the fair is faintly heard; the churches and the mosque rise above the scarcely distinguishable mass of stone and wooden buildings. In the river there is a long sandy island, on which, as in the fair, the life and motion are like that of an ant-hill. Passing through the Atkoss, a declivitous gorge, the road leads down to the suburb, which truly deserves the name of Nischnei-Novgorod, "Lower New-town;" for it has been built much later than the upper town, which has grown up under the protection of the Kremlin.

The fair-town is divided into the inner and the outer. The inner town consists of rows of buildings of one and two storeys, erected in streets crossing each other at right angles, and surrounded by a canal. There are twelve running straight to the river, and six rows parallel with it. The central one, wide and embellished by an avenue of willows, extends from the town-hall on the river side, to the Savor, the Greek church, at the other end. These long rows of buildings are marked with the letters of the alphabet, besides large halls, bearing different names according to the goods offered for sale in them: for instance, The Armenian, the Yaroslavan, the Tvanogoer—the Leather, Linen, Cloth, Goldsmiths', Needle, Shoe Halls, &c. These names are, however, no longer always applicable. The cross-rows, or bazaars, are not named; some of them, as the Kitaistic Pojadni (the Chinese Bazaars) are distinguished by little Chinese towers on the roofs; but at the present time the Chinese attend the market but little, and the name is appropriate only in so far as the Russian tea-dealers have their stalls there. In walking through the rows of this inner market, we miss the noisy activity usual at fairs and markets; the shops—before which there is a paved and covered path—are insignificant; and the whole is, outwardly, in no way distinguishable from the Gostinoi-Dwore, which we see in Petersburg and Moscow, and are far surpassed, in splendour and brilliancy of display, by the modern bazaars of Berlin, Vienna, and Paris. It is true we receive another impression on entering one or other of these shops, and convince ourselves of the mass of mer-

chandise brought here for sale. Exact and complete statistics of the fairs, embracing every point relating to them, do not exist; but the committee appointed for the surveyance of business at the fairs, endeavours to establish the approximate value and quantity of goods brought annually to the market. In the very detailed statistics of the fairs for 1876, the goods are not strictly classed according to their similarity, but oftener divided according to the places they come from, and exact information respecting the sales effected is wanting. Without wearying the reader with figures, it should, at all events, be mentioned, that in these statistics the total value of goods brought to the fairs in 1876, is given at 165 millions of roubles; whilst it is proved that, in the period of ten years—from 1817 to 1826—the average yearly amount was 32 millions. In looking over the statistics, we find some thirty items, of the value of one to several millions. Unfortunately, also, the Russian and foreign manufactures are only in a few cases distinguished from one another. In a very minute consular report of the fairs, published a few years ago in the Prussian Handelsarchiv, it is said, that the supply and sale of Russian goods may be taken at five times as great as that of other countries—a proportion that may be considered as about correct at the present day. Under "Foreign," the valuable Asiatic goods are understood. West European and colonial wares form a very small portion. Only some articles appear open to the eye in large masses, such as tea, iron, fish, raw cotton and wool, the salt-depôt on the Aka, wood-work, some of which, such as cart-wheels, sledge-runners, and all sorts of household utensils, lie on the conveyances in which they have been brought to the fair. If we wish to see more, we must penetrate into the interior of the shops and warehouses, accompanied by an interpreter, or Artelschick. The stone warehouses of the inner town, the Ambars, are the property of the Crown, which, indeed, has furnished, at no small cost, all the arrangements for holding the fairs: these include the network of walled subterranean canals which intersect the whole inner town. The access to the "catacombs" (or fair-vaults) is by steps, surmounted by little low towers. These catacombs are washed out every night, by means of a steam-engine, which draws up the river-water into the reservoir of a tower, where it is stored up in case of fire. This washing out is a most wholesome arrangement for the sanitary condition of the place, where, at times, 100,000 to 150,000 strangers are assembled. There is also an excellent fire-brigade now organised.

The "little market" of the fair is on an open space before the town-hall. Characteristic are the numerous stalls with malachite articles, the mead-sellers, the Orenburg lace-traders, the pedlars with fruits, shoes, and needles. In the lower hall of the bazaar we find also French jewelry, and Caucasian baubles of fine wood inlaid with silver. The stalls of the inner fair, the shops, warehouses, and lofts of the Ambars are let on hire by the government, and bring in 300,000 roubles annually. On the other hand, the cost of repairs must be considered; for at the time of the floods of the Aka and the Volga, the whole market-place is inundated, and thus the government contemplates disposing of their property for the sum of three and a-half millions of roubles. Altogether, the number of stalls and shops amounts to 5,000. The wooden edifices are mostly erected specially for every fair, because they are too much damaged by the water in winter and in spring.

The most interesting part of the fair lies in the outer town. In the imposing mass of goods in the great store-houses, piled up towards the Volga, the peculiarity of the fair strikes one more especially; the goods are actually there, and can be viewed in every department. On the Siberian landing-place is the tea-store. Tea is the daily beverage of the Russians, and is an important article at the fair; indeed, formerly, the tea-trade determined the course of the market, which may be herein explained by the greater number of the sellers being buyers also: especially the Siberians, the Bokharians, Armenians, and Persians.

In the Persian bazaar we find the products of the rich provinces of that country: raisins and almonds, pistachio-nuts and walnuts, dates and currants, and —which is especially relished by the Russians—schabdalla (dried peaches). Here the Persian trader, dressed in his long kaftan, pointed cap, and bright-coloured slippers, constantly chattering, and with animated gestures, carries on his traffic. Besides these fruits, he has quantities of very durable woven carpets packed in



matting, shawls, and embroidery. In return, and to a much more considerable amount, the Persian buys especially red cotton goods, linen, cloth, copper, drugs, gold-thread and fringes, and sugar.

On, past transport establishments, insurance agencies, agencies of every kind, notaries' offices—where there is a great deal to do, particularly with protested bills, on pay-day—past Russian, German, and even Persian inns, through a hot cloud of dust, or, in wet weather, through a bottomless sea of mud, we reach an open space, which stretches past a long row of low wooden buildings, and the comptoir of the Steam Navigation Company. On the right we see a little town, consisting of neat wooden houses, covered inside and outside with matting of lime-tree bast (Tinofka). These lime-tree bast mats, the finer as well as the coarser kinds, form an important article at the fairs as packing material. "Accompanied by a Russian, who could speak German, we entered one of these mat-covered houses, called Balagem, and made the acquaintance of the owner, an Irkutsk tea-dealer, named Alexander Gerasimowitsh Malich. With true Russian hospitality he invited us into his prettily-decorated room. A glass of the best Kiachta tea, with lemon-peel in, was immediately presented to us. Pan Malich, a very talkative, lively man, with intelligent face, then conducted us to the tea-store, and, with an iron gauge, something like our cheese-tasters, he produced, out of one of the thousand chests which lay in the open air, covered with matting and guarded by Tartars, a sample of tea. The tea mostly consumed in Russia is black tea. For the true tea-connoisseur, it suffices for him to rub the sample between his fingers and smell it. He can then at once determine the quality."

Up to the year 1856, Chinese tea was transported for Russia entirely by land from China to Nischnei. In that year the importation of tea was permitted at a lower rate of duty; and since then, Canton tea—this collective name comprehending all teas imported by sea—has gained the upper-hand more and more over that coming by land. Still the Kiachta tea is a valuable and important article at the fairs; and the assertion that tea, even when specially dried and treated, loses its flavour through the sea-transport, seems not without foundation. Han-Khan, on the Yantsè-Kiang, has now attained great importance as the Russian depôt of tea coming by sea *viâ* Shanghai, and as a tea-market generally in China. We obtained some interesting information from a merchant who is well acquainted with the Kiachta tea-trade, and has more than once attended the Han-Khan tea-market. A chest of Kiachta tea contains 90 to 92 lbs. (the Russian pound has 409 grammes.) The tea is packed in silk-paper and lead. The chest is covered on the outside with reed matting. At the tea-market of Han-Kiang, which takes place from the 8th to the 12th of Mai, the first tea-harvest coming to market amounts to about 400,000 packages: these arrive from the tea-districts in conveyances, in which they remain until sold. The proprietors lodge in the tea-houses, where the jobbers wait upon them. These distribute the samples obtained among the twenty or twenty-five representants of Shanghai firms attending the market, the greater part Russians; the smaller, English. After this, the conclusion of business is quickly accomplished through the jobbers. These keep a market journal, in which the quantity and quality of the purchases, the prices given, and the name of the purchaser, are entered. The tea conveyed by land from Han-Kiang to Russia is called Chankowiki, to distinguish it from the Cantonski. One single Russian house has as good as the monopoly of export. The export of tea from Han-Kiang and Shanghai by sea for Europe, is carried on by steamers through the Suez canal to England, the Russian ports, particularly Revel and Odessa, and to the Netherlands. Germany imports only a few cargoes from Futschew to Hamburg.

The tea destined for land-transport is first brought by sea from Shanghai to Tien-Tsin; also partly by land. From here the land-transport proper commences, first to Kalgan, an important commercial town near the Chinese wall, and on the frontiers of Mongolia. Our informant gave us the import of Kiachta tea into Russia at about 45,000 chests, which nearly agrees with the market reports of the Petersburg Russian Exchange Journal.

The tea-caravans, as the Russian traveller Przelwalski relates, form a characteristic aspect of Eastern Mongolia. A camel can carry four chests = 216 kilogrammes, of tea through the desert. Mongols accompany this transport as far as Maimatchin, the Chinese town near Kaschta: here the tea-

chests are sewn up in damp skins for further transport. A particular sort of tea coming to Russia is the brick tea. The preparation of this common tea, an important article of daily consumption in Mongolia, Siberia, and particularly for the Steppe populations of European and Asiatic Russia, and even used in Central Asia as a medium of exchange, is carried on by the Russian dealers in Han-Kiang. These bricks are of different sizes; of the smaller kind, some sixty fit in a chest.

The value of all the sorts of tea brought to the fair of 1876, is given by the official statement at eight and a-half million of roubles. All these estimates are given by the proprietors themselves to the market committee: there is no higher control exercised. The commonest sort of brick-tea, or, in Russian, Kirpitschui, is composed of the refuse of the tea-shrub, and is drunk by the nomad tribes, boiled with mutton-fat and milk. It may be observed that the tea business was very bad at the last market. As an example of the consumption of tea in Russia, we may say that the value of the corn-export about covers the import of tea.

We will now cast a glance on the Pisli, the sandy island lying in the Aka, near the shore. Several bridges lead to it, and also rails, as indeed is the case from the station through the chief streets of the fair. Two important articles are stored on the Pisli—iron and dried salt-fish. In extensive booths also, erected fresh for every fair, we find immense quantities of the various productions of the Ural mines and foundries; among others, from the celebrated Demidoff works of Nischnei Tagilsk. On the way to Pisli we see another speciality of the market—the church-bell store. Metal bells, of the most various sizes, hang here suspended from large beams. Our road leads us also past the place of sale for the samovars, the Russian tea-machines, heated by charcoal, and the people's kitchen, under the protection of the empress. If the wages of the fair-labourer be low (about eighty kopecks), he can, on the other hand, procure the necessaries of life at a small expense. At the people's kitchen, which is very clean and well managed, he can, for four kopecks, get a portion of tea with sugar; and, for eight kopecks, as much as he can eat of Schtschi (cabbage-soup), bread, and boiled grits, with oil. In the warehouses are the productions of the foundries—iron bars, wire, copper bars, horse-shoes, nails, iron stoves, cooking vessels of iron, and tinned iron. Altogether, at last year's fair, twenty-two private iron-foundries sent in hardware to the amount of five and one-third million puds, representing a value of nearly ten million roubles.

The productions of the crown foundries, compared with those of the private foundries, are, in value and weight, scarcely worth mentioning. Perm and Ufa are the chief places where the Ural iron is embarked, on tributary streams, for the Volga. Tartar workmen transport the bars of iron, on each wheelbarrow about 7 pud weight, from the boats to the store; and for this hard work they get five roubles per 1,000 pud. The treasures of the Ural mines, in coal, iron, copper, &c., will not attain their full importance until the railway to the Ural is finished. The expected speedy completion of the Perm-Yekatharinenburg railway will exercise great influence; for in Perm the Karna steam-navigation commences. The cost of water-transport is now only one-fifth of that by land. The boats, which lie in great numbers alongside each other, are heavily laden with fish, which, in a country like Russia, where more than half the days of the year are fast-days, independently of its low price, plays a great part as an article of food.

The Volga, and its tributary streams, particularly its many-armed Delta and the Caspian Sea, are inexhaustibly rich in fish. It is brought, salted or dried, to the fair; and, in 1876, to the estimated value of four and a-half million of roubles. The dried fish, packed in matting, is laid in layers on the deck; and the salted, in barrels, is stored in the hold. The most important kinds are the sudal, sandart, sassan, carp, lesehtsch, brachse, and the sevringa; but, above all, the king of the Volga fish, the asjote; not forgetting sturgeon, which, like the Volga herring, is brought salted, whilst the others are dried.

The fish-boats are towed by steamers from Astrachan, up the Volga, to the fair; and there are some fishmongers who possess a dozen and more of these boats. The caviare of the sturgeon is a great delicacy in Russia, and is brought to the market partly pressed and partly in a fluid state: the working classes content themselves with the red caviare produced from the "whiting" (Bjeliega).

Other important articles of the fair are

the furs and skins. Russia requires more of these than the extensive Russian territory, so rich in fur animals, can furnish, and is therefore an eager purchaser at foreign fur-markets, especially at Leipsic. It would, unfortunately, demand too much space were we to expand upon this subject as it deserves. One of the most interesting articles, on account of its manifold preparation and application, is the merluschki—the skin of lambs, one or two days old. The finest and dearest, the karakuldschi (in trade, at a later period, called Persian), take their name from the little river Karakol, in Bokhara, on whose banks these valuable flocks of sheep pasture. The Bokharians tan these little skins by a peculiar process, sort them according to colour and age, and bring them, packed in bales, to the fair. "We went, with the owner of a large fur business, to one of the Bokharian dealers, who keeps this branch of trade chiefly in his own hands. The old gentleman, with a cunning face, dressed in a dark-blue kaftan, and a blue velvet embroidered cap on his shaven head, received us very kindly in his shop, where thousands of the little skins lay stored up, and conducted us to a room in the upper storey, where servants presented us with confectionery, and invited us to sit in the divan. Some other Bokharian merchants, dressed more gaily than our host, were already making themselves comfortable here in Eastern fashion."

There are many sorts of these skins known, from the karakuldschi, which are sold by tens, and cost three or four roubles a-piece, down to the common kirgise-merluschken. The value of the karakuldschi, in 1876, was estimated at one and a-half million roubles. The Leipsic furriers make caps of them for Hungary, Russia, and Persia; collars for Germany, &c. The Astrachan merluschki, which is dried and prepared in Russian fur establishments at Kasimoco and Kasan for the fair, is of less commercial value, although it has undergone a thirty-fold preparation. The Astrachan skins are also an important article at Leipsic; a single fur business there, in a middling year, working up 250,000 lots. We will describe, in a few words, how this kind of fur business is carried on at Nischnei. The seller opens any one of the bales, takes a sample from it, and this is a guarantee for the quality of the whole lot. Together with the naming of the price, which is half as much again as that really paid, appears the calculating machine, which is set in active motion during the whole transaction, which, when necessary, is carried on by an interpreter, and in the presence of the friends of the seller, with remonstrances and loud expressions of honour, &c. At last they are agreed. The purchaser pays the seller a deposit of from two to 100 roubles; the seller takes this money in his hand, and swears upon it that the bargain is concluded. Then follows the reception of the whole lot, comparing it with the sample-bale. If no objection is made, the business is ended, and the payment is immediately made; whilst otherwise, and for other articles, a very long credit is given from fair to fair.

We cannot, unfortunately, enter further upon other furs, such as squirrel, martin (whose tails are used for the finest paint-brushes), sable, wolf, badger, white hare, &c.; but will, in conclusion, turn to a Russian branch of industry—the manufacture of cotton, and the Russian beetroot sugar trade.

We mention first the red cotton stuff for the Russian peasants' shirts, called Kumasch; stuff for covering furniture; women's petticoats or mantles, for the Tartar women, who appear in the streets only thickly enveloped and veiled in their garments; the most various kinds of stuff for the peasant, the Steppe populations, the German colonists on the Volga, &c. There are in Russia a number of very large establishments for cotton-spinning and weaving; among them Krähnholm, near Narwase, mostly the property of a Bremen merchant. The value of the manufactured cotton goods at the fair of 1876, was reckoned at 23,000,000 roubles. In addition to the raw cotton coming to Russia from America and East India, there is a considerable quantity from Persia, Bokhara, and Turkestan, which comes by camels, and then by water to the fairs. The cost of transport on a camel from Khiwa, or Tashkend, to Orenburg, is from five to seven roubles for every two bales.

Now a few words as to the Russian beetroot sugar. The old town of Kiew is the great market for this extensive industry. In the season of 1876, 254 beetroot sugar factories were in motion, chiefly in Kiew, Podolia, and the south-western governments. The largest of the sixteen to eighteen refineries of Kiew can produce a million

puds of moist sugar. It is a company. The Kiew moist sugar is of a very good quality, as it contains 99 per cent. saccharine. The greatest export from Russia, in the winter of 1876, was sugar; but this export had not a healthy basis: it was caused by a great fall in price, the consequence of over-production and speculation. On the whole, the export from Russia is latterly below the import, in spite of high protective duties.

The knowledge of Russian commercial relations, and particularly of the Nischnei fair-trade, is not unimportant for the German merchant, Russia's nearest neighbour. It is true that high duties hinder the free intercourse between both countries; and the late decree, demanding the duty to be paid in gold, still further increases this artificial barrier. But we must remember that the present protective policy was not always the measure for regulating Russian intercourse with foreign countries: the duties, on the whole, were much lower fifty years ago. And who would assert, that a government which carried out the great interior reform of the abolition of serfdom, may not, at a future time, recognise, in the diminution of the duties, a powerful lever for the material well-being of the Russian people, and decide upon an action more in consonance with the acknowledged principles of commerce.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE COSSACKS.

THE history of no other country in the world affords a second instance of such a corporation as that of the Cossacks in Poland and the empire of the czars. The rapid development of their power, resting on the broad bases of personal freedom, equality, and despotism at one and the same time, may, perhaps, have been favoured by the natural features of those extensive, almost unknown, and almost unpeopled steppes lying between the Dnieper, the Don, and the Volga, as far south as the Black Sea and the Sea of Azoff. That the associations and fraternities such as those out of what we may call *Cossackdom* proceeded, should have been able to exercise such power, casts a strong light upon the sad condition formerly prevailing in the two neighbouring countries, in Great Russia and party-torn Poland. Such conditions explain how the freebooting Cossack became a power, which, for a century, carried on a desperate struggle with Poland—a power before which the Khan of Tartary, and even the padishah in Tzargrad, trembled when the enterprising Cossacks of the Ukraine and the Don appeared in their large flat Tchaiks (boats), in the waters of the Black Sea and Sea of Azoff, plundering flourishing towns like Trebizonde, Sinope, and others; ravaging the coasts, and returning to their homes laden with booty, to enjoy a short repose in voluptuous ease, like the hardy pirates of the North.

It has been attempted to surround the Cossacks with a romantic nimbus, and to describe them as an heroic chivalry, combating against Islam on the one hand; on the other, as protectors of the Orthodox Church against the encroachments of the Roman Church. Such a conception, however, is erroneous. Although some individual chivalrous figures may now and then appear in the chaos—and we acknowledge their bravery, valour, and contempt of life, as characteristic traits and brilliant qualities of the Cossacks—they were, in fact, nothing more than wild freebooters, to whom nothing was more foreign than the principles of the chivalric knighthood of the mediæval ages, except in their combats, freebooting and plundering expeditions against defenceless towns. The thorough savageness and inhumanity of these barbarous times was reflected in a much higher degree amongst them than among the Tartars and Turks. In the heroic traditions and songs of what some people call the romantic Cossack period, things are sung which never existed, and were drawn by later poets from their own imaginations. The rude Cossack nature had nothing of the tender love for

women which the songs express; the fate of women, on the contrary, even among the rich Cossacks who lived upon their estates in the steppes, was anything but enviable.

That the Cossacks could have so long existed as a powerful and independent body, proves, as we have said, the impotency of the neighbouring countries. Thus a Cossack of the Don, Stenno Rasin, in the latter years of the 7th century, conducted ravaging expeditions along the Lower Volga; collected a considerable force, consisting of Cossacks from the Don and Jaïk (Ural); besieged and plundered towns, such as Simhirsk, Ssumara, Ssaratow, and Astrachan; laid castles and cloisters in ashes; and even concluded an alliance with Persia; whilst Pugatchew—likewise a fugitive Cossack from the Don—raised the banner of insurrection in the Ural, against the government, for the freedom of the peasants, and caused an insurrection in which the whole peasant class and the sectarians took part, and which the generals of the great Catharine opposed, for a long time, in vain. All this proves upon what a feeble basis the famed brilliancy of Russia at that time rested, in spite of many an easily-gained success over Poland and Turkey.

But the splendour of Cossack life is now extinguished. It had arisen like one of those brilliant meteors on the horizon of history, to vanish again and leave no trace of its existence behind. The story of the Ukraine Cossacks lives only in the remembrance of the inhabitants of Little Russia; and the Cossack settlements on the Don, Ural, Kuban, and on the Black Sea, are at present under the common law of the country, although they are privileged military settlements, and furnishing an important contingent to the army.

The Cossacks in Little Russia, however, although closely connected with the Cossacks of the Don, are distinguished from them by some peculiarities, and have risen to political importance as a corporation.

In the second half of the 12th century South Russia was already separated from North and East Russia, divided into different principalities, and governed partly by the decisions of popular assemblies, partly by princes, whose hereditary succession was by no means secured. The invasion of the Mongols depopulated the south; and that part of the country which, at that time, already bore the name of "Ukraine," was completely devastated. In 1476, the King of Poland, Kasimir, succeeded in uniting the principality with Poland; the self-government of Ukraine ceased, and the Polish element predominated.

The word Cossack is of Tartar origin, and in the Tartar tongue means wanderer, "free warrior." The Russians, who had repeatedly to suffer from the invasions of the Tartars, insensibly adopted the manner of warfare of their enemies, and thus the same class of men arose among the Russians as among the Tartars. At the commencement of the 11th century the word Cossack had a general signification, and did not indicate a "free warrior" exclusively; and the villagers free from tithes in the north of Great Russia, as well as the free sailors on the banks of the Lower Volga, likewise received the name of Cossacks: indeed, this word, at the present day, still signifies, among the people, a workman, and such as have no land of their own.

Self-defence against the Tartars made a Cossack of the peasant. The free, unfettered life, the alluring prospect of rich booty brought home by the Cossack from his expeditions, attracted a number of volunteers from Great Russia, Lithuania, and Poland, to the Ukraine. In Great Russia the peasant lived under the inexpressible oppression of the nobleman—still worse in Poland, where the indebted noble let his lands to Jews, and even gave up the Orthodox Churches on his estates to them. The Jew closed the churches, and the parish was forced to pay him for every divine service, and for every office performed by their pastor. All those who were not inclined to bear such oppression fled, and found protection and good reception from the Cossacks of the Don and the Ukraine, who thus increased greatly in numbers in a very short time; and the tales told them by the fugitives, called forth an additional hatred of the Poles, of the Roman church, the nobles, and the Jews. At the time of Ivan the Terrible, the Cossacks had spread over the whole Ukraine, the present government of Poltawa and Kiew, and nearly as far as the Black Sea. They divided themselves into Cossacks of the towns, or "Ukrainers," and Cossacks of the lowland, or "Saparogers." The Saparogers lived on the islands of the Dnieper, below the rapids; their largest station, the "Setscha," was on the island Chartitzn, on which Prince Wischnewetzli

(1560) established a fortified camp for their protection. At a later period the Saparogers had another fortress on the island Tomatowka, which was their chief station after the Setscha. The situation of these islands was most favourable for the Saparogers, and contributed no little to attract adventurers who had nothing to lose but their lives. The great commercial road from Turkey to Great Russia passed by Ortschakow: the caravans generally took this road; the Saparogers attacked and plundered them, and carried their booty in safety to their islands.

Glancing at the customs of the first Saparogers, and their severe rules of life, these remarkable communities, apart from their profession of arms, assume almost the character of a monastic guild, for they were forced to observe all their religious rites most strictly. But at the same time, the circumstance must not be lost sight of, that the Saparoger in the Setscha, in his "Kur" (dwelling), and the Saparoger on a freebooting expedition, were two different men. Simplicity of life, abstemiousness, chastity, perfect good-fellowship among themselves, and strict obedience to their authorities, were the moral laws of the Saparogers.

A popular assembly, such as the Wetscha in ancient times, existed among the Saparogers, under the name of "Rada," where an "Ataman," or chief, was chosen for every place, and for the whole community a superior Ataman. This Ataman, or "Kobschewor," had, it is true, unlimited power, but was obliged, at the end of a year, to give an account, and, in case of abuse of his power, might be punished with death. Inhuman and cruel in war, the Saparoger punished robbery, plunder, and theft with death in time of peace. Celibacy was not a binding law; but the unmarried only were allowed to live in the Setscha, and whoever introduced a woman was punished with death. Everyone could be admitted into the Setscha; there was no inquiry made about name, descent, or the past; Catholics and Jews alone were excluded.

The time came, however, when the kings of Poland, fearing the power of the Cossacks, on the occasion of their expression of sympathy for Great Russia, attacked the rights of the Saparogers, gave lands in the Ukraine to Polish noblemen, and finally contemplated their union with the rest of the kingdom. The whole of the Ukraine, the Saparogers at the head, rose against such violence, and a bloody war ensued, which, with some interruptions and changing fortune, lasted many years. No war of the 17th century was carried on with such inhumanity and cruelty as this struggle between the Poles and Cossacks. The latter, it is true, fought for their independence and the Orthodox faith, but at the same time turned this struggle into a war of revenge and annihilation against the Polish nobility, the Jews, and the Latin church. The most brilliant period for the Saparogers in this war, was when Bogdon Chemelnitzki stood at their head as Ataman. It was, however, but for a short time; and even this gifted, energetic, and politically clever man was unable to contend successfully against the numbers and resources of the Poles. After the suppression of the rebellion in the Ural by Pugatchew, an end was also put to the Saparoger-Setscha, and Catharine dissolved the confederations of the Ukraine Cossacks and the Saparogers as separate communities. The last Hetman of Little Russia was Raswonowski, a favourite of the empress. A portion of the Saparogers resisted the order of the government to lay down arms, and fled to Turkey, where they were gladly received by the sultan; they settled in the Dobrudscha, where their descendants still live. The greater number of Cossacks, however, submitted, settled in the neighbouring provinces, and took to peaceful pursuits.

When, soon after, the war against Turkey broke out, the Saparogers were recalled to take up arms, with the promise that their former rights should be restored: they obeyed the call, and formed a corps of 12,000 men; and as a reward for the services rendered by them to Russia during this war, the government granted them fresh privileges and considerable lands on the Kuban. About 20,000 established themselves here in the endless steppes on both sides of the river, down to its mouth in the Black Sea. The Cossacks on the Black Sea itself were originally descendants of the Saparogers; but their number has been tenfold increased by continual emigrations from the Don and the Ural. These Cossacks, generally called Tchernomorzen, were destined to guard the frontiers towards the Caucasus; but through

the subjection of the mountain populations this line has lost its significance.

Nothing more dreary can be imagined than this wide treeless plain of 2,000 square miles, covered with prickly grass, reed, and flags; but the isolation, the difficulties, and dangers of outpost duty, have not been without influence on the character of the Tchernomorza; he is gloomy, unsocial, and has something awkward and apathetic in his appearance. The "Plasterni" stand in high repute with the Tchernomorza. These are the intrepid Cossacks, whose task it is to find out new paths through the marshes and impenetrable fields of reeds by the Kuban, to rove about the frontiers for whole days and nights, or to lie in ambush. Besides this frontier service, the Tchernomorza are obliged to serve in the army in special Cossack regiments.

The government has allotted certain regions to the Cossacks, granted them privileges and land, in return for which they are bound to serve in the army. Of any independence, special laws, or self-administration, there is no question. The present Don Cossacks, who had an organisation very similar to that of the Saparogers, and were formerly the same freebooters, now inhabit the extraordinarily fertile region of the Don down to the Sea of Azof. The former freebooters are now a thrifty, industrious population on their own lands, but in their military organisation still remain Cossacks.

In 1570, the Don Cossacks acknowledged the rule of Russia, but still continued their piratical expeditions to the Crimea. Under Peter the Great their organisation was completely altered, and at present the Ataman is appointed by the crown; the chief Ataman of all the Cossacks being always the Russian hereditary grand-duke. Every Cossack has thirty hectares of land at his disposal; higher officials 100 to 1,000; which, since 1870, have become their hereditary property. The number of Cossacks on the Don is, at present, about 700,000; and the contingents of troops they have to furnish, consist of special regiments, which are allotted to different corps of the army as light cavalry.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

RUSSIA IN CENTRAL ASIA.

ACCORDING to the manner in which the history of Europe in the middle ages is generally written, it would seem as if the Western nations had lived isolated from the rest of the world, self-sufficing, and scarcely sensible of the shocks of the great events occurring in Central Asia. It is not so, however. The Crusades were not merely a passing fit of religious fervour, nor were all relations broken off between Europe and Central Asia, since the days of St. Louis. Although France, Italy, Spain, and England may, from that time forward, have transferred all their activity to the countries just then discovered beyond the ocean, the Slav States, on the contrary, continued in uninterrupted relations with the populations of the East, and, above all, Russia. At the end of the 14th century, already we find a Muscovite State; but its princes were vassals of the Khan of the Kipchaks, descendants of the Djozdi, one of the three heirs of Gengis Khan. The Kipchaks composing the Golden Horde were the least civilised of the Mongols. They remained more faithful than their brothers on the other side of the Oxus to the nomadic habits of the Touranian race, preserving the rudeness of their primitive character; and although nominally converted to Mohammedanism, were still addicted to gross superstitions.

Some large cities on the confines of the territories inhabited by these wandering tribes—Kief, Kazan, Novgorod especially, which remained in commercial connection with the southern Hanseatic towns—became the refuge of rising civilisation. The conquest of Constantinople by the Ottomans brought numerous emigrants, attracted also by the community of religion. Towards 1550, the Russian czar was already

an independent sovereign, possessing Astrachan. He had a large corps of Cossacks in his army, of Mongolian origin, whom he first employed against his neighbours, and then sent them forth to the conquest of Siberia. This is the moment when Russia, an Asiatic power, became a European power. In the remote provinces of the Volga and the Ural, that Europe thinks so little about, the Slav population decidedly predominates over the Turks and Mongols. What a change since the time when the generals of Timour (two centuries before) entered Moscow as victors, and reduced it to ashes!

These events in the middle ages formed the prelude to the modern conquests of Russia on the banks of the Oxus and the Yaxartes, and distinguish the Russians from the other Europeans who have gained a footing on the continent of Asia. The English, French, and Portuguese colonies in India have originated in some adventurous commercial enterprise; Hong-Kong and Saïgon are modern creations for expressly political and commercial interests; whilst the entrance of the czar's troops into Samarcand is the most recent act in the struggle of races pursuing each other for centuries without interruption.

In order to appreciate the obstacles encountered by the Russians in their progressive march to the countries of the East, it is necessary to call to mind the nature of the soil and the climate. From the Caspian to the Pacific, between the 35th and 50th degrees of latitude, there extend vast deserts, the monotony of which is interrupted at intervals only by some water-courses and several chains of mountains. For the traveller coming from Russia, the steppe commences almost at the gates of Orenburg; but as far as the river Emba there is nothing formidable about it. One still meets with rivers and lakes, the waters of which are sweet; on the banks there are meadows, and here and there trees. But on approaching the south the soil becomes more sterile, the water of the brooks and the wells is brackish, and here and there a thick layer of salt reveals the sites of dried-up lakes. Vegetation disappears; the sand-hills change their slopes according to the wind. Nothing can surpass the desolation of these immense bare and arid plains, called the Oust-Oust, between the Caspian and the Aral—the Kizil-Koum (red sands), between the Oxus and the Yaxartes—the Kara-Koum (black sands), to the north of the latter river. The steppe preserves the same aspect between the Kharizm, the Caspian, and the frontiers of Persia. There is neither food, nor forage, nor fuel to be found. The temperature is icy in winter, burning in summer. During the cold season the wind raises the snow in columns, and buries everything beneath it. It is reported that, in 1827, the Kirghiz of the Middle Horde lost more than 1,000,000 of sheep in a whirlwind.

The steppe, however, is inhabited in spite of the inclemency of its climate and the barrenness of its soil. To the south of Khiva there are the Turcomans; to the north, the Kirghiz; more to the east, in the heart of the desert of Gobi, live the Mongol tribes; at the extremity of the continent, in the little-known regions separating the river Amour from the wall of China, are the Mandchous. All these people, Turcomans, Kirghiz, Mongols, Mandchous, are different varieties of the Tartar race. They are all nomads; the country admits of no other mode of living. Yet, at the period of their splendour, the Mongols had, it is said, a capital of the name of Karaporum. Here was the throne of Gengis Khan and his sons. Modern travellers have been unable to discover its ruins, so slight had been its construction. It is astonishing that, from these inhospitable regions, there should have proceeded those successive invasions which, although ephemeral, have shaken Asia—more than once brought bloodshed on Europe. We must, however, observe that these invading hordes always yielded to the ascendancy of the people they had conquered, without ever bringing back their civilisation to the country from which they issued. Khiva, Bokhara, Kashgar, Pekin, have not ceased being wonders of civilisation in comparison to the barren plains whence their conquerors came from.

Under Peter the Great the Russians were masters of Siberia, which was of no great advantage to them; they extended to the Caspian and to the foot of the Caucasus; some Kirghiz tribes around Orenburg acknowledged their supremacy;—in fact, they were already in a position to exercise a certain influence in Central Asia. At this period, Khiva was in continual warfare with Bokhara. At about 1700 A.D., the people of Khiva sent an embassy

to St. Petersburg, to offer the homage of the Khan Mohamed to the Russian czar—so say the Russian historians—and to claim the help of European troops against their enemies of Bokhara; or, perhaps, simply—as their own historians relate—to conclude a commercial treaty. Peter the Great perceived that the possession of Khiva would give him the preponderance over many other States: he even thought, it appears, of opening a road for his subjects to the rich lands of Hindostan; and, accordingly, resolved to send a military expedition to the valley of the Oxus. The avowed programme of this enterprise was to conciliate the sovereigns of Khiva and Bokhara; to search for the auriforous sands which were supposed to be in the Amou-Daria; to find the ancient bed through which this river flowed into the Caspian, and to explore the road to India. All this was pacific!—then wherefore give his ambassador an entire army as escort? Peter the Great had reason to believe that the khans and begs had some disputes with their own subjects, and wanted to make them the generous offer of installing a Russian garrison in their capital.

The chief of this expedition was Prince Bekovitch Cherkaski, of Kirghiz origin, and one of the most important personages of these nomad tribes. The governments of Kazan and Astrachan furnished him with 4,000 infantry and 2,000 Cossack cavalry. The first campaign was devoted to the construction of a fort at Krasnovodsk, on a promontory of the eastern coast of the Caspian, which the Russians occupy to this day. The next year, in the month of June, 1717, he marched across the desert of Oust-Oust, beat the Khivan troops at Karagach, and finally concluded a treaty of peace with the khan, who then offered him hospitality in his palace at Khiva. But, as the country afforded few resources, he was made to believe that it was indispensable he should divide his troops into small detachments. No sooner were the Russian soldiers dispersed than the enemy attacked them singly and destroyed them. Bekovitch was one of the first victims; it is said he was flayed alive, and that a drum was made of his skin. This act of cruelty is, however, by no means proved; but if it is true that Bekovitch was of Mongol race, it may be conceived that his compatriots were greatly irritated against him. The disaster of 1717 had grave consequences for the Russians. The Turcomans between the Caspian and the Oxus had prudently refrained from declaring for either of the belligerents; but on learning the defeat of the invaders, they attacked the forts built by the Russians. The garrisons, isolated and without provisions, resolved to retire on Astrachan; but navigation was dangerous on this sea, the coast being but little known, and a few individuals escaped. On the whole, the issue of this unfortunate enterprise was such that the czar abstained from renewing it.

It is a singular circumstance, that these nomad Mongols, after having conquered Asia under Gengis Khan, and maintained their position under his successors, should end by allowing themselves to be effaced from history, and accepting the supremacy of the peoples whom they had formerly subjugated. The Kirghiz of the Little Horde, the nearest to the Ural, who were gradually emerging from barbarism through contact with a civilised nation, possessed great influence in the steppe. Five-and-twenty years after Bekovitch's unfortunate expedition, Nadir Shah, the sovereign of Persia, took possession of Khiva, and dethroned the reigning family. Being desirous of conciliating the Russians, he willingly consented to leave the power in the hands of Nour-âli, Sultan of the Little Horde, who acknowledged himself subject of the czar. This is an important fact, for on this ground the Russians pretend that Khiva belongs to them from its having been for a century the appanage of one of their vassals. But the truth is that, posterior to Nour-âli, the Khivans had a khan of another family who submitted to the Kirghiz, or, at all events, disputed with the Russians for the rule over the tribes nearest their territory.

Repulsed from the borders of the Caspian by the Turcomans, and from the basin of the Aral by the rebel Kirghiz, the Russians made no considerable progress up to our day. Siberia, used as a penal colony, in spite of the 10,000 exiles sent annually beyond the Ural, remained uncultivated, without commerce or industry. The government seemed unable to find clever and upright administrators for this immense territory. In that more fertile region, which might have attracted emigrants, they could obtain no protection from the nomads, and retired or led a life of rapine. The province of Orenburg—at the com-

mencement of the 19th century the province nearest the interior of Asia—contained a population of the most various elements, presenting an image of complete disorder. Here were Baskirs, Kalmouks, Cossacks, Kirghiz, every variety of the Turco-Mongolian race—some Christians, the greatest part Mohammedans, some simply idolaters. Revolts broke out from time to time among these nomads, supported by the Khans of Khiva and Bokhara. The governor-general of Orenburg then sent flying columns, which had great difficulty in reaching the insurgents, and suffered more from the climate than from the fire of the enemy.

The steppe, with its intractable tribes, and, beyond the steppe, the fanatic inhabitants of Kharizm, following, like their brothers of Bokhara, the most savage Mussulman doctrines, were sufficient to arrest the Russians for a long time. Although there was always a lively caravan commerce, yet Khiva refused to enter into diplomatic relations with Europeans. In 1793, the czar, at the request of the khan, sent him a physician—Dr. Blankenagel; but the Khivans refused to allow him to depart, and, after having exhausted every pretext, they formed a conspiracy to assassinate him on the road, to prevent his revealing anything he had seen. The doctor contrived to escape to the Turcomans, whence he was able to reach Astrachan. In 1819, Captain Mouravieff, after having explored the eastern coast of the Caspian, and meeting with a good reception among the Zamouds, ventured to go to Khiva, under an escort of these Turcomans. Here he was detained prisoner for six weeks, during which time the Khivans indulged in all kinds of rapine. Their capital was an open market, to which the nomads brought the Russian fishermen they had carried off from the Caspian to sell them as slaves, as well as the Kirghiz, subject to Russia, whom they made prisoners. The caravans coming from Bokhara were vexatiously taxed, and, in case of resistance, plundered. The authorities on the frontiers kept open credit for the repurchase of captives; the sums obtained in this manner exceeded, in a single year, 20,000 roubles.

About the end of the year 1836, the Russian government, seeing that the tribes escaped them—thanks to their agility—and fearing to make an unsuccessful expedition against the Khan of Khiva (the real instigator of all the troubles), resolved to manifest their displeasure by a purely defensive measure. They seized all the Khivan traders returning from the fair of Nijni-Novgorod, by way of Orenburg or Astrachan, and then informed the khan that they would be detained as hostages until he should release the Russian subjects kept in slavery. The immediate consequences of this rigorous act showed that Khiva was, in some degree, commercially dependent upon its north-western neighbours. The price of European goods rose in an extraordinary degree, whilst the value of their native productions was lowered by one-half. Nevertheless, the Khan Allah-Kouli was in no haste to satisfy the demands of Russia, always hoping he should be able to extricate himself by cunning. He permitted some of his subjects noisily to protest to the governor-general of Orenburg that the two States should in future live in peace; but these deputies had no mandate, and could not pledge their master's word. Perceiving, however, that this did not succeed, he sent back twenty-five prisoners, with some presents: these were old men, incapable of labour; and the whole thing was a farce; for the same year the pirates of the Caspian carried off hundreds of Russian fishermen. In the meanwhile, the invasion of Afghanistan, by the English, took place. The conviction was at once formed, in St. Petersburg, that the British army was immediately going to conquer all the States of Central Asia, and that not a day was to be lost if they were to have any share in the spoil. Perofski, the governor-general of Orenburg, was, no doubt, glad of an opportunity of distinguishing himself by a brilliant campaign in the valley of the Oxus. Some deserters, pretending to be well informed, assured him that the khan, ruined by the decrease of revenues arising from the suppression of foreign commerce, had imposed oppressive taxes on the Turcomans and the Kirghiz; that these threatened to pillage the town; that the inhabitants had no wish to defend it, and that the golden keys destined for the victorious Russian general had been already manufactured.

Perofski had experience enough of the affairs of Central Asia to be aware, that in a war of this kind, the real enemy was the desert to be crossed, and not the army of the khan. He considered that it would suffice for him to arrive under the walls of Khiva with 3,000 infantry and twelve cannons, but that he would require far more con-

siderable forces to secure his line of march, and especially a number of sumpter animals for the provisioning of his troops. The expedition having been decided on, it was settled that it should consist of 4,400 men, 2,000 horses, and twenty-two pieces of cannon, with a train of 10,000 or 12,000 camels; for in the steppe the camel is far preferable to the horse, because it can endure thirst, lives upon almost nothing, and can bear a heavier load. At this period the route to be followed was self-evident; Orenburg was the only base of operations where men and provisions could be gathered: it was, it is true, 1,300 kilometres from Khiva, entailing at least fifty stations, a good third of them in the desert of Oust-Oust; but it was intended to establish a depôt for provisions in the neighbourhood of the river Emba, about half-way, and to supply it through Astrachan and Gonrieff, or the little Russian post of Mangichlak, on the shores of the Caspian. The plan of the expedition had indeed been well studied in all its details, and the deposition of Allah-Kouli was already settled on in favour of one of the Kirghiz sultans faithful to Russia. This resolution had been the more readily adopted, as it was wished to avoid giving umbrage to Great Britain, and was a solution exactly similar to that projected by the English in Afghanistan, where they intended substituting Shah-Soujah for the reigning emir, Dost Mohamed.

General Perofski left Orenburg on the 14th of November, 1829. Although the weather was still mild, the season was certainly ill-chosen, for the corps would have to cross the steppes during the snows and severe cold: in fact, on the last days of November the thermometer was below zero. The country was quite devoid of fuel; the little wood the soldiers dragged with them was reserved for cooking, and therefore there were no bivouac fires even on the cold nights, with twenty or even thirty degrees of cold. The men became exhausted from walking on the snow; the camels fell from fatigue. On approaching the Emba, the commander-in-chief learned that the provisions sent from Astrachan had not yet arrived; the ships laden with them had been surrounded by the ice: some of them were attacked by the Kirghiz and burned, together with their cargoes, and others had discharged theirs at Fort Alexandrofsk. By the end of December, Perofski found himself with but half his stores, exhausted men, and an insufficient train. He hoped that beyond the Emba the snow would be less thick, and the cold somewhat less severe; for it was there that the nomads took refuge when the winter was too severe for them to remain in their usual encampments. These hopes were, however, not realised. The cold did not diminish, and the conductors of the train revolted: hitherto they had borne the fatigues and sufferings of the march with patience, but they declared they would go no further, and that the season was not fit for travelling. Perofski had some of the most rebellious shot, which quieted the others, and he succeeded in continuing his march as far as Ak-Boulak, 160 verstes from the river Emba. After a journey of two months and a-half they were scarcely half-way to Khiva. Of 10,400 camels which he had at his departure, there remained hardly more than 5,000; the rest had perished from fatigue, cold, and privation. Abstemious as this poor animal is, yet he requires something to eat. The question then arose as to whether they should continue the expedition. The train could not convey more than a month's provisions, and this time would not suffice to reach the valley of the Oxus, where they would, besides, be in a hostile country. The general was forced to retreat, and entered Orenburg only on the 8th of June, having lost a fourth part of his men in the unfortunate campaign.

In spite of the failure of this expedition, the Khan of Khiva perceived that it was imprudent to brave an adversary such as the czar, and was wise enough to restore the Russian slaves, and forbid his subjects every act of hostility against Russia. Perofski now sent an ambassador to him, Captain Nikiphorof, with a mission to conclude a treaty, which, however, failed. "The khan and his ministers," wrote Nikiphorof, "have no idea of what a *political* treaty is." The next year, in 1842, another ambassador, Lieutenant-Colonel Danilefski, was more successful. The Khan Allah-Kouli had just died; his successor, Rahim-Kouli, more conciliating, at last concluded a treaty of peace and alliance, by which the khan engaged that Russian subjects should no longer be molested. It is remarkable that, in this document, no frontiers are fixed between the two countries. It was, perhaps, advisable not to be too exacting with a potentate so ignorant of the usages of

civilised nations. The most valuable result of these negotiations was the information respecting the States of Central Asia, and the roads leading to them. The successors of Rahim-Kouli, however, felt themselves by no means bound by the treaty to which he had fixed his seal, and the tribes continued their depredations. Seventeen years later, when Colonel Ignatieff went to Khiva to demand the execution of the treaty of Danilefski, they calmly replied that they had lost the document, that there were no traces of it in the archives. During this time both Russians and Khivans endeavoured to secure to themselves the rule over the nomads, who, on their part, would acknowledge no ruler. The little influence gained at that time by the Europeans in these regions, is attributed to the tyranny and corruption of the Russian officers, and also to the vexatious mode of administration, which pretended to organise these tribes, to create a hierarchy of native chiefs, and to double the capitation—all innovations repugnant to the Kirghiz. The region between Orenburg, Khiva, and the Caspian was, in truth, rather neglected. Having nothing to gain by a direct attack on Kharizm, the Russians made a circuit by way of Samarcand and Bokhara, having become convinced that they had taken the wrong road in trying to penetrate into Central Asia by the valley of the Oxus. Whatever Peter the Great may have said about it, they at least discovered that Khiva is no thoroughfare—it leads to nothing, and is not easy to get at. On the other hand, their progress was made more rapid as soon as they entered the more fertile valleys of the Yaxartes and the Ili, which were, perhaps, also not so well defended.

It has been seen what was the power of the emir, and the wealth of the town of Bokhara, in past centuries. The annual commerce of this capital, the chief entrepôt of Central Asia and the Russian territory, amounted to eight millions of francs. The caravans, besides being often black-mailed by the nomads, were subjected to heavy custom dues, the emir having no other means of enriching himself but at the expense of the Russian traders. From time to time, too, he sent embassies, and they returned laden with presents from St. Petersburg, a good number of which fell to his share. But the first official mission sent by Russia to Bokhara was in 1820. M. de Negri, the chief of the embassy, was accompanied by Baron Meyendorf, who has given an account of the journey.

This diplomatist had received instructions that he was to demand the protection of the caravans against the undisciplined nomads, and that merchandise should not be retaxed as soon as it had once crossed the frontier. The reigning emir, the terrible Nasroulat, replied that it was for the Emperor Alexander himself to protect his own subjects; he would scarcely receive M. de Negri, and refused to release the Russian slaves, to the number of 600 or 700, who were living in bondage in the khanate. The ambassador was allowed to bring back to Russia those only whose ransom he paid. At a later period other envoys of the czar received no better reception. In 1840, however, Nasroulat, being afraid of the English, who were the masters of Afghanistan, received Major Bonteinef in a friendly manner; he had come, like his predecessors, to negotiate a treaty of commerce, and to claim the Russian subjects held in slavery; but he could not succeed in obtaining any serious discussion of his demands; and, when the news arrived of the disasters of the English army at Caboul, he was bluntly dismissed.

After these repeated attempts, it was clear that the potentates of Central Asia would make no concessions to the Europeans, and that it was by force only that they would ever obtain guarantees. The ordinary caravan road between Orenburg and Bokhara circumscribes the Sea of Aral on the east. About half-way, towards the mouth of the Yaxartes, was the theoretical boundary between the tribes subject to Russia and those acknowledging themselves vassals of the khans of Bokhara, Khiva, and Khokand. Here and there, on the banks of the river, there were some fortresses, whence some indigenous chiefs, more or less subjected to their masters, ransomed the caravans, and plundered the nomads. Thus, in 1850, the commander of Ak-Mesdjid, who was no other than Yacoub-Beg, the Sultan of Kashgar, carried off 26,000 head of cattle in a razzia, and another time 30,000. In order to protect his vassals against these exactions, the czar at last determined to place permanent garrisons at some points in this district. In 1847, the fort of Aralsk was erected at the mouth of the Syr-Daria; it was a base of operations for new enterprises. The Sea of

Aral was explored at the same time by the Russians. The country furnished no wood; small vessels were, therefore, constructed in Sweden, taken to pieces, and transported bit by bit along the rivers and canals from St. Petersburg to Samara, and thence on the backs of camels to the shores of the Aral. Lieutenant Boutakof thoroughly explored this little-known midland sea, and discovered that the Yaxartes was navigable to a great distance from its mouth. It is worthy of remark, that these outposts of Turkestan, restricted as they were, cost the imperial government dear, as the country produced scarcely anything, and all provisions for the troops had to be brought from Orenburg.

From the commencement of their establishment at Fort Aralsk, the Russians found that the Khivans and the Bokharians were not their most troublesome neighbours. It was of Khokand that the Kirghiz had most to complain. This country, after having long been subject to Bokhara, had recovered its independence under the sceptre of a direct descendant of Baber and of Timour. Circumstances were then favourable to its development; and about the beginning of the century it extended along the whole length of the Yaxartes. Tashkend and Chemkend, the two principal towns in this region, belonged to it, and Ak-Mesdjid was its most advanced fortress to the north. The neighbourhood of this nest of pirates was intolerable; but it seemed a hazardous enterprise to get possession of it, for there was a desert of 500 kilometres to cross before reaching it. Nevertheless, General Perofski, who at this time was still governor-general of Orenburg, took the field in the spring of 1853, with 1,700 men. One of the steamers of the flotilla ascended the river at the same time. The place was well fortified, and was taken by storm after a siege of five weeks, during which the garrison behaved most valiantly. This was the first serious affair between the Russians and the inhabitants of Turkestan; and this first encounter was also the most lively. The Russians had more dead and wounded than in any of their later encounters against the whole army of Bokhara; but they had got possession of Ak-Mesdjid, and were resolved to remain there, and all the attempts made by the Khokandians to retake it were fruitless. It was a serious loss for them; for this important fortress, reputed impregnable, was their strongest resort in the valley of the Syr-Daria.

At the same time the Russians threatened Khokand from Siberia. From Semipolatinsk there is a caravan road taking the direction from north to south, and leading to Kashgar and Yarkand, across the territory occupied by the Great Horde. The forts of Kopal and Vernoë, erected to guard this road, became centres of commerce for the surrounding tribes. Thus two fortified lines stretched towards Central Asia, separated by an interval of about 1,000 kilometres; it was therefore but natural to unite them by a third transverse line, so that this series of forts should encompass all the nomads, and isolate them in some sort from the States of Central Asia, which so often plundered them. The project was adopted by the czar, but was deferred on account of the Crimean war. It was a fine occasion for the emirs of Khiva, Khokand, and Bokhara to drive back the Russians to their northern solitudes. The Porte, who had diplomatic relations with them, urged them strongly to it; but absorbed as they were with their intestine quarrels, they had no inclination to do it. And, as soon as peace was restored in Europe, the Russians recommenced their march forward. From year to year they constructed new forts, secured the possession of a valley, and progressed slowly but prudently, so as never to have to retreat. The confidence they inspired in the Kirghiz was of great assistance to them. These nomads made no resistance; they probably eagerly accepted the protection of a powerful neighbour. Thus the czar extended his frontier, at a period unknown to us (probably towards 1860), as far as the mounts Thian-Shan. Between the lake Issi-Koul and this chain of mountains, to the east of Khokand, is the source of the Yaxartes. The population is exclusively pastoral; and here the Russians erected Fort Narim, and thus became neighbours of Kashgar. No attention was paid to this, for at that time there was no country less known than that corner of the earth, supposed to be the cradle of mankind.

Still the Russians occupied only barren and almost desert provinces. The valley of the Syr-Daria is salubrious; but from the Sea of Aral to Ak-Mesdjid agriculture is almost unknown. The nomads produce, at the utmost, sufficient only for their own

subsistence, and have nothing to sell. All supplies for the small garrisons on the frontier had to be brought across the desert. There was a total want of wood; the steamers of Aral had no fuel excepting very scanty supplies of brambles. But beyond the outposts the plains were well irrigated, and it was known that veins of coal existed in the mountains. Tashkend, one of the trading centres of Central Asia, was some days' march distant. After having traversed the desert, the Russians halted at the entrance to the promised land; but this position could not be permanently retained, nor was it held for long.

It must be observed that there was no unity of command at this distant frontier of the empire. The line of Fort Vernoë received its orders from Western Siberia; that of Syr-Daria from the government of Orenburg. The difficulty of establishing an understanding between two generals so distant from one another, no doubt caused much uncertainty; for we are informed by Russian documents that these expeditions were not made at hap-hazard. The plans of the campaigns were drawn up at St. Petersburg, under the eyes of the emperor himself. At length, in the spring of 1864, the order was given to advance. The Siberian troops, under General Tchernaïef, who has since become so notorious through his campaign in Servia, took possession of Auli-Ala, and the forces of Orenburg entered Hazret-Sultan, one of the holy cities of Turkestan, and then the two columns, combined under Tchernaïef, took Chemkend, and some weeks afterwards Tashkend, a town of 80,000 inhabitants, the garrisons of both places offering but a feeble resistance. These conquests cost but very few killed and wounded: for instance, Tashkend surrendered to a detachment of 1,500 men, an evident proof that the population was not hostile to Europeans.

Having penetrated into the heart of Khokand, the Russian government was constrained to justify its action. This was particularly necessary with reference to Great Britain, the only power, indeed, that exhibited any alarm at the progress Russia had been making in Central Asia. This Prince Gortchakoff did by a circular of the 21st of November, 1864. This document deserves attention, for it contains political theories respecting the international relations between civilised States and barbarous nations, with an attempt to confirm these theories by general history, but which no government, not even those who had adopted them, had yet established in principle. His note ran generally as follows:—"Every civilised nation is bound to protect its subjects, to repress slavery, to punish the turbulent tribes in its vicinity; and it is also forced to extend itself from time to time. This has been the case in the United States of America, France in Algeria, Holland in the Sund islands, and England in India. They can stop only when they come to non-nomadic populations, who comprehend the advantages of commerce and a regular mode of existence. It was thus inevitable for Russia to advance as far as the boundaries of the States of Bokhara and Khokand; the line of fortified posts for the protection and defence of the frontier, and through which she keeps the pillaging tribes in order, could exist only in a fertile country capable of maintaining the garrisons. Russia has at last acquired a definite frontier by her last conquests; she has a more compact and better organised social centre. She has reached the geographical limits where interest and reason bid her halt. And, indeed, what motive could she have for extending her territory? Besides that, she already possesses more provinces than she wants; she knows that commerce is the essential element of civilisation. She wishes, therefore, to live at peace with her new neighbours, and to employ force only where justice demands it."

Unfortunately, these fine theories were contradicted by facts at the very moment Gortchakoff uttered them, so powerful was the attraction exercised by the spirit of conquest on a victorious general. What need had the Russians to occupy Tashkend? But then Tchernaïef had already entered it, and the government took good care not to make him quit it, although he had, no doubt, exceeded his instructions in this instance. In the month of January, 1865, an imperial ukase instituted the province of Turkestan, bounded on the one side by part of Western Siberia, the district of Vernoë, and the Kirghiz Steppes, as far as the snowy mountains of Thian-Chan; on the other by part of the province of Orenburg, and the lower valley of the Yaxartes. Tchernaïef was appointed commander-in-chief, with most extensive civil and military powers, for he was made responsible for the

defence of a country almost entirely unknown. Hazret-Sultan was the capital of this new province, of which the boundaries on all sides, except, perhaps, towards the south, were determined by an ukase. Was it from ignorance of geography, or the hope of soon making further conquests, that Tashkend was not included in Turkestan? It was said it was to be made a free town, with its own government, under the protectorate of Russia. This sham, however, did not last long. The inhabitants were soon induced to petition the czar for their annexation to the empire; they feared, they said, that the removal of the Russian garrison would expose them to reprisals from the sovereigns of Khokand and Bokhara. Finally, Tashkend was reunited to Turkestan, and became its capital.

Let us now consider how this extension of the Russian empire was looked upon by the other powers. In Europe one nation alone had any cause of uneasiness—Great Britain. But, being unable to prevent it, she tried to convince herself that it was rather advantageous than otherwise. The Ousbegs, said the press, are a bloodthirsty, depraved race. The state of barbarism in which they live renders Central Asia inaccessible. The Russians will open routes, introduce the germs of civilisation, suppress slavery, and destroy the barriers that have impeded commerce up to the present day. A little more and they would have hailed the submission of all Central Asia to the generals of the czar as a happy event. But however distant the chances of a conflict between the Russians and the English on the frontiers of India, all this language was nothing else but resignation. It is known how timid the foreign policy of the viceroy was at that period; and yet if he had wished to interfere, he would have found races enough disposed to resist the Russians on the banks of the Oxus and the Yaxartes, for their religious fanaticism had been over-excited by the loss of Hazret-Sultan, to which the pilgrims who were unable to make the journey to Mecca repaired, and which now belonged to the infidels: it was a profanation that must be revenged.

But the well-known ambition of Mozaffer-Eddin, Khan of Bokhara, would not allow him to remain inactive, although his possessions were still intact. Khokand alone had as yet been subjected. After many revolutions this State had fallen to a child, the sixteenth descendant of Baber, under the regency of Alim-Koul, the energetic chief of the Kipchaks, the most warlike tribe of this region. Alim-Koul valiantly resisted the Russians, and perished at the taking of Tashkend. A month after this event, Mozaffer wrote an arrogant letter to Tchernaïef, summoning him to evacuate Tashkend, and threatening him, in case he did not yield, to rouse all the true believers of Central Asia against him. At the same time he sent one of his armies to Khokand, banished from it the partisans of the Kipchaks, and set a certain Khonda-Yar-Khan on the throne. Tchernaïef had no objection to this new sovereign, who, from his weakness of character, was not likely to become a disagreeable neighbour; but resolved, above all things, not to be disturbed in the enjoyment of the newly-acquired territory, he would not allow the Emir of Bokhara to appropriate to himself the south-western part of the Kharak, comprising the important town of Khodjend. In order to testify his displeasure, the Russian general caused a Bokhara caravan that was at Orenburg to be stopped. In revenge, the emir stopped a Russian caravan at Bokhara; then he despatched a khodja to St. Petersburg, in order to come to an understanding with the czar himself, after having demanded of the commanders on the frontier that they should only await the return of this messenger. Tchernaïef, and his immediate chief, Krijanofski, governor-general of Orenburg, discerned the true motive of these steps. The emir wanted to gain time, collect his troops, and fall upon the Russians as soon as he should have concentrated all the forces at his disposal. The khodja was imprisoned as soon as he set foot on Russian territory, and Tchernaïef hastened to occupy the valley of the Syr-Daria, as far as Chinaz, under the pretext that there were fertile plains there whose crops were necessary for the provisioning of the garrisons. Khonda-Yar-Khan, to whom the territory belonged, offered no opposition. Knowing his position with the Russians, he made great protestations of friendship, and, thanks to his prudent behaviour, remained in possession of what was left of the State of Khokand.

The affair between Mozaffer and the Russians had been so vigorously commenced, that it could not terminate without war. It is possible that the govern-

ment of St. Petersburg was uneasy about this fresh struggle in perspective, for in attacking the Emir of Bokhara, the spiritual chief of Central Asia, they were entering on a religious war, the issue of which was uncertain. It was therefore decided that a last attempt should be made at conciliation. Towards the end of the year 1865, Tchernaïef sent an embassy to Bokhara, under Councillor Struve, son of the astronomer, and three officers. This was indeed an imprudent measure, when it is remembered what regard Asiatic potentates entertain for diplomatic privileges, especially when they can render tit-for-tat. And, in fact, the four members of the Russian mission were imprisoned immediately on their arrival at Bokhara; Mozaffer declaring he would not release them until his own messenger returned from St. Petersburg. Thereupon, Tchernaïef set out in February, 1866, with fourteen companies of infantry, 600 Cossacks, and sixteen cannons; in all, about 1,700 men, and a train of 1,200 camels. They intended to occupy Fort Djizak, which commands the defiles through which the road passes from Khokand into Bokhara. The country was devoid of wood, forage, and victuals. The general had badly calculated his provisioning, and Djizak was better defended than he thought, and he therefore found himself compelled to retreat; this was accomplished without any serious losses. It was, however, a great success for Mozaffer-Eddin, who more than ever believed himself in a condition to resist the Europeans.

In consequence of this check, Tchernaïef fell into disgrace. His successor, Romanofski, arrived in Turkestan in the spring of 1866. The condition of the province was, it seems, rather critical. There were, in all, scarcely 13,000 troops, of which a quarter, at most, were in the outposts around Tashkend, to receive the first shock of the Bokharian armies. The treasury was empty; the civil administration of the recently-conquered districts scarcely existed. The flying columns of the emir harassed the small frontier garrisons. However, in the month of May, Romanofski advanced against Mozaffer-Eddin with some thousand soldiers. The encounter which took place at Irdjar, on the banks of the Yaxartes, a little above Chinaz, was decisive. In less than an hour the emir's 40,000 men disbanded, leaving the artillery on the field of battle. The losses of the Russians were twelve wounded. There never was, in any country, a victory more complete and less honourable. Romanofski at once advanced as far as Khodjend, which offered no resistance. Mozaffer then pleaded for pardon. The ambassadors whom he had detained in his capital were released. The conditions imposed upon him were not onerous; he had to acknowledge the conquests of Russia, to reduce the customs duties on Russian merchandise, and to pay 1,000,000 francs, war indemnity. Peace now seemed restored; for Russia had so much to do in her newly-conquered possessions, that a long period of tranquillity seemed indispensable for her. The organisation of these territories had, first of all, to be provided for. Municipalities already existed in every town of any importance; these Romanofski preserved, placing them under the surveillance of a Russian officer: he even invested these municipalities with very extensive powers, such as the collection of taxes and the administration of justice. Thus a great responsibility was vested in the commander of this distant province; for it was so difficult for him to consult his hierarchical superiors when anything unforeseen occurred, that it was absolutely necessary to allow him a great deal of independent action. For this same reason the czar instituted, by a ukase on the 23rd of July, 1867, the governor-general of Turkestan, the seat of which is the town of Tashkend, and definitively united it with the empire. As for Romanofski, whether he was too insignificant a personage for such a command, or whether he had failed in anything, is not known; but he retired into private life. The new governor-general was General Kauffmann, who had already acquired the reputation of a clever administrator in the Baltic provinces.

At this period, Khonda-Yar, Khan of Khokand, had resigned himself to the inferior *rôle* imposed upon him by circumstances. Under the semblance of a treaty of commerce, he had, *de facto*, accepted the protectorate of Russia. The attitude of Bokhara was far from being so satisfactory. Not that Mozaffer-Eddin had any serious desire to recommence the war, for the affair at Irdjar had taught him the respective value of his soldiers and the European troops; but his subjects, especially the sacerdotal caste—always influential in the Trans-Oxus—were not so submissive. The emir had sent ambassadors to the

sultan and the viceroy of India, to claim assistance against the Russians. From Constantinople and from Calcutta he received the answer that he must make the necessary sacrifices to obtain peace. The people, however, excited by the mollahs, refused to allow holy Bokhara to humble herself before the infidels; and Mozaffer-Eddin, in spite of everything, was forced to prepare for war. Kauffmann, however, instead of waiting for the enemy, took the field in the month of May, 1868; he met the army of Bokhara at Serpoul, in the valley of the Terefchan, routed it, and the next day entered Samarcand, that had shut its gates against the defeated troops of the emir. He then proceeded further to take the fortresses in the neighbourhood, leaving only a feeble garrison behind. The Beg of Sheri-Sebz then retook the town, and the Russian garrison was saved only by the speedy return of the commander-in-chief. In fact, the war was terminated. The ancient capital of Timour, one of the centres of the Moslem faith, was now in the hands of the Russians.

The fate of this ancient city, however, was not immediately sealed. The treaty of peace granted the Russian traders full liberty of communication in Bokhara; it reduced the duty on imported Russian goods to 2½ per cent., and fixed a war contribution of 1,000,000 francs. At first it seemed as if the Russians kept possession of Samarcand as a guarantee for the payment of the indemnity; but two years passed away, and it was then pretended that Europeans had settled there, and that their interests would be in danger if the imperial troops were to leave. At length, in the autumn of 1870, General Kauffmann declared that Samarcand was incorporated with Russian Turkestan. Besides this town being important from the number of its inhabitants and its history, it occupies a topographical situation which its conquerors could not lose sight of. The scanty waters of the Terefchan are absorbed by the irrigation canals during the hot season; then, if the cultivators about Samarcand abuse their rights, those of Bokhara suffer; the meadows dry up, and the swampy gardens become sterile. In a word, Bokhara can only subsist by the consideration of the government to whom the head of the valley belongs. Such being the case, the Russians would not abandon a conquest that no one, indeed, was in a position to dispute with them, Mozaffer-Eddin less than any other.

This unfortunate sovereign, the victim of the faults of his father, Nasroulat, more than his own, had to contend against a civil war after the foreign war was over. The old Mussulman party, exasperated by the defeats which it attributed to treason, accused the emir of weakness in treating with the infidels. The heir-presumptive took up arms against his father at the same time as the Begs of Sheri-Sebz and of Karchi. As it did not suit the Russians that the khanate should become a prey to fresh revolutions, General Kauffmann sent his troops to the aid of the legitimate monarch, and soon succeeded in quelling the disturbance.

In the meanwhile Khiva alone had managed to preserve its independence. But were this khanate and the Turcoman steppes once to be subjected, the Caspian and the Aral would become Russian lakes. The commerce of Central Asia had become more active since the Europeans had had access to the valleys of the Yaxartes and the Terefchan, and they complained of the long circuits they were compelled to make in consequence of the hostility of the Khivans. The caravans coming from Tashkend and Fort Vernoë could enter Russia only by Orenburg, or, still farther north, by the circuitous routes of Petropaulovsk or Semipolatinsk. The czar already had a fleet on the Caspian; Astrachan and Gowrief to the north, and Baku on the coast of Georgia, were the principal ports. In the place of an establishment on *terra firma*, on the south-eastern coast, which the Shah of Persia, to whom the territory belongs, would not have allowed, the Russians were forced to be contented with a naval station on the island of Achourada, where they kept a strict watch on the Turcoman pirates. On the high sea, navigators had nothing to fear from these savages; but every merchant vessel approaching the coast was exposed to their attacks, their cargoes were plundered, the sailors carried into the interior, and sold as slaves in the markets of Khiva. Employing force ostensibly in the interests of humanity, the Russians arrogated to themselves the right of searching all Turcoman vessels, to see that they carried neither prisoners nor munitions, or contraband of war. In the north they also possessed Fort Alexander, on the peninsula

of Mangichlak, which they had not ceased occupying since the time of Bekovitch; but the garrison was a prey to the continual attacks of the Kirghiz, and the country around being so barren that they could derive nothing from it. The tribes, too, of the Oust-Ourt, who acknowledged the supremacy of the czar, remained turbulent because they felt themselves supported by the Khan of Khiva. In 1869, the governor-general of Orenburg obtained permission to found a colony more to the south, on the bay of Krasnovodsk, which is not far from the spot where the Oxus formerly fell into the Caspian. Apparently it was particularly a commercial station, founded at the request of some Russian traders, to serve as a depôt for goods coming from, or destined for, the valley of the Oxus. There is excellent anchorage there for vessels of deep draught, although this coast is in general flat. This new establishment could not fail to alarm Persia, which, at the instigation of England, then desired that the boundaries should be fixed between its territory and the Russian possessions. The two powers agreed upon the course of the Attrek for the frontier, and Russia, determining to profit at once by the advantages offered by the treaty, erected another fort at Chigichlar, on the right bank of the river. Therewith there was not a cape from Gowrief to Achourada on which the imperial flag did not float.

The Russians were, however, not much more advanced; for the numerous columns sent by the commanders from Krasnovodsk and Chigichlar to explore the steppe, found nothing but desert, without water or forage; and if they chanced to meet any Turcomans, there was at once an exchange of shots. The complicity of the Khan of Khiva with the indigenous tribes was evident. General Kauffman wrote to him, therefore, demanding the release of the Russian prisoners, the protection of the caravans, and that he should no longer encourage the depredations committed by his nomad subjects on Russian territory. The khan gave no answer to this letter. The same demand was made the next year: this time he replied, in a haughty tone, that the czar was at liberty to act as he pleased. This took place in 1871. Kauffmann would have immediately marched against Khiva; but he was prevented by his government, who were still uneasy at the attitude of the Bokharians; it was feared that the fanatics of the Terefchan would profit by the circumstance to take their revenge. Mohammed-Rachim-Khan had already perceived that the desert was not impracticable for his enemies; he heard, from time to time, that the flying columns of Krasnovodsk had advanced as far as the confines of his territory, and with the astuteness of some of his predecessors on similar occasions, he tried to obtain peace at no other sacrifices but vain promises. He therefore despatched a mission to the Grand Duke Michael, governor-general of the Caucasus, and a second to St. Petersburg: they were both sent back with the simple advice to address themselves to the governor-general of Turkestan, through whose intermediation the negotiations must take place. The khan was informed, also, that no preliminaries could be settled before he had delivered up the prisoners. Mohammed-Rachim then bethought himself of claiming the assistance of the Afghan Emir and the viceroy of India. Both advised him to accept the conditions offered to him. Unfortunately for him, one of the flying columns sent by the Russian generals into the desert suffered a slight check. The commander, too confident in his strength, was not sufficiently precautious, and let himself be surprised by a band of Khivans, and lost nearly all his train, which obliged him to retire in all haste towards the Caspian. Emboldened by this slight success, the nomads of the Kharism broke into the province of Orenburg, assaulted the isolated posts, and seized a great quantity of cattle belonging to the faithful Kirghiz.

The expedition was now resolved on. The Russian government was not deceived as to the difficulties of the enterprise. Surrounded on three sides by deserts of sand; offering no resource to an army on the march; guarded on the north by the Sea of Aral, whose shores are so sandy that they can be reached only by flat-bottomed boats, the territory of the khan had also other obstacles to offer as soon as the troops advanced into the cultivated zone. The oasis constituting the inhabited part of the khanate is nothing but a vast marsh, intersected with innumerable irrigation canals; and the expedition would be stopped by each of these water-courses, unless they carried pontoons with them. The resistance the khan was in a position to make was not much dreaded; he had scarcely any regular army; he had no infantry, and the

troops were badly armed. Supposing the Ousbegs and Turcomans to be able, unitedly, to form a troop of 30,000 cavalry, a few thousand Europeans would suffice to put them all to flight. It was also known that Khiva was surrounded by several earth-walls, and every village protected by an encircling wall; but these fortifications were worth nothing against modern artillery. In reality, the true defence of the Kharism lies in the deserts which surround it—deserts which must not only be crossed, but where it was necessary to maintain lines of communication from post to post. Finally, although the Emir of Bokhara had not stirred for the last five years, the Russians had to guard against an offensive movement on his part, and of the fanatics surrounding him.

The conduct of the operations was confided to General Kauffmann; but, as the government of Turkestan could not have furnished the 14,000 men that must take the field, and as, besides, it was considered best to disperse the troops along different routes, it was decided at St. Petersburg that the expedition should be divided into four columns. The first was to set out from Djizak and Kazalinsk, at the mouth of the Syr-Daria, with twenty companies of infantry, thirty cannon, seven *sotnias* of Cossacks, and 9,500 camels, under the immediate command of General Kauffmann. A second column, organised by the Grand Duke Michael, governor-general of the Caucasus, was collected at Krasnovodsk and Chigichlar, under the orders of Colonel Markosof: it was composed of eight companies of infantry, with proportionate cavalry and artillery, and 3,000 camels. The third column, about as strong as the preceding, had the shortest line of march. Leaving Kinderli, at the south of the peninsula of Mangichlak, under the orders of Colonel Lamakine, it was to organise and establish stations on the route, in order to maintain quick and easy communication between Khiva and the Caspian during the whole course of the campaign. Finally, Lieutenant-General Verofkine left Orenburg with 900 infantry, twelve cannons, 400 Cossacks, and 5,000 camels. The longest passage of the desert fell to his lot. It was arranged that all these troops should set out so as to arrive at the same time before the walls of Khiva, and that Kauffmann should then take the supreme command. This general also caused the mouths of the Amou-Daria to be explored by the flotilla of the Aral, consisting of gun-boats and sailing-boats, with a dozen cannons and 260 marines. This little squadron, though too feeble to effect a landing, might, at least, frighten the enemy and divide his forces.

About the 15th of May, after a march of three months, the column of Orenburg arrived at Konngrad, on the western arm of the delta of the Oxus, where it was joined by Lamakine's column, which had left Kinderli on the 15th of April. Although he had received no news of the other detachments, General Verofkine did not hesitate to advance. The Khivans made a show of resistance before Khodchaïli; but a few cannon-shot quickly dispersed them, and the town was occupied without any loss beyond two wounded. Some days later, the enemy again gave battle at Manghit; their numerous cannon seemed to envelop the Russians, who, however, remained masters of the ground with a loss of nine killed, and about twenty wounded. The inhabitants having taken part in the struggle, the town was burnt by way of reprisal. After these two engagements the Khivans did not venture to offer any further resistance in the open field; they skirmished around the expedition, attacked the train, cut the bridges, and fled like the wind when they were pursued. At last, Verofkine received a message from Kauffmann, who appointed a rendezvous under the walls of Khiva for the 23rd or 24th of May. As to Markosof's column, of which nothing was heard, we may as well at once say that it turned back after having crossed half the desert. Although this officer had had much experience in travelling across the steppe, he could not find sufficient wells to supply his men; and for fear of their dying of thirst, he could not do otherwise than retreat. His movement had, at all events, the good result of keeping the tribes of the Tekkes in awe, who otherwise would probably have gone to the aid of the Khan of Khiva.

The 22nd of May, Verofkine received an embassy from Mohammed-Rachim; the imminent danger having induced him to try the stratagem which had succeeded with Bekovitch. He begged the general kindly to accept hospitality in his capital; he would be but too happy to receive him. He required two or three days at most to complete his preparations and chastise the plundering Turcomans, who had had the

audacity to oppose the Russian march. Verofkine could not have been entrapped by a more clever *ruse* even: he had received formal orders to refuse all negotiations. He therefore continued to advance, so that on the evening of the 27th of May he was before Khiva. According to his instructions he was to await the commander-in-chief; but was there not danger in delaying the attack? He willingly persuaded himself there was. On the 28th the Russian artillery bombarded the town at the same time as the infantry ventured rather too boldly to the walls, and the losses were greater than in the preceding battles. On the whole, the result of the day was satisfactory; for in the evening a messenger arrived from the khan, with the information that he was disposed to conclude a treaty. The next morning General Kauffmann arrived, and the united army entered the town, and occupied the citadel and the chief strategic points. The khan had fled, but the population was peaceable; the bazaar was re-opened, and the inhabitants gave the Russians a friendly reception. If the troops had suffered much, during the crossing of the steppes, from the want of water and provisions, the fire of the enemy had done them little harm. The Khan of Khiva, like those of Khokand and Bokhara, was forced to acknowledge the immense superiority of the European armies.

The khan had fled before the taking of his capital; it showed little prudence on his part, for he must have known of the claims of certain Kirghiz sultans to the throne of Khiva. He returned after a few days, ready to subscribe to whatever conditions the conqueror should think fit to impose. What General Kauffmann made him subscribe was indeed less a treaty of peace than a declaration of vassalage. The khan proclaimed himself the obedient servant of the Emperor of all the Russias; he renounced the right of entertaining direct relations with the neighbouring sovereigns; he yielded all territory on the right bank of the Amou-Daria, with the inhabitants, settled or nomad, upon it. All the khanate was to be open to the Russian traders and their goods, freed from all duties, either of customs or transit. Finally, slavery was to be abolished, and the war contribution fixed at the enormous sum of 2,200,000 roubles.

This treaty, which was signed August 24th, 1873, is of such importance as evidence of the true intentions of Russia, that our readers will be glad to read it *in extenso*, and see for themselves how well-founded were the motives which impelled her majesty's government to exact an explanation from the Russian emperor, early in the year 1873, regarding his intentions as to Khiva. The explanation will be given further on, as well as the terms of the promise, which, proceeding from the czar himself, induced the British cabinet to place the fullest confidence in the imperial word.

Treaty of Peace between Russia and Khiva; prepared by General Aide-de-camp Kauffmann, commanding the Forces acting against Khiva, and accepted by the Khan of Khiva, Seid-Mohammed-Rachim-Bahadur-Khan.

"1. Seid-Mohammed-Rachim-Bahadur-Khan acknowledges himself to be the obedient servant of the Emperor of all the Russias. He renounces the right of maintaining any direct and friendly relations with neighbouring rulers and khans, and of concluding with them commercial or other treaties of any kind soever; and shall not, without the knowledge and permission of the superior Russian authorities in Central Asia, undertake any military operations against such neighbouring countries.

"2. The boundary between the Russian and Khivan territories shall be the Amou-Daria from Kukertli, down the river as far as the point at which the most westerly branch of the Amou-Daria leaves the main stream; and from that point the frontier shall pass along such branch as far as its mouth in the Aral Sea. Further, the frontier shall extend along the sea-coast to Cape Urgu, and from thence along the base of the chink (escarpment) of the Oust-Ourt, following the so-called ancient bed of the Amou-Daria.

"3. The whole of the right bank of the Amou-Daria, and the lands adjoining thereunto, which have hitherto been considered as belonging to Khiva, shall pass over from the khan into the possession of Russia, together with the people dwelling and camping thereon. Those parcels of land which are at present the property of the khan, and of which the usufruct has been given by him to Khivan officers of State, become likewise the property of the Russian government, free of all claims on

the part of the previous owners. The khan may indemnify them by grants of land on the left bank.

"4. In the event of a portion of such right bank being transferred to the possession of the Ameer of Bokhara, by the will of his majesty the emperor, the Khan of Khiva shall recognise the latter as the lawful possessor of such portion of his former dominions, and engages to renounce all intention of re-establishing his authority therein.

"5. Russian steamers and other Russian vessels, whether belonging to the government or to private individuals, shall have the free and exclusive right of navigating the Amou-Daria river. Khivan and Bokharian vessels may enjoy the same right not otherwise than by special permission from the Russian authority in Central Asia.

"6. Russians shall have the right to construct wharves (landing-places) on the left bank, wheresoever the same shall be found necessary and convenient. The government of the khan shall be responsible for the safety and security of such wharves. The approval of the localities selected for wharves shall rest with the superior Russian officers in Central Asia.

"7. Independently of such wharves, Russians shall have the right to establish factories on the left bank of the Amou-Daria, for the purpose of storing and safe-keeping of their merchandise. For the purposes of such factories, the government of the khan shall allot, in the localities which shall have been indicated by the superior Russian authorities in Central Asia, a sufficient quantity of unoccupied land for wharves and the construction of store-houses, of buildings for the accommodation of servants of the factories, and of persons transacting business with the factories, and of merchants' offices, as well as for the establishment of domestic farms. Such factories, together with all persons residing thereat, and with all goods placed therein, shall be under the immediate protection of the government of the khan, which shall be responsible for the safety and security of the same.

"8. All the towns and villages, without exception, within the khanate of Khiva, shall henceforward be open to Russian trade. Russian merchants and Russian caravans may freely travel throughout the entire khanate, and shall enjoy the special protection of the local authorities. The government of the khan shall be responsible for the safety of the caravans and stores.

"9. Russian merchants trading in the khanate shall be free from the payment of customs' duties (*ziaket*), and of all kinds of dues on trade, in the same manner as the merchants of Khiva have long enjoyed immunity from *ziaket* on the route through Kazalinsk, at Orenburg, and at the stations (landing-places) on the Caspian Sea.

"10. Russian merchants shall have the right of carrying their goods through the Khivan territory to all neighbouring countries, free of customs' duties (free transit trade).

"11. Russian merchants shall, if they desire it, have the right to establish agents (caravan bashis) in Khiva and other towns within the khanate, for the purpose of maintaining communication with the authorities, and superintending the regularity of their trade.

"12. Russian subjects shall have the right to hold immovable property in Khiva. A land-tax shall be leviable on the same by agreement with the superior Russian authority in Central Asia.

"13. Commercial engagements between Russians and Khivans shall be fulfilled inviolably on both sides.

"14. The government of the khan engages to examine, without delay, the complaints and claims of Russian subjects against Khivans; and, in case such complaints and claims shall have been proved to be well founded, to give immediate satisfaction in respect of the same. In the examinations of disputes (claims) between Russian subjects and Khivans, preference shall be given to the Russians in respect to the payment of debts by the Khivans.

"15. Complaints and claims of Khivans against Russian subjects shall be referred to the nearest Russian authorities for examination and ratification, even in the event of such complaints and claims being raised by Russian subjects within the confines of the khanate.

"16. The government of the khan shall in no case give refuge to emigrants (runaways) from Russia, having no permit from Russian authorities, *without regard to the nationality of such individuals.* Should any Russian subjects, being criminals, seek concealment within the boundaries of Khiva in order to avoid judicial pursuit,

the government of the khan engages to capture such persons, and to surrender them to the nearest Russian authorities.

"17. The proclamation made by Seid-Mohammed-Rachim-Bahadur-Khan on the 12th (24th) of July last, respecting the liberation of all slaves in the khanate, and the abolition in perpetuity of slavery and of trade in men, shall remain in full force, and the government of the khan engages to employ all the means in its power in order to watch over the strict and conscientious prosecution of this matter.

"18. A fine is inflicted on the khanate of Khiva to the extent of 2,200,000 roubles, in order to cover the expenses incurred by the Russian exchequer in the prosecution of the late war, which was provoked by the government of the khan and by the Khivan people. Since, owing to the insufficiency of money in the country, and particularly in the hands of the government, the Khivan government is unable to pay the above sum within a short time, the Khivan government shall, in consideration of such difficulty, have the right of paying the said fine by instalments, with the addition of interest thereon at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum, on condition that, during the first two years, 100,000 roubles shall be annually paid into the Russian exchequer, 125,000 roubles per annum during the two ensuing years, and, after that, 175,000 roubles per annum during the succeeding two years; and in the year 1881—that is to say, after the expiration of eight years—the sum of 200,000 roubles shall be paid; and lastly, a sum of not less than 200,000 roubles per annum shall be paid, until the final settlement of the claim. The instalments may be paid both in Russian bank-notes and in the current coin of Khiva, at the pleasure of the government of the khan.

"The first instalment shall be paid on the 1st (13th) of December, 1873. On account of this instalment the khan shall have the right to a tax for the current year from the population on the right bank, according to the assessment hitherto in force. This collection shall be terminated by the 1st (13th) of December, by agreement between the khan's collectors and the local Russian authorities.

"Subsequent instalments shall be paid in by the 1st (13th) of November of each year, until the entire fine, with interest thereon, shall have been paid off.

"After the expiration of nineteen years—that is to say, by the 1st (13th) of November, 1892—after the payment of 200,000 roubles for the year 1892, the sum of 70,054 roubles will still be due by the government of the khan; and by the 1st (13th) of November, 1893, the last instalment of 73,557 roubles shall be paid. Should the government of the khan desire to shorten the term of payment, and thus to reduce the amount of accruing interest, it shall have the right to pay larger annual instalments.

"These conditions have been fixed and accepted for exact execution and constant guidance on the one part by General Aide-de-camp Kauffmann, governor-general of Turkistan, and on the other part by Seid-Mohammed-Rachim-Bahadur-Khan, ruler of Khiva, in the garden of Hendemian (the camp of the Russian troops at the city of Khiva), on the 12th (24th) day of August, 1873 (on the first day of the month of Radjab, in the year 1290).

"The original treaty was signed and sealed by General Aide-de-camp Kauffmann, governor-general of Turkistan, and by Seid-Mohammed-Rachim-Bahadur-Khan."

The very first sentence of this treaty characterises the whole production. In it the Khan of Khiva acknowledges himself a servant of the Emperor of Russia, and renounces all those privileges the possession of which distinguishes a State from an individual. In paragraphs 2 and 3, a large portion of Khivan territory is forthwith annexed to Russia; and, finally, a fine of 2,200,000 roubles—a fine, be it noticed, not a war indemnity—is inflicted on the khan, to be paid in instalments. Now, though the sum of 2,200,000 roubles—£250,000—is not a large amount for the government of a civilised State to pay, it is a very different thing when it has to be collected from a wandering race of shepherds and nomads, who hate nothing more than paying in any shape. Nor is this all. In Khiva cash is very rare. Outside the towns the trade is simply one of barter. This forces the government to have recourse to money-lenders, to whom they farm the taxes. The money-lenders appoint their collectors, who seize the tax-payer's property if he will not pay, and in every case receive the value of the sum demanded in kind, and at their own price, according to the article they and their employers can make the most profit out of. The sum, therefore, which was demanded, was, in

reality, exceptionally high, and the collection of it gave rise to disturbances, which afforded the Russians a pretext for still further curtailing the powers of the khan.

The true significance of the Khivan treaty became still more apparent when read by the light of the treaty concluded a month afterwards with the Khan of Bokhara, by General Kauffmann. This treaty runs:—

Treaty concluded between General Aide-de-camp Kauffmann, Governor-General of Turkistan, and Seid Muzafer, Ameer of Bokhara.

"ART. 1. The line of frontier between the dominions of his imperial majesty, the Emperor of all the Russias, and of those of his eminence the Ameer of Bokhara, remains unaltered.

"All the Khivan territory on the right bank of the Amou-Daria being now annexed to the Russian dominions, the former frontier separating the possessions of the Ameer of Bokhara from the khanate of Khiva, and stretching on the west from the locality called Khalata towards Gugertli, 'Togai,' on the right bank of Amou, is abolished. The territory situated between the former Bokharo-Khivan frontier, the right bank of the Amou-Daria, from Gugertli to Meschekly, 'Togai' inclusive, and the line passing from Meschekly to the point of junction of the former Bokharo-Khivan frontier, with the frontier of the Russian empire, are annexed to the dominions of the Ameer of Bokhara.

"ART. 2. The right bank of the Amou-Daria being detached from the khanate of Khiva, all the caravan routes leading from Bokhara to the north into the Russian dominions, traverse henceforth exclusively lands belonging to Bokhara and Russia. The governments of Russia and Bokhara, each within its own limits, shall both watch over the security of the march of caravans, and of the transit trade.

"ART. 3. Russian steamers and other Russian government vessels, as well as vessels belonging to private individuals, shall have the right of free navigation on that portion of the Amou-Daria which belongs to the Ameer of Bokhara.

"ART. 4. Russians shall have the right to establish wharves (landing-places) and storehouses for merchandise in such places on the Bokharian banks of the Amou-Daria as may be judged necessary and convenient for that purpose. The government of Bokhara shall undertake to watch over the safety and security of the said wharves and storehouses. The ratification of the selection of localities for the establishment of wharves shall rest with the superior Russian authorities in Central Asia.

"ART. 5. All the towns and villages in the khanate of Bokhara shall be open to Russian trade. Russian traders and Russian caravans shall freely pass through all parts of the khanate, and shall enjoy the special protection of the local authorities. The Bokharian government shall be responsible for the security of Russian caravans within the confines of the khanate of Bokhara.

"ART. 6. All merchandise belonging to Russian traders, whether transported from the Russian possessions into Bokhara, or from Bokhara to Russia, shall, without exception, be liable to a tax of two and a-half per cent., *ad valorem*, in the same way as a duty of one-fortieth is charged on merchandise in the Turkistan province. Besides this ziaket no other supplementary tax shall be imposed.

"ART. 7. Russian traders shall have the right to transport their merchandise through Bokhara to all neighbouring towns free of duty.

"ART. 8. Russian traders shall be allowed to establish caravanserais for the storage of their merchandise in all Bokharian towns in which they may consider it necessary to do so. Bokharian traders shall enjoy the same privilege in the towns of the Turkistan province.

"ART. 9. Russian traders shall have the right to have commercial agents in all the towns of Bokhara, whose business it shall be to watch over the regular course of trade, and over the legal imposition of customs' dues, and who shall also be authorised to enter into communication with the local authorities. Bokharian traders shall enjoy the same privilege in the towns of the Turkistan province.

"ART. 10. Engagements of trade between Russians and Bokharians shall be held sacred and inviolable on both sides. The Bokharian government shall promise to keep watch over the honest fulfilment of all trading engagements, as also over the conscientious conduct of trading affairs generally.

"ART. 11. Russian subjects shall, equally with the subjects of Bokhara, have the right to occupy themselves in the Bokha-

rian dominions with the various trades and crafts which are allowed under the shahrigate, in exactly the same way as Bokharian subjects are permitted, in the Russian dominions, to follow those occupations which are sanctioned by the laws of Russia.

"ART. 12. Russian subjects shall have the right to possess immovable property in the khanate; *i. e.*, to acquire by purchase gardens and cultivable lands. Such property shall be liable to a land-tax on an equality with the properties of Bokharian subjects. The same right shall be enjoyed by Bokharian subjects within the limits of the Russian empire.

"ART. 13. Russian subjects shall enter the Bokharian dominions with permits, issued by the Russian authorities, for crossing the frontier; they shall have the right of free passage throughout the entire khanate, and they shall enjoy the special protection of the Bokharian authorities.

"ART. 14. The government of Bokhara shall in no case admit into its country any emigrants from Russia, *whatever may be their nationality*, who are not provided with permits from Russian authorities. If a criminal, being a Russian subject, seeks refuge within the confines of Bokhara from the pursuit of the law, the same shall be arrested and delivered over to the nearest Russian authorities.

"ART. 15. In order to hold direct and uninterrupted relations with the superior Russian authorities in Central Asia, the Ameer of Bokhara shall select from among those around him a person of confidence, whom he shall establish at Tashkent as his envoy-plenipotentiary. Such envoy shall reside at Tashkent, in a house belonging to the Ameer, and at the expense of the latter.

"ART. 16. The Russian government may, in like manner, have a permanent representative in Bokhara, who shall be near the person of his Eminence the Ameer. The Russian plenipotentiary in Bokhara, as in the case of the Ameer's plenipotentiary in Tashkent, shall reside in a house belonging to the Russian government, and at the expense of the latter.

"ART. 17. In deference to the Emperor of all the Russias, and for the greater glory of his imperial majesty, his Eminence the Ameer Seid Muzafer has resolved that henceforth and for ever the shameful trade in men, which is so contrary to the laws of humanity, shall be abolished within the limits of Bokhara. In conformity with this resolution, Seid Muzafer shall immediately send to all his Beks the strictest orders to that effect. Besides the order abolishing the slave-trade, commands shall be sent to all the frontier towns of Bokhara to which slaves are brought for sale from neighbouring countries, to the effect that in case slaves should be brought to such places, notwithstanding the orders of the Ameer, the same should be taken from their owners, and immediately liberated.

"ART. 18. His Eminence Seid Muzafer, being sincerely desirous of developing and strengthening the friendly and neighbourly relations which have subsisted for five years to the benefit of Bokhara, shall be guided by the seventeen articles composing the treaty of friendship between Russia and Bokhara. This treaty shall be written in duplicate, each copy being written in the two languages—one in the Russian, and the other in the Turkish language.

"In token of the confirmation of treaty, and of its acceptance as a guide to himself and to his successors, the Ameer Seid Muzafer has attached his seal. In Shaar, the 28th day of September (O.S.), 1873, in the month of Shaghan, 19th day, 1290."

These stipulations afford the Russian government so many pretexts for interference in the affairs of Bokhara, that the independence of the State exists merely in name. It would be waste of time to point out the various modes in which Bokhara is by this treaty made entirely dependent on Russia. Suffice it to say, that it was by such treaties that the Russians extended their position ten degrees southwards in forty years—by one degree, or sixty-nine miles, every four years. At this rate of advance they will extend their possessions to the Indian frontier and Afghanistan in another twenty years. This rate seems to be kept up now; for every mail from Tashkent to St. Petersburg brings the news of some further advance, for one reason or the other.

However, when the news of the two above treaties arrived in England, the indignation was universal. It is beyond our province, and does not fall within the scope of the present work, to show why the Russian advance should be a menace to British rule in India. Still, at certain periods the history of one country becomes so interwoven with that of another, that it is necessary to take some account of the relations existing between them, especially when, as in the present case, a subject is under consideration that may possibly make the history of both countries identical—that is, in case of a bitter war between the two.

Rightly or wrongly, the British government judged it expedient to demand of the czar some explanation regarding the expedition to Khiva.

Mr. Gladstone and Lord Granville were then in office. These gentlemen considered *then*—also rightly or wrongly—that Khiva was a country whose fate could not be a matter of indifference to the British government. Being then in office, the fate of even so small and unimportant a country as that of Khiva was not indifferent to these statesmen. They held it to be their duty, being in office, to uphold the interests and honour of the nation. They therefore, not being hampered by the interests which animate an opposition, demanded explanations as to the object of the expedition to Khiva. A matrimonial alliance—which, it is true, was not to the taste of the people, nor, there is reason to believe, to the other members of the royal family—had rendered the demand for such explanations comparatively easy. The British statesmen approached the czar somewhat in the spirit of the head of a family who makes the occasion of his son's marriage a reason for settling old disputes and sore points. The czar at once entered into the spirit of the thing; and announcing his intention of soon coming to England and paying a visit to his daughter, replied with the greatest frankness; and as an autocrat, without whose sanction not a sword can be sheathed or drawn, at once made the promises which set the minds of the British cabinet at rest, and amply satisfied the majority of parliament. He sent Count Schouvaloff, hitherto minister of police, a man in whom he had unbounded confidence, to England, to assure the British ministers personally of the good wishes the czar entertained for England, and as to the objects of the Khivan expedition. Count Schouvaloff acquitted himself creditably and completely of his task. He quite allayed Lord Granville's fears in a conversation which was communicated to Lord Loftus, the British ambassador at St. Petersburg, in the following despatch:—

"Foreign Office, Jan. 8th, 1873.

"My Lord,—Having received information from your excellency and from Count Brunnow, that Count Schouvaloff, a statesman enjoying the full confidence of the Emperor of Russia, had left St. Petersburg for London, at the desire of his imperial majesty, I had the pleasure of receiving his excellency on the 8th instant.

"He confirmed the fact that it was by the emperor's desire that he sought a personal interview with me. It had caused great surprise to his imperial majesty to learn, from various sources, that a certain amount of excitement and susceptibility had been caused in the public mind of this country, on account of questions connected with Central Asia.

"The emperor knew of no questions in Central Asia which could affect the good understanding between the two countries. It was true that no agreement had been come to as to some of the details of the arrangement concluded by Lord Clarendon and Prince Gortchakoff, on the basis of Mr. Forsyth's recommendations as to the boundaries of Afghanistan; but the question ought not to be a cause to ruffle the good relations between the two countries. His imperial majesty had agreed to almost everything that we had asked. There remained only the point regarding the provinces of Badakshan and Wakhan. There might be arguments used respectively by the departments of each government; but the emperor was of opinion that such a question should not be a cause of difference between the two countries; and his imperial majesty was determined that it should not be so. He was the more inclined to carry out this determination in consequence of his majesty's belief in the conciliatory policy of her majesty's government.

"Count Schouvaloff added, on his own part, that he had every reason to believe, if it were desired by her majesty's government, the agreement might be arrived at at a very early period.

"With regard to the expedition to Khiva, it was true that it was decided upon for next spring. To give an idea of its character, it was sufficient to say that it would consist of four and a-half battalions. Its object was, to punish acts of brigandage, to recover fifty Russian prisoners, and to teach the khan that such conduct on his part could not be continued with the impunity in which the moderation of Russia had led him to believe. Not only was it far from the intention of the emperor to take possession of Khiva, but positive orders had been prepared to prevent it, and direc-

tions given that the conditions imposed should be such as could not in any way lead to a prolonged occupancy of Khiva.

"Count Schouvaloff repeated the surprise which the emperor, entertaining such sentiments, felt at the uneasiness which it was said existed in England on the subject, and he gave me most decided assurance that I might give positive assurances to parliament on this matter.

"With regard to the uneasiness which might exist in England on the subject of Central Asia, I could not deny the fact to Count Schouvaloff. The people of this country were decidedly in favour of peace; but a great jealousy existed as to anything which really affected our honour and interest; that they were particularly alive to anything affecting India; that the progress of Russia in Asia had been considerable, and sometimes, as it would appear, like England in India, and France in Algeria, more so than was desired by the central governments; that the Clarendon and Gortchakoff arrangement, apparently agreeable to both governments, had met with great delay as to its final settlement; that it was with the object of coming to a settlement satisfactory to both countries, and in a friendly and conciliatory spirit, thad I had addressed to your excellency the despatch of the 17th October.

"The only point of difference which now remained, as Count Schouvaloff had pointed out, concerned Badakshan and Wakhan. In our opinion, historical facts proved that these countries were under the domination of the sovereign of Cabul; and we have acknowledged as much in public documents: that, with regard to the expedition to Khiva, Count Schouvaloff was aware that Lord Northbroke had given the strongest advice to the khan to comply with the reasonable demands of the emperor; and if the expedition were undertaken and carried out with the object and within the limits described by Count Schouvaloff, it would meet with no remonstrance from her majesty's government; but it would undoubtedly excite public attention, and make the settlement of the boundary of Afghanistan more important for the object which both governments had in view—viz., peace in Central Asia, and good relations between the two countries.

"As to coming to a decision at an early date, it appeared to me desirable, inasmuch as it would bear a different aspect if arrived at in the spirit with which both governments were actuated, and not complicated by possible discussions raised in the British parliament.

"I concluded by telling Count Schouvaloff that I knew the confidence which was placed in him by the emperor, and that I felt sure that my colleagues would agree with me in appreciating his visit to England, as a gratifying proof of the eminently conciliatory and friendly spirit with which the emperor desired to settle without delay the question at issue.—I am, &c.,

(Signed) "GRANVILLE."

Now, when the positive assurances given to the British cabinet by the czar, as related in the above despatch, were communicated to parliament, great satisfaction generally was exhibited, although there were many who knew that the czar was acting contrary to the advice of the men who were conducting the expedition, and contrary to that of his own foreign minister. Consequently, men like Sir Henry Rawlinson placed no value at all upon the czar's word of honour. In a former page we pointed out that the emperor—autocrat though he be—is actually very far from all-powerful, and but little more than a puppet in irresponsible hands, who persuade and force him to adopt steps, and take measures, for which he alone bears the responsibility. But though we may know that such a man means what he says, and is a man of personal honour, as far as he possesses any personality at all, we must hold him responsible for the acts of his servants; and no considerations of his personal worth must be allowed to affect the relations between the two countries. The czar's word, as a man to a man, may be unimpeachable; but his word as the head of the State, as a government, is not worth the fag-end of a rushlight. This was made amply apparent when the result of the Khivan expedition and the two treaties with the Khan of Khiva and the Khan of Bokhara became known. The imperial promises were scattered to the winds, and the seeds sown to a distrust of Russia that have been steadily growing, and which, in no slight measure, contributed to the fate of the Gladstone ministry, and to the discontent with which the members of the Gladstone cabinet were regarded when they were found pleading the cause of the very man who had so egregiously deceived

them, and then offered to the British cabinet a bushelful of excuses to take their choice of.

These excuses were based on the unforeseen difficulties which dictated the annexation of Khiva, and upon the "fact" that the czar had commanded General Kauffmann not to annex any portion of Khivan territory to Russia. But General Kauffmann did not agree with this command, and refused to obey it. Not only that, but he apparently requested the czar to approve of this disobedience, and to sanction its continuance, and notify and confirm the results. The czar, recognising the virtues of obedience better than his subject, obeyed this request. It is, therefore, a question as to who really is the Emperor of Russia. Lord Granville did not care to solve the question; and in reply to the excuses made, observed, that "her majesty's government saw no practical advantage in examining too minutely how far the Khivan arrangements were in strict accordance with the assurances given by Count Schouvaloff."

At this stage we, too, may leave the question. Public attention, however, was drawn more closely to Central Asia, not only in England, but also in America and Germany. The country and its products, the life and habits of the Central Asian States, and the nature of Russian progress, were more closely examined from a political point of view, and the world enriched by such works as those of Mr. Schuyler, the American ambassador at St. Petersburg; by Mr. MacGahan and Captain Burnaby.

Mr. Schuyler, especially, wrote a report concerning the bad administration of Central Asia; which was so carefully written, and with such detail, that its publication came like a blow upon the Russian government, who made such strong representations to the United States government, that Mr. Schuyler was recalled. The salient passages in his report run as follows:—

"The faults of the Russian administration seem to be, however, in some measure due to the personal character and conduct of the governor-general. General Kauffmann is, unfortunately, a very weak as well as a very vain man, and has always been surrounded, wherever he was, by persons who use these qualities to serve their own purpose. He came to Central Asia with no knowledge of the country, and, by holding himself in a very lofty position, has acquired very little knowledge of it during his stay. He has considered it necessary to keep up an appearance of state, and to have little communication with the natives, having been in the Asiatic part of Tashkent only once or twice during the seven years of his administration. He never rides through the streets without a body-guard of 100 Cossacks, and maintains himself at a distance of the Russians also.

"At his balls, it is forbidden to a gentleman to be seated—a more strict etiquette than prevails at the balls of the emperor at St. Petersburg. The Central Asiatics are accustomed to a very simple, and, in some respects, democratic kind of life; and, instead of standing in awe of the governor-general, they turn his actions, to some extent, to ridicule. At the same time, these restrictions, in their intercourse with him, prevent their reaching him with complaints or suggestions; and, therefore, so far as he knows the natives, he knows only such as by their wealth and cunning are able to get round him. In this respect he is the exact opposite of General Tchernaïeff, who, by his simplicity, bravery, and almost intuitive knowledge of the country and people, made himself very popular, and is very greatly regretted by the natives, who long for his return. It is natural, of course, that General Kauffmann should have his favourites among the Russian officers, and should be disposed to uphold them in spite of all charges of maladministration. Although the most glaring acts of maladministration have been committed by the district prefects or commanders, the general tone set by the governor-general is such as to naturally lead to this result, and to render it almost hopeless to expect anything better. The prefects, being removed, to a certain extent, from the observation and control of the centre of observation, and falling soon into the ways and methods of former Central Asiatic governments, abuse their powers, and consider themselves almost irresponsible. A striking example of this was in the management of the Karminski district, one of the most fertile and thickly settled in the whole province, and surrounding, not including, the city of Tashkent. The prefect of this district in one year levied 90,000 roubles of illegal taxes, all of which he spent, besides other government money, and yet he resided within five miles of the house of the governor-general, and was known to be

living in a style, with frequent dinners, suppers, and gambling parties, entirely impossible on his salary of 2,400 roubles a year. Among other things, savings' funds had been instituted for the benefit of the population; but by a subsequent regulation, approved by the governor-general, it had been allowed to spend them on administrative needs of the district. This money, some 22,000 roubles, entirely disappeared, and no account of its expenditure could be found, except that it was said it had been used in fitting up the house of the prefect. Money was taken from the natives at all times, and under all pretences; and a grossly illegal order was issued, forbidding all persons to cross the river Syr Daria at any other place than the places specified in the order, threatening persons who did so with being sent to Siberia. The points specified were places belonging to friends of the prefect.

"When, at last, matters became too scandalous, the governor-general felt obliged to take some notice, and removed the prefect from the district; but, instead of punishing him, he appointed him to another locality, stating that he considered him a 'most useful officer.'

"The prefect of the district of Perofski was investigated and removed for extortion and bribery. He was then appointed to Auli-ata, and has lately been investigated, and removed for demanding an illegal contribution from the natives on the occasion of the demand for camels for the Khivan expedition. Other persons have, in like way, been removed from one post for maladministration, and immediately given another.

On the other hand, many persons who endeavoured to enlighten the public as to the state of affairs, were immediately punished; and the commandant of the district of —— was removed, and sent out of the province, for having written a letter to St. Petersburg for publication, though not at the time actually published, stating the truth about the disaffection and riots at Khodjend, alleging that they were caused by the excessive taxation, which was not what the Russians had at first promised, and not by the vaccination measures, as had been given out. Similar instances are numerous. When the papers showing the guilt of one *employé* were presented to the governor-general, he tore them up without reading them; saying, 'I know this person so well, and I believe him to be such an honest man, that I cannot think such things to be possible.'

"In some cases, acts not only wrong in themselves, but bringing with them very important consequences, have been committed, not from a desire of personal gain, but from a wish to appear zealous in the performance of duties, or from motives of intrigue. A case which happened last year is especially noticeable.

"An officer named Emmonds, in possession of a considerable amount of government funds, gave information that he had been robbed by Kirghiz. The chief Kirghiz living in the neighbourhood of the alleged occurrence were arrested, and, after a long examination, several of them confessed their guilt, though the money could not be found. While the trial was going on Emmonds committed suicide, leaving a letter, in which he stated that he was not the honest man that had been supposed, as he had himself spent the money, and made that excuse to clear himself. The Kirghiz were then, of course, released; but the question arose—why had they confessed? And, on investigation, it was found that the judicial officer, Baron Grevenitz of Kerney, had extorted a confession from them by means of torture—a practice wholly at variance with Russian law, and certainly most disastrous for Russian influence amongst the Kirghiz.

"There was another case in the same neighbourhood, at Kopol, where a district prefect had been robbed, beaten, and severely wounded. As he was most deservedly unpopular for the extortions he practised on the natives, his was not to be wondered at. Over sixty Kirghiz were accused of participating in this act, the chief of them being the Sultan Veizak, holding the rank of major in the Russian service, the most aristocratic and respected amongst the Kirghiz chiefs, and a well-known and life-long friend to Russia. The chief evidence against him was, that some of the property stolen from the prefect was found in his tent. One investigation succeeded another, until a Cossack finally confessed that he had placed these articles in the tent of Veizak at the instigation of the judge himself. It is said that this was done because the judge wished to please one high official by convicting of robbery and sedition another, of whom he was jealous. Among the papers of the investigating commission is a letter from the prefect to the judge, with regard to the

means of obtaining this evidence. For various reasons it has never been possible to finish this investigation; but it was thought necessary to remove the judge, and to bestow upon him a similar post in the city of Khodjend, where he is now the chief administrator of justice. The effect of such a proceeding is, of course, to make the natives thoroughly displeased with the working of the Russian courts.

"Another case of the ill-advised action of the authorities, regardless of the effect produced upon the natives, occurred last summer.

"When the Khivan expedition began, it was found necessary to obtain 14,000 camels, exactly 14 per cent. of the whole number of camels in the provinces; and it was agreed, that in case these camels died, a sum of fifty roubles would be paid for each. They had to be furnished in proper proportions by the different districts. In consequence of the hardships of the expedition nearly all the camels perished, and it became, therefore, necessary to pay a sum of 700,000 roubles. One of the prefects, thinking that he had found a good opportunity to show his zeal for the administration and the good feeling of the district, told the population over whom he ruled, that the government would never pay for these camels, and that it would be much better for them to make a present to the administration; and, by the use of proper persuasion, succeeded in accomplishing this. The example was followed in most of the other districts; and the result is, that the inhabitants feel that they have been absolutely robbed by the government of these camels; and, to speak of nothing else, if it were necessary again to furnish camels for some expedition, the discontent would be very great."

As was foreseen at the time, the expedition to Khiva soon furnished the Russian commanders with further pretexts to exercise their arms; and difficulty being experienced in the collection of the contributions laid upon the Turcomans, General Kauffmann decided to enforce a fine of 300,000 roubles upon them; and instructed his officials to begin with the collection at once, and commence with the Bairam-Shali branch of the Yomud tribe, the most turbulent and numerous Turcoman family. At the same time the elders of the tribe were summoned to General Kauffmann's headquarters. They promised to pay the fine; whilst twelve of their number remained as hostages, and the other five were allowed to depart.

But long before the time agreed upon for the payment, General Kauffmann ordered an expedition against them. On July 19th (thus after the capture of Khiva, and after the treaty had been settled, though not ratified), a force under Major-General Golovatcheff, composed of eight companies, eight sotnias, ten guns (including two mitrailleuses), and a rocket battery, was advanced from Khiva to Hazarat, where the settlements of the Bairam-Shali Yomuds commence. Encountering only small parties of Turcomans, who followed its movements, this detachment at once commenced operations on the 21st of July, by seizing a caravan and firing some shells into the running Turcomans. It is, therefore, evident that, from the very beginning, it was not expected that the payment would be made, notwithstanding that five of the elders were suffered to return to their tribe to collect the money.

The military operations commenced on the fourth day after the appearance of the elders, in compliance with General Kauffmann's order. The commander of the detachment sent out against the Turcomans did, indeed, learn that the Yomuds had not alone not begun to collect the money, but that they had struck their tents with the intention of decamping and of offering armed resistance. What credit attached to this intelligence it is impossible to say: at any rate, only three days had elapsed from the time of the first announcement to the elders of the imposition of the contribution. This is "explained" by the Russian papers saying, that "although the initiative of the campaign against the Yomud Turcomans was not provoked by any acts on their part, but was solely taken by the local military authorities, it is a universally acknowledged fact, confirmed by foreign writers, that the Turcomans are marauders. Whether they anticipated us, and attacked us first, or we them, is a matter of little consequence. The material point is, that having concluded a treaty with Khiva,* Russia could not allow any element of the population to remain free from her influence, which would most certainly interfere with the fulfilment of the terms of the treaty—a circumstance which might possibly necessitate a renewal

* The treaty was signed on the 24th of August, 1873, having been ratified by the emperor.

of Russian military operations in the khanate of Khiva."

On the 25th of July, General Golovatcheff encamped his force at the Chandyr village, and was at once surrounded by large masses of Turcomans. The enemy here made their first display of energy, attacking the force on different sides, until the infantry fire, the artillery, and rockets finally forced them to turn and fly, the troops following in pursuit for a distance of three and a-half versts. During this action, Lieutenant Kamenetzki, with a few Cossacks forming an outpost, pursued a party of Turcomans, and fell into an ambush, where they were all killed. The enemy suffered a great loss. The affair of the 27th July was, however, still more grave. The Turcomans, as it was stated in the official report, "fought with a furious determination: pushing their caps over their eyes, they rushed upon our bayonets with sabres and halberts." There was in this action even a "critical moment," according to the official report—not, of course, in the sense of a possibility of their losing the day; that they could not have lost; for in the report there is nothing to show that the enemy's fire occasioned any harm to the soldiers. The Turcomans fought principally with cold steel, and it was for this reason that they rushed upon the Russian front ranks. The "critical moment" occurred when one of the Cossack sotnias which was sent forward, being obliged to draw back before superior forces, losing its officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Esipaf; the Turcomans broke through the front troops, following upon the heels of the Cossacks. Both mounted and on foot they rushed to this attack, armed exclusively with sabres and halberts. Those amongst them who had no horses galloped to the front, mounted behind the horsemen, and, jumping down, joined in the attack. Barefooted, and clothed only in shirts and loose trousers, with their sleeves tucked up and screening their eyes with their left arms, they broke, with shrieks and shouts, through an opening between the 2nd Rifle Battalion and the 8th Orenburg sotnia, falling on the suite of Major-General Golovatcheff, and on his escort. Golovatcheff was himself wounded, receiving a sabre-cut on his right wrist.

The chief of the staff of the detachment also received a sabre-cut. His highness, Prince Eugene Maximilianovitch (of Leuchtenburg) himself shot, with a revolver, a Turcoman who attacked him. These unmounted Turcomans had evidently devoted themselves to death, because they could not have hoped to escape with the horsemen who brought them up to the Russian front. The enemy was beaten back at all points, and, in retreating, overtaken by shells.

The Russian detachment then advanced through the town of Ilyaly, along the road to Kyzyl-Takyr, without at first meeting with any opposition; but, encountering the enemy again further on, it had to push its way for eight versts through masses of Turcomans. On reaching the Ana-Murat canal, it was discovered that the detachment had been proceeding in a wrong direction, owing to its having lost its guides. It should not have marched to Kyzyl-Takyr, but to the lower extremity of the Ana-Murat-Bai canal, where the enemy was concentrated. Having, therefore, passed the night by the Ana-Murat-Bai, the detachment advanced, on the next day, to the lower part of that canal.

The Russian losses on the 27th of July, consisted of—killed, one staff-officer and three privates; and wounded, one general, four officers, and thirty-two privates. According to native accounts, the enemy lost only 800 men. The Turcomans engaged in the action are said to have numbered 4,000 foot and 6,000 horse.

On reaching the Niaz-Sheikh canal, General Golovatcheff received intelligence concerning the whereabouts of the Turcomans, which compelled him to resume his former direction. On the 29th of July the detachment had another engagement, which was remarkable only for the fact that the Russian soldiers captured a large transport escorted by the Turcomans; on which occasion the detachment captured over 5,000 head of cattle, 119 camels, and about 3,000 arabas (three-wheeled carts) laden with various articles of property. The Turcomans fled in great haste, leaving behind them not alone their property, but also their wives and children; and the official report in reference to this, making no allusion to any loss on the Russian side, speaks only of slaughtered Turcomans.

On the following day, the 30th of July, General Golovatcheff, returning to his previous halting-place by the Niaz-Sheikh canal, where his (Turkistan) detachment was joined by the Orenburg detachment, and by the main body of the Russian troops under General Kauffmann, who, receiving

no intelligence from General Golovatcheff's detachment, owing to the interception of the communication by the enemy, had himself advanced from Khiva on the 27th with ten companies, eight guns, and one sotnia, leaving in Khiva only six companies with two guns. The Orenburg detachment had left still earlier, and in the wake of the Turkistan detachment, reaching Kyzyl-Takyr on the 27th of July, and proceeding from that place to Ilyaly, where General Golovatcheff arrived later. General Kauffmann marched first to Hazarat, and then to Zmukshir; that is, he took the same direction as that followed by General Golovatcheff, but proceeded along the other side of the canal.

On the 31st of July all the detachments were assembled at Ilyaly. The rout of the Turcomans, when the Russian troops came suddenly upon them, was complete. A considerable number of them were killed and wounded; 9,000 head of cattle were captured; and the dwellings, crops, and various stores of the Turcomans along General Golovatcheff's line of march, from Hazarat to Zmukshir, were devoted to the flames: altogether, about 3,000 laden arabas were destroyed and burnt by the Russian troops. Materially weakened, and morally beaten, the Yomuds were dispersed on all sides.

After the 20th July (O.S.), deputations of Yomud Turcomans came to General Kauffmann, appealing for mercy. The commander of the forces, nevertheless, proposed to exact some portion of the fine from the Yomuds, which should be in proportion to the means which, on inquiry, they should still be known to possess. From the other tribes General Kauffmann demanded a payment of 310,000 roubles within a twelve days' term, allowing them to make up half of that sum in camels.

The three Asiatic khanates of Khokand, Bokhara, and Khiva, preserving only an appearance of independence, and having lost some portions of their territories, have fallen under the actual influence of Russia. Khokand is isolated from the two other khanates. Khiva is now separated from Bokhara; and Bokhara and Khiva are now entirely open to Russian troops, who, at the same time, command the irrigation sources of those khanates, and by that means alone hold the population of those countries entirely at their mercy.

Although, by the treaty with Khiva, our frontier on the western side is defined by the old bed of the Oxus, yet it exists, of course, only as far as those extreme points where the Khivan territories merge westwards into the steppes. The points already occupied by Russian troops on the south-eastern coast of the Caspian lie considerably to the south of the Uzbri (the so-called ancient bed of the Oxus); so that here the line of frontier must necessarily be formed by the Attrek. It has already been officially declared to be the boundary by the Russian authorities, and has been practically recognised as such by Persia, our immediate neighbour in that quarter.

This expedition against the Turcomans was quickly followed up in January, 1874, on the faith of a rumour for which there appears to have been no foundation, that the Turcomans "intended" to ravage the country annexed by the Russians in the Delta of the Oxus, as soon as the ice became strong enough to allow them to pass over it to the Russian side. The only evidence for the existence of such an intention, rested on the confession of Russians themselves—upon nothing more than the gossip of the bazaar in Khiva. But even if it had had a more tangible basis, regarding an "intention" on the part of a people but just subjected to severe treatment as equivalent to the act, is a piece of hypocritical cant and cruelty which has found indignant critics even in Russia. But having been decided on, the expedition was rapidly organised.

On January 4th, 1874, Lieutenant-Colonel Dreschen marched from Petro-Alexandrovsk with four companies of infantry and fifty Cossacks, taking with him two field-guns and two howitzers. Three days later, Colonel Ivanoff followed with a sotnia of Cossacks and a rocket company, leaving instructions for two companies of infantry, with a troop of field artillery, and fifty Cossacks, to be in readiness as a reserve force in the event of its being required.

The troops thus left in garrison were three companies of infantry in full complement, and a troop of Cossacks, with the garrison artillery, and a troop of mountain artillery; or a total of something more than 1,000 men.

The troops forming the expeditionary force were supplied with fur-coats, felt-blankets, and felt-boots.

Arrangements were made for the erection of tents by the local inhabitants at the

various places where the troops were appointed to bivouac.

The average temperature was 5° below freezing-point (Reaumur); during the night it fell to 11° and 12°. It was daily expected that the river would be blocked with the ice.

The official reports state, that the rumours concerning the hostile intentions of the Turcomans having increased, Colonel Ivanoff ordered the reserve force to quit the fort, which he accordingly did on the 15th January, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Aderkas, provided with every winter requirement, with provisions for nineteen days, and accompanied by a transport of seventy camels, laden with sacks of biscuits, buckwheat, and conserved meats.

The first intimation of the crossing of a body of Turcomans to the right bank of the Oxus was received on the 15th January, *i. e.*, on the same day on which the reserve issued from Petro-Alexandrovsk. It was then said that the Turcomans had made their appearance at Khodjà-Kul (lake), at Kipchak; and at the same time it was rumoured among the Kirghiz that they intended to break past the Russian column to the encampments of the nomads of the Daù-Kara, a lake situated about seventy miles to the north-east of Nukus.

Subsequently to this it was learned that a body of about 300 Turcomans had attacked the fortified post of Mahmut-Kul, but that, failing in their attempt to seize it, they had proceeded to Kipchak, destroying all the tents and stores of clover prepared for the Russian troops.

At Nukus Colonel Ivanoff found no signs of the Turcomans; but his spies brought him the intelligence that some 6,000 Turcomans, mounted and on foot, were assembled in the vicinity of the Laudan, and all along the course of that canal, up to Kipchak. It was further stated that these Turcomans were under the leadership of Kazy-Murad (one of the deputation of elders unwarrantably kept as a hostage during the Khivan expedition, but who succeeded in making his escape), and of a Kirghiz named Dosan. The spies reported that none of the other elders of the tribes joined in the movement, although they suffered their people to take part in it.

On the 17th of January, it was ascertained that about 1,000 Turcomans had crossed the Oxus near Kipchak, and had taken the direct road to the Daù-Kara.

Colonel Ivanoff, being at this time left with only fifty mounted Cossacks (having previously detached one sotnia, with a rocket company, to escort back to Petrovsk the officer who had brought the reinforcements to the Oxus), mounted a hundred riflemen upon cart-horses, and sent them, under Lieutenant-Colonel Dreschern, in the direction of the Daù-Kara, to the encounter of the returning escort. This improvised cavalry, without saddles or bridles, performed a journey of thirty miles, and meeting the escort, rode back again.

On the 20th of January, Colonel Ivanoff, leaving the greater portion of his baggage at Nukus, marched from that place to Nazar-Khan (up stream, one march distance from Nukus), at which place Lieutenant-Colonel Aderkas, coming down from Petro-Alexandrovsk with the reserve forces, was ordered to await him, being instructed in the meanwhile to send patrols up the river in order to ascertain the strength of the enemy, and to prevent him from crossing. At this time the river was only partially frozen over, but it was found that the Turcomans were passing over, in separate detachments, at Kipchak, where the ice was strongest.

On the 21st and 22nd of January, the outposts of the united forces of Colonel Ivanoff and Lieutenant-Colonel Dreschern, which were encamped at Nazar-Khan, were harassed by small parties of Turcomans, but these were fired upon and kept at a distance. On the 23rd the forces advanced up the river, provided with felts, furs, and ten days' rations, leaving the impedimenta at Nazar-Khan under the charge of the Kirghiz elders. On the same day the force encamped at Kipchak, where the ice was traversable from three points, taking up a position immediately in front of the central crossing.

The left bank of the river was densely lined with Turcomans, who, while the Russian detachment was advancing towards Kipchak, likewise pushed on in the same direction. The Russians had barely formed their camp when the Turcomans opened fire upon them, but without any effect, to which the Russians did not respond. In the meanwhile the Cossack patrols kept the Turcomans from crossing above and below the Russian camp.

Having determined to pass over to the left bank, Colonel Ivanoff sent a cavalry

force to reconnoitre all the three crossings, and while in this manner leaving the Turcomans in ignorance regarding the one he would select for passing the troops over, he despatched Lieutenant-Colonel Aderkas with two sotnias of Cossacks and a company of mounted rifles, to drive back a strong body of Turcomans which had mustered at the lower crossing, about three miles lower down the river, and to examine the condition of the ice in that direction. This operation was speedily performed, with very little firing, and the ice was reported to be of a good thickness.

On the night of the 23rd of January the Turcomans kept up a sharp fire upon the Russian camp, and made some bold attacks upon the chain of pickets and on a patrol, but were repulsed with heavy losses.

The Turcomans were chiefly massed on the left bank, opposite the Russian camp, believing that the Russians intended to cross the river at that point. In order, therefore, to keep them in their delusion, the Russian commanding officer sent Lieutenant-Colonel Dreschern, with two companies of infantry and a troop of mountain artillery, to occupy the right bank of the lower crossing, Lieutenant-Colonel Aderkas being at the same time ordered to proceed with the sotnias, one company of rifles, and a troop of field-artillery, to make a demonstration in the direction of the higher crossing leading to Kipchak, while Colonel Ivanoff, with the main body and the train, remained temporarily in camp.

The detachment under Lieutenant-Colonel Aderkas was soon engaged in a sharp fusilade with the Turcomans, of whom 1,500, scattering themselves over the ice, and screening themselves behind boats and carts brought down by the drifting ice, kept up a continuous fire, accompanied by a practice with their falconettes from the left bank. The field-artillery being brought into play, the Turcomans were driven back from off the ice. Ordering Lieutenant-Colonel Aderkas to remain where he was for about an hour, Colonel Ivanoff hastily broke up his camp, and moved quickly with all the rest of his force, and with the train to the lower crossing, where Lieutenant-Colonel Dreschern had located a company of infantry on the ice, midway between the two banks.

On being informed that the ice was sufficiently strong for the passage of the troops, Colonel Ivanoff organised a special column for the occupation of a position on the left bank. Taking with them a troop of mountain artillery, the men ran across the river (850 fathoms wide), and firing a volley at the Turcomans massed on the bank, established themselves in a position. Preparations were next made for the passage of the remainder of the force, which was effected with complete success. The guns were drawn over by the men, the wheels being bound round with felt, and the ends of the carriages placed on wooden slides, in order to lessen the friction.

Lieutenant-Colonel Aderkas had joined the main force before the passage was effected. Abandoning his position at the higher crossing, he was followed by great numbers of Turcomans. On joining Ivanoff's detachment, however, two sotnias were told off to go up the right bank in order to protect the transports. Seeing that the Russian troops had already established a footing on the left bank, and that the rest of the force could not be prevented from crossing, the Turcomans offered no further resistance, but gradually dispersed.

From the position on the left bank Colonel Ivanoff sent a letter to the Khan of Khiva, acquainting him with the fact of his having traversed the river, and requesting him to pacify the Uzbegs, and not to interfere in the affairs of the Russians with the Turcomans. He also requested the khan to attach an agent to the Russian detachment so long as it remained on the left bank of the Oxus. On the 25th of January the Russian detachment marched to Kazy-Murad, an encampment of Turcomans. Leaving Kipchak on its left, the Cossack cavalry sent in advance demolished all before them so effectually, that when the main force came up there was not a living creature to be seen, fire and sword having laid waste the country.

Wishing to avoid the permanent dwellings of the people of Kipchak and Mangyt, Colonel Ivanoff proceeded towards the Kuba-laù hills, but found to his astonishment that the country was flooded. This was a surprise even to the local guides, who knew that the canals were always dry in the winter, and were not aware of the fact that the Turcomans had destroyed the dam of the Arna canal.

As the water was rising rapidly over the low marshy lands, Colonel Ivanoff recalled the Cossacks, who were continuing their

work of destruction in all directions, and fell back upon the desolated Kazy-Murad encampment, where the Russian force halted on the night of the 25th January.

On the morning of the 26th the Russian detachment marched through Mangyt, the commanding officers assuring the inhabitants that they had nothing to fear, and crossing in that town the only existing bridge over the Arna canal, proceeded four miles beyond Mangyt, coming upon the winter encampments of the Kulchar Turkomans, which were at once demolished; the Cossacks performing the work of destruction at distances, while the infantry did it as effectively along the line of march.

At Mangyt Colonel Ivanoff had received a notification from the Khan of Khiva, to the effect that the Yomud Turcomans of Hazarat had given in their allegiance. To this Colonel Ivanoff replied that, although he did not fully believe in the sincerity of the Yomuds, he would not pass through their lands, but would proceed by way of the encampments of the Chaudurs, and so back again to the right bank of the river. Taking warning by the fate of the Kulchars, the Chaudur elders presented themselves, on the 26th January, in the Russian camp at Lake Chagat, on the north-west side of the Kuba-laù hills, with a moiety of the contribution demanded of them, on the condition that they should not be molested. They entreated Colonel Ivanoff not to proceed through their lands; but to this he would not accede, assuring them, however, that he would do the people no injury if they complied with his demands. On the 27th the Russian detachment bivouacked at the Ikdyr wells, where another moiety of the contribution was paid by the Chaudurs. On the 28th the detachment reached Porsu (about thirty-three miles west of Kipchak), and halted at Lake Lar. Here the elders of the Imraly, Kara-Dashly, and Kara-Ilyaly Turcomans presented themselves with tenders of submission, and with some of the contributions exacted from them.

On the 29th of January, Colonel Ivanoff, with a portion of his detachment, visited the site of Old Porsu, where Prince Cherkaski and his suite were murdered in 1717. The place is now a scene of utter ruin, having been abandoned by the inhabitants thirty years ago, on account of a deficiency of water. Here a triple volley was fired in honour of Bekovitch and his followers; and after a night's halt, Colonel Ivanoff rejoined the rest of his force. On the 30th January he camped again at Lake Chagat.

On the 31st, the force entered Kipchak, where it was obliged to wait for the opening of the river, the ice having been weakened by warm weather. On the 4th of February the river was clear of ice, and on the 5th, the Russian detachment crossed over in boats to the right bank.

During the stay of the Russian force in Kipchak, Colonel Ivanoff sent three sotnias of Cossacks down the river to the Laudan canal, to survey the left bank in that direction, a work which had not been done during the expedition to Khiva in the summer. These sotnias performed the journey (fifty-three miles there and back) in a single day.

Judging from these operations, the Turcomans will soon be under the same rule as that which Khiva has fallen under. What the character of that rule is, can scarcely be better shown than by alluding to the case of Captain Burnaby, who rode to Khiva as a private individual in time of peace, but who was recalled by the Duke of Cambridge because the czar commanded it.

Captain Burnaby describes his recall, and the incidents concerning it, in a most inimitable manner. Having got to Khiva, in spite of all attempts to detain him, by the exercise of no small amount of mother wit and more determination, he intended to go on to Bokhara. "However," he says, "*l'homme propose mais Dieu dispose;* and the truth of this celebrated old French saying was prominently brought before me the next morning; for, on returning from an early ride through the market, where a great sale of camels and horses was taking place, I found two strangers in my apartment. One of them, producing a letter, handed it to me, saying that he had been sent to Khiva by order of the commandant at Petro-Alexandrovsk.

"On opening the enclosure I found a letter written in Russian on one side of the paper, and in French on the other.

"Its contents were to the following effect—that the commandant had received a telegram *viâ* Tashkend, and that I must go to the fort to receive the communication.

"I was greatly surprised to find that any one took so much interest in me as to despatch a telegram so many thousand miles, and put himself to the expense of having the message forwarded from Tashkend, where

the telegraph ends, to Khiva, a distance of 900 miles, by couriers with relays of horses. It must have cost a large sum of money sending that telegram; and I began to be a little alarmed, thinking that perhaps I should be asked to pay for it.

"Again, what could have occurred of such great importance as to induce any one to telegraph? Could it be that General Milutin, the Russian Minister of War, had just remembered that I had called four times at his house, and that he had not been able to give me an interview, but that he was now prepared to grant one?

"There was another solution, which might also have been correct; and the thought suddenly occurred that perhaps Count Schouvaloff's brother, to whom the thoughtful ambassador in London had so kindly given me a letter of introduction, had by this time arrived at St. Petersburg, and wished to show me some hospitality.

"Anyhow, there was the letter, and I must go to Petro-Alexandrovsk to receive the telegram. It was not a pleasant thought, after having gone so far, to have possibly to return to European Russia over the snow-covered steppes. It is a hard journey, even for the Tartars, this fourteen days' march, with the cold at 20° and 30° below zero, and no shelter to be met with on the road. The Tartar and Khivan merchants occasionally, it is true, make the journey in mid-winter, but invariably wait till the spring for their return to Orenburg.

"I had accomplished the really hard part of my journey, and every degree marched in the direction of Meroe would have led me to a warmer climate. However, there was nothing to be done save to go to Petro-Alexandrovsk, and then, if the despatch were of such a nature as to oblige me to return, to retrace my steps.

"The messenger who had brought the letter was eager for my immediate return to the fort. This, I said, was out of the question till the next day, as I wished to make some purchases in the town, and must also pay a farewell visit to the khan previous to my departure.

"A little later I rode to the bazaar, accompanied by Nazar and the guide, the latter not being at all pleased at our having to go to Petro-Alexandrovsk. He was very uneasy in his own mind about the consequences which might occur to him for having brought me to Khiva.

"One of the men sent with the commandant's letter was now continually in our wake; and I subsequently learned that a strict order had been sent to the khan to have our party followed and taken to the fort, in the event of my having left the city. We started early the next morning, and rode across the Amou-Daria at a spot about thirteen miles from Anca, and where the stream was nearly two versts wide; the ice being in some places more than a foot thick. Presently we passed by a Cossack cavalry station, called Lager. Here, in spite of the inclemency of the season, three squadrons were picketed out in the open, the horses having coats like bears, and looking exceedingly well, in spite of their exposure to the extreme cold.

"We were now approaching Petro-Alexandrovsk, and a few dark spots on the different horizon were pointed out to us as the recently-erected fort. The emissary who had brought me the commandant's letter, spurred his horse forward, leaving his companion with my party and self. 'He has only gone on to say that you are coming,' was the reply to my enquiry, and in a few minutes more we rode into Petro-Alexandrovsk. It has been built upon the site of a house and garden, which formerly belonged to the uncle of the Khan of Khiva, the materials of his house having been used in constructing the wall which has been erected round the fort.

A clean-looking, well-built house stood in a small open space in the centre of the enclosure. A flagstaff at one end of the dwelling, and two sentries walking up and down in front of the doors, made me think that this was probably the house of the chief of the Amou-Daria district. My guide, who was each moment more alarmed at the possible consequences to himself for his having taken us to Khiva, now informed us that here lived the celebrated Colonel Ivanoff.

"The commandant was out hunting—so a servant informed me. At that moment a young officer coming up, accosted me by my name, and said, 'We expected you before this. Come with me. There is a room prepared;' and he led the way to a small building inhabited by some of the officers in the garrison. Here I found several of them congregated in a small room, and was introduced in due form by my newly-made acquaintance. I then heard that the telegram which had arrived for me was from H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge,

the field-marshal commanding-in-chief, and that he required my immediate return to European Russia. The document had been waiting for me several days at the fort; and in the event of my having gone first to Petro-Alexandrovsk, I should never have seen Khiva.

"A little later an officer brought a message from Colonel Ivanoff, to say that he had returned from shooting, and was waiting to see me. He is a tall man, considerably over six feet in height, but very thin, and of a German type, his whiskers having a decided Teutonic appearance. I was received by him at first a little stiffly, but his demeanour soon changed, and he began to laugh about my journey.

"'Too bad,' he said, 'letting you get so far, and not allowing you to carry out your undertaking.'

"'It was lucky,' I remarked, 'that I did not come here first.'

"'Yes,' said Ivanoff; 'when I received the despatch, and found that you did not arrive, I sent back a special Tartar courier to Fort Number One, to say that you had probably gone on to Bokhara, and had thus given us the slip; but we should have caught you there,' he continued.

"'It is the fortune of war,' I said. 'Anyhow, I have seen Khiva.'

"The colonel here winced a little.

"'Khiva; that is nothing,' he said. 'Why, Major Wood, one of your compatriots, an officer in the Engineers, was here last summer; he could have gone to Khiva any day if he liked; indeed, I was a little surprised that he never asked me to let him go there.'*

"'Well,' I remarked, 'as I have to return to European Russia, there can be no objection to my going to St. Petersburg *viâ* Tashkend and Western Siberia, or by Krasnovodsk and the Caspian.'

"'My orders are very strict about this,' said the colonel. 'You must go back the shortest way through Kasala. But you can write, if you like, to General Kolpakovsky, the officer commanding our troops in Turkistan. I will send on the letter with the same courier who leaves this afternoon to announce your capture; and then, if you return to Kasala in the course of three or four days, you will there receive the general's answer.'"

The answer, of course, was that Captain Burnaby was to be sent back to Europe by the shortest route. In fact, he was a prisoner in time of peace, and subjected to this treatment in consequence of the jealousy of the Russians, who did not wish that anyone should see with his own eyes what they were doing in these parts, and what means they had at their disposal for extending their position still further south, towards the frontier of India. But the most remarkable thing about this proceeding is, that it was sanctioned by an Englishman—not quite a full-blooded Englishman, it is true—by the Duke of Cambridge.

The three most important strategic points which must be gained before the Russian frontier can be extended to that of India, are Merve, Balkh, Kashgar, and Yarkand. Towards all these points the Russian lines are rapidly approaching. It is said, by those who desire to excuse the Russian plans for extension, that they can have no object in annexing the vast tract of country that lies between Khiva and Merve, and which is no more than a desert with a few oases here and there. These people say that it would be impossible for the Russians to move an army across these wastes. But a report has been made by Captain Potto, of the Russian service, for the guidance of the Russian War-Office, which places things in a very different light. In this report we find that the distance from Khiva to Merve is about 930 miles, and the time occupied by a caravan in performing this journey is seventeen days. According to all reports, troops, if supplied with a camel train, can easily accomplish this march. The only part of the road trying to man and beast, is the 170 miles' desert which lies between the Moorghaub and the Oxus; but even here wells are to be found; and the longest interval traversed without water is fifty-six miles. A force despatched from Khiva to Merve would not have to undergo half the hardship experienced in the route from Kasala to

* "Apparently there was a slight misunderstanding between Major Wood and Colonel Ivanoff on this point; or, possibly, the atmosphere of Central Asia has somewhat affected the colonel's memory. After my return to London from Khiva, I dined one evening with Major Wood, and asked him why he had not gone to Khiva. His reply was, 'I wanted to go there very much; I frequently asked Ivanoff to let me, saying that it was a great nuisance to have come so far and not be allowed to enter the town.' However, Ivanoff replied that he was very sorry, but he could not allow me to do so, as he had received a strict order from General Kauffmann on that subject."

Khiva. Indeed, the Khivans, under Mohammed Rabiss Khan, were able to take Merve; thus showing that even a badly organised Asiatic force can perform the journey. Besides the two caravan roads that lead from Khiva to the capital of the Turcomans, there is a direct caravan track from Bokhara to Merve, by Chardjui, the distance being about 230 miles. This is by far the easiest route. Two days is the longest time that troops would be on the road without finding wells, whilst caravans go from Bokhara to Merve in thirteen days. A Bokharian army, under Shah Murad, captured this stronghold of the Turcomans, and destroyed the dam or bend of the river Moorghaub, in order to impoverish the country. Where Bokharian troops can go, Russian soldiers would have no difficulty in following; and the same force which has captured Samarcand would find little difficulty in overcoming any resistance the badly armed but brave Turcoman hordes might be able to oppose. There is a short route to Merve, which would perhaps be the easiest of all, in the event of an advance in that direction. This would be along the line of the Turcoman forts, under the slopes of the Attrek outside Khorassan. This road leads through a fertile and well-watered country, and where some Turcoman tribes have already been gained over to the Russian interests. A Russian line of military operations along the Kurren Dagh would flank Persia in the north, and turn her from the east at Mested.

The same officer has published a work, in a limited number of copies, for the use of his comrades, entitled *Steppe Campaigning*, in which he describes the method pursued by the Cossacks on the march out in bivouac, which is well worthy of perusal:—

"In the presence of the enemy a detachment ordinarily bivouacs behind a waggon barricade; but if the transport be small, and the place selected for the bivouac offers one of its sides to a river, ravine, or other obstacle which is secure from an unexpected attack, the waggon barricade may, in order to gain internal space, be arranged in the shape of a lunette, with its open side toward the natural obstacle. On the other hand, if the train be large, it is preferable to form a square, the carts being in several rows, and sufficient room being given for the reception of the horses, not losing sight of the possibility of bringing a fire to bear upon the enemy from behind the carts. The length of each face of the square should be in proportion to the number of men defending it. The angular places are filled with bales, or occupied with guns. The troops are ordinarily distributed parallel to the faces of the waggon barricade, and at such distances apart, that between them and the inner row of carts in rear, there may be sufficient space, in the event of attack, for bringing up artillery and reserves. The men's kits are heaped up in rear of their own particular section, and behind them are piled their rifles. The Cossack horse-lines are in rear of the line of the bivouac; and behind them, in the centre of the barricade, are the staff, the artillery park, the engineer and hospital trains, the sutlers, and, lastly, if there is room, the drivers with their horses and camels in a separate square. By day it is necessary to take advantage of any opportunity of sending out the animals to pasture; but they should be again brought into camp at twilight, and, if possible, placed within the barricade—the camels near one of the faces most removed from attack, and the horses in the horse-lines and hobbled. For the defence of a camp, both by day and night, it is necessary to throw out a chain of dismounted posts. These posts, furnished from the Cossacks, are called mayaks (signalling stations). Each mayak consists of three men; one of them always remains mounted, while the other two rest. They go separately to water, to get grass, &c. At night the camp should be surrounded with a chain of sentries, and the detachment should be on the *qui vive*, as the robbers often make a dash at the camp, and, taking advantage of the commotion which ensues, endeavour to carry off the camels and horses, or to seize anything they can. In former times, the detached Cossack posts, pickets, and small forts along the Siberian line, protected themselves by throwing out sentries on commanding eminences, and at night by patrols; but owing to the small number of men, and the frequent alarms, the outpost service was so fatiguing, that the Cossacks had recourse to the use of dogs. These dogs were exceedingly watchful, and, at the smallest noise, barked and roused the Cossacks. This custom was probably brought from the Caucasus—in fact, from the shores of the Black Sea, where the employment of dogs was in general use, and

where these animals were regularly rationed and trained.

"The amount of train in a steppe campaign depends on the quantity of provisions and other requisities which have to be carried by the expeditionary force. The following are the chief articles to be carried: food, forage, horse equipment, officers' and soldiers' baggage, medicines and hospital stores, felt tents, and camp equipage. The proportion of this equipage, for a company of 170 men, is as follows:—Six cast-iron boilers with lids, two white-metal dram-cups, seven water-vessels, seven pounds of pepper, four pounds and a-half of laurel-leaves, 100 pounds of leaf tobacco, nine bottles essence of vinegar, 100 pounds of onions, ten pounds of garlic, ten pounds of horseradish, ten pounds of soap, 200 pounds of salt, three wooden troughs, five scythes, 120 mats, 300 fathoms rope, three hatchets, three spades, three picks, seven shovels, two white-metal mugs, one eight-gallon cask, three wooden shovels, one net, one iron pail, and 170 wooden tea-cups. The weight of this is from 1,200 to 1,600 pounds. Sometimes we have had to carry with us such things as wood field forges, bridging material, portable wells, guns on pack-animals; and finally, a number of spare horses or camels, in case of forming sick convoys, flying detachments, or for carrying convalescents, &c. From this list of necessaries, it is plain that a train of a steppe detachment must be very numerous. In European warfare, one cart ordinarily suffices for forty or fifty men; in steppe campaign it is otherwise; every two or three men must have an animal, and sometimes more. If we suppose, for example, a Cossack sotnia (150 men) taking the field with a month's supplies, then, according to calculation, it will require about eighty camels, without counting officers' baggage, carts for the transport of military stores, the sick, &c. This is the reason that military detachments, marching in the steppe, are nothing more than an escort to their own numerous trains. Napoleon's campaign in Egypt, where the transport organised by him was on so reduced a scale, that everything could be placed within a small infantry square, cannot serve us as a precedent, because the French were able to transport their food and other stores by the Nile. The same must be remarked respecting the later expeditions in Algeria, where the French had seldom to proceed more than two or three marches from their store depôts; but even in this case, according to the observations of Marshal Bugeaud, there were often more than 1,000 different sorts of animals with a column consisting of 5,000 men under arms. In the steppes, the smallest train, as we know, was that at the time of the Khivan campaign of Prince Bekovitch Tcherkassky, when there was a camel to every two men. The greatest was in the winter of 1839, in General Perovsky's expedition, when every man had two camels, and every two men approximately had a three-horse cart. The English train in the East Indies and in Afghanistan was still more numerous. Suffice it to say, that, according to the returns, the train of each battalion of infantry is fixed, in time of peace, at 1,200 mules, and 600 mule-drivers. In the field, these numbers are still further increased. The why such vast crowds of servants and immense trains follow in the wake of a detachment, where every elephant, every horse, every camel, and every bullock has his attendant, is partly due to the climate, so baneful for Europeans, and still more to the Oriental habits, which effeminate the troops. Even the common soldiers had their servants; and thus, in the words of an Englishman, the military camp was turned into a motley show. Similar license led to pernicious consequences for the English during their second expedition to Afghanistan in the winter of 1841, when the detachment of 4,000 men, under General Elphinstone, was forced to retreat; the train, following in rear, numbered 12,000 men. This unarmed, dissolute, and most demoralised mob quickly fell into complete disorder, enabling Afghans to surround the English detachment and destroy it, so that, of the 16,000 or 17,000 men, only one Englishman—thanks to the rapidity of his horse—succeeded in reaching the fortress of Jelalabad. Consequently, in the Abyssinian campaign in 1867, the English deemed it necessary to limit the baggage of each officer to eighty pounds, and that of each soldier to twenty pounds, including bedding. The result was to reduce the ordinary number of mules per battalion from 1,200 to 187, and 100 drivers. But with all, the train of the expeditionary force numbered 20,000 various animals. For carrying the baggage in steppe campaigns, we use pack-animals, two-horse or one-horse carts, and lastly, bullock transport. The baggage is so arranged, that each pair-horse or pair-bullock cart has not more than 1,400 pounds; each one-horse, 700 pounds; each camel-load, 680 pounds. The quantity of carts or camels, and, consequently, the size of the train, is calculated for each unit. Assuming the company of infantry at 200 men, inclusive of servants, non-combatants and officers, it requires, for one month, 12,480 pounds of biscuit (net weight), 2,080 pounds of groats (net) in lieu of five-sixths of the monthly allowance of spirits, sixty pounds of tea, and 180 pounds of sugar; five gallons and a-half of spirits, weighing eighty pounds; oats for the draught-horses, 600 pounds; fifteen kibitkas, being ten per company, two for sick, three for officers, each weighing 260 pounds, equal to 3,900 pounds; felts for bedding (ten pounds to twelve pounds), camp equipage, and anti-scorbutic stores, 1,200 pounds to 2,000 pounds; men's kits at sixty pounds, 12,000 pounds; ammunition, 2,000 pounds; in all, about sixteen tons. If this amount of baggage be placed in one-horse carts, 1,000 pounds in each, thirty-six carts will be required. Of this number, for food alone (six tons and a-half), fifteen carts; and as the detachments are never sent for less than two months, fifty carts will be required. To this number we must add two or three additional carts for the apothecaries' medicines and sick on the march; in all, say fifty-six carts. For this load there ought to be sixty-five camels (each at 560 pounds), allowing one spare camel for every seven or ten camels. The sotnias of Cossacks have no special carts for their baggage, but carry it with the forage. The number of carts which they require is much greater than for a company. For a Cossack sotnia, consisting of 145 men and three officers, 148 riding and fourteen pack-horses, much more transport is required than for a company. The food for the men, and barley or oats (eight quarts and a-half daily) for the horses, amount in two months to 120,000 pounds without the sacks. The other baggage is not great, ten or eleven kibitkas, seven for the Cossacks, three for officers, and one for sick, equal to 2,600 pounds, and two or three carts for the apothecary, medicine and sick. On this computation, the number of carts necessary for a sotnia for two months, including sacks and coverings, will amount to 130 or 135. Of camels, for same period, leaving five carts, there would be required about 200 (each carrying 640 pounds). If hay has to be carried, a considerable addition must be made to the transport."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE DEBATABLE GROUND IN CENTRAL ASIA.

AN examination of the map will show that the basin containing the Caspian Sea, Lake Aral, and Lake Balkash, presents some very remarkable features. A high rugged mass of mountains dips down precipitously into the Caspian in the west and south—is suddenly cut off as it were by that shallow inland sea, which receives the waters of the Volga and the Ural. This mountain range, the Caucasus sweeping toward the southern shores of the sea, stretches almost due east till it becomes merged in the Hindu Kush and the plateau of Pamir, which forms the water-shed between the Amou-Daria and the Nuclus in the south, and the Syr-Daria in the north. Both these rivers, the Amou-Daria and the Syr-Daria, flow into Lake Aral, which, like its sister-sea, has no outlet north of Lake Aral: the ground, in a hydrographical sense, seems to be in a state of the greatest indecision. The rivers there scarcely know where to flow to. They start from opposite directions, and flow on till they meet either straight opposite to each other, or at right angles, and their waters mingling, form lakes of larger or smaller dimensions, morasses and swamps, or, tired of seeking a career, abandon themselves to the inevitable, and terminate an inglorious existence in the sands of the desert; so that, except for the flow, it would be difficult to tell, from the size of either, which was the source or which was the end. This state of things continues up to the 50th

degree of latitude, where arise the low hills north of Lake Balkash, which are the homes of the Great Horde of Kirghiz and the Middle Horde, and separate the Caspian and Aral systems of rivers from those which flow into the Polar Seas. In this vast basin —at some remote period, most probably, a vast sea—the chief rivers are the Amou-Daria, the Syr-Daria, the Tchuy, and the Sary-Su. Of these, the Amou-Daria is the most important. It rises in Lake Victoria, on the plateau of Pamir, about fifty miles from the frontier of India, and flows westwards for about 200 miles, through the valleys of Wokhan, till it sweeps, with a gradual curve, north-westwards for about 250 miles, skirting Badakshan. In this portion of its mountainous course it is joined by several tributaries descending from the Pamir and the southern slopes of the Karalas mountains which bound the Narafshan valley on the south, and receiving considerable drainage on both sides, still flows westward for a distance of some 300 miles, after which it turns more and more to the north, and enters Lake Aral about 1,500 miles from its source in Lake Victoria. A country is often spoken of as being watered by a river, but usually the expression is not very accurate, rivers chiefly carrying down the superfluous waters and drainage to the sea. But in the almost rainless regions lying to the east of the Caspian, we find that they are rendered habitable and fertile solely by the employment of the waters of the Amou-Daria, and then the force of the current expression becomes very appropriate. The country on either side of the river has generally been described as a desert; but there are many reasons for believing that, in ancient times, it was the home of early Aryan peoples, and in as flourishing a condition as that of the oasis of Khiva at the present day. The explanation of this phenomenon is, that changes in the main course of the river crossing the desert lying between the Hindu Kush and Caspian, have been brought about by the diversion of water for the fertilisation of the country upon its banks, and go far to show that the first change in the course of the Oxus was due to similar causes that were called into action in ancient times. And, as will be seen, the proofs of this are actually to be found in that very sterility which has characterised these localities during the past twenty-three centuries.

The Amou-Daria, in the last 300 miles of its course, is employed in fertilising the oasis of Khiva, by means of a number of large canals diverting the waters over the surface of the land. The cultivating season begins in early spring, when the snows and glaciers round the higher sources of the river and its affluents commence to melt and swell the volume of water flowing in the channel. This flood increases in a variable manner to a maximum, which, in 1874, was attained at Khodjeili on August 3rd; and it may therefore be inferred that the epoch of greatest summer heat on the Pamir plateau, occurred some ten days previously. On the above day of extreme flood, the discharge of the Amou amounted approximately to 143,000 cubic feet per second, a quantity which is almost twenty times as large as the flood volume of the river Thames at Staines. The lowest level subsequently reached by the Amou was on March 22nd, 1875, when the volume was approximately 35,000 cubic feet per second. As far as could be judged, the year 1874 was one of average discharge. While Egypt owes her fertility to the waters of the Nile, the very existence of the khanate of Khiva depends upon the floods of the Amou-Daria. It is, however, to be remarked, that the fertilising principle which is contained in the waters of the Nile, and which is due to vegetable matter carried down from its upper courses, is absent in those of the Amou. The river, in fact, brings down nothing but finely triturated sand, the *débris* of that extensive destruction which Wood has described as caused by frost on the steep flanks of the mountains of the Upper Oxus. It may consequently be inferred that the fertility of the Khivan oasis is due to the stimulation by water of the chemical properties of the clay, which chiefly forms the great Khwarezni desert.

Of the whole volume of water passing down the Amou in the cultivating season, about one-half is diverted by the irrigation canals watering the territory of Khiva, leaving the other half to flow down into Lake Aral, from which it is lost in evaporation. Nearly all these canals are situated on the left bank, from which the country slopes downwards, in a westerly direction, to the valley that follows the foot of the Ust-Urt plateau, and formerly received the southerly overflow of Lake Aral by the head of the Abougir Gulf.

As it is impossible to foresee whether the annual flood of the Amou will be a high or a

low, or merely an ordinary one, and as a certain minimum quantity of water is required for the cultivation of the crops, without which, the Khivan population, isolated by surrounding deserts, would infalliby starve, the beds of the irrigation canals at their heads must be adjusted on such a level as will ensure the necessary quantity of water entering them, even in a year of lowest flood. It consequently results, that in all other years, the volume of water diverted by the canals for the irrigation of the oasis is larger than what is actually required; and this surplus, which would be as great an evil as a deficiency of water, must be got rid of as speedily as possible, in order to save the growing crops from destruction.

From what has been said of the general slope of the country towards the west, it will be seen that there is every facility for the cultivated tract being inundated by the Amou, and escape-channels are therefore dug to carry off surplus water into all adjacent low lands, and thus a number of swamps and lakes are formed over the surface of the country. The canals are also lined with protecting embankments, and the whole energies of the agricultural population, who live in homesteads scattered along the various watercourses, are devoted to the repair and maintenance of the works which guarantee the safety of the irrigated and cultivated tracts from inundation. The entire mode of life of the people may, indeed, be said to be influenced by the floods, or want thereof, of the Amou-Daria; for at the end of the cultivating season, and at the approach of winter, after the crops have been reaped and garnered, and when the volume of water flowing in the river is greatly diminished, dams are built across the heads of the canals to prevent the further entry of water. After having in this manner been run dry, the earthy matter, amounting to a depth of more than two feet, which has been deposited during the year by the streams flowing in the canals, is excavated from their beds by a levy of the population. Through these precautionary measures the dimensions of the irrigation canals are restored, and the entry is ensured of that minimum volume of water which is required at the advent of the next year's flood for the cultivation of the oasis.

The enormous mass of earthy matter which the Amou carries down in its descent from the high plateaux of Central Asia, would, in a state of natural flow, have been conveyed to a permanent outlet; but since the transporting power possessed by the river is diminished by its division into irrigation canals, a large portion is deposited in the several canals, which divert one-half of the waters, as well as in the main channel, which carries the other half to an outlet. It has been said that the canals are cleaned out yearly, and are thus freed from these deposits; but those in the lower portion of the river are, year after year, continually added to; and as this increase of earthy matter takes place, and the main channel is gradually choked, a tendency must also be gradually and continually growing for more and more water to enter the irrigation canals. The cultivators have to combat the results of this evil, by which their fields would be inundated, by extending the courses of the canals year after year, and getting rid of the water by a large number of suitable escapes; and since opportunities for effecting this would occur in greater numbers along some one particular canal, this one would offer greater facilities for the entry of water from the Amou, and would become the chief channel by which the increased flow from the river would eventually declare itself. Thus this channel would be continually enlarged, until its dimensions first gradually reached, and then surpassed, those of the main course of the river, and the day arrived when the whole stream would inevitably change its flow into the enlarged canal, which would then become the new lower course of the Amou. The country watered by the canals which left the river in its old course below the enlarged one, would, consequently, be deprived of the water necessary for its fertilisation; and the population so affected would have to change their habitations to some more suitable ground along the new course.

This is quite a sufficient explanation of the changes which the course of the Oxus has undergone since time immemorial; and its application to the other rivers of Western Turkistan, affords a key to the disappearance of much water which formerly entered the basin of Lake Aral, and caused its junction to overflow with the Caspian towards the Kara Bugas Gulf, or through the series of lakes still existing in the same sands. The clay soil of Khiva, more particularly in the southern parts, produces, under irrigation, cotton of an excellent quality. On

the other hand, the silk of Khiva is not so good as that either of Bokhara or of Khokand. The other crops grown on the Amou are wheat, maize, rice, lucerne, sesamum, hemp, and the madder plant, besides tobacco, tumbak, and the poppy, on the growth of which narcotics exceptionally high rates of land-tax are levied. Free culture is largely practised, and the irrigated tracts are covered with groves of mulberry and fruit orchards, as well as with poplars, elms, willows, planes, and other useful trees, which are planted along the banks of the canals and the network of minor watercourses.

The area of sandy desert which has thus been more or less reclaimed by the waters of the Amou, is about one and a-half million of acres, for the cultivation of which, probably one-half of the volume of water that is now diverted from the river in the flood season would suffice. The Khivan landlord receives one-fifth of the produce as rent; but where irrigating water has to be lifted, the proportion is reduced to one-seventh. Of the whole oasis, perhaps one-quarter pays a land-tax of about 1*s.* an acre to the khan, the remainder being the property of religious or charitable corporations, or otherwise, free from charges. In addition to this source of income, an *ad valorem* duty of 2½ per cent. is levied on all imports, and the tributary Turcomans are supposed to pay 8*d.* yearly for each camel and bullock, and 4*d.* for each sheep they possess. The receipts from this tax must have been precarious previous to 1874, when the khan's authority was scarcely recognised by the Turcomans; but the presence of the Russian battalions in the Amou-Daria territory now probably acts as a pressure on these tribes, and allows of the indemnity being collected which was levied on Khiva at the close of the campaign of 1873.

The country's wealth has never recovered the blows it received at the hands of the plundering hordes of Djengiz Khan and of Timour. At present, the usual revenue of the khan is stated to amount to about £30,000 a-year, a sum far short of that in the olden days, when, escorted by 5,000 horse, he went on his annual hawking tour, and collected tribute from the south-east coast of the Caspian to the courses of the Lower Syr, and from the environs of Balkh to the Emba steppe, on the north of the Ust-Urt plateau. Besides such more or less legitimate sources of revenue to the Khan of Khiva, belonged, by right, a share of the booty taken in the yearly *alamans*, or plundering and slaving expeditions, formerly made upon Persia and the Kirghiz *aouls* north of the Syr-Daria, and on the country watered by the Tchuy, the Sary-Su, and the Talass.

The population is estimated at 300,000 souls, of which two-thirds consist of Uzbeks and of Jajiks, who are the descendants of the ancient population of the country. Liberated Persian and other slaves make up another 50,000; while the remainder is composed of semi-sedentary Turcomans, who occupy cultivated lands in the khanate, or who wander about its western limits.

As for the 300,000 or 400,000 Turcomans who occupy the Khwarezmian deserts up to the Persian and Afghan frontiers, it is evident that there is not only the land, but also the water available which could render that land fertile, and afford these nomads the means of becoming a sedentary population. At the present moment, Russia is probably spending as much money in military establishments for overawing the wandering tribes, and for preventing their taking to their former pursuits of man-stealing, as would suffice to found well-organised settlements of Turcomans in the Khwarezmian wildernesses. In all history, what these sterile regions have denied to their wandering populations, has been taken by force from adjacent and fertile countries; but, if humanity and civilisation be not empty words, Russia would prefer to reclaim these deserts, rather than seek for fresh acquisitions.

Just above where the Kuwan-jerma arm leaves the Amou-Daria, is situated the small and mud-walled village of Nukus, on the right bank of the river, which is here crossed by a ferry, made much use of by the scattered population, converging upon Khodjeili, on market-days. A mile or two north of Nukus is the new Russian fort—a small square, enclosed with *pisé* walls, and flanked by two circular bastions at opposite angles. It contains barracks for its garrison of two companies of infantry, who will, with the armament of four field guns, be more than a match for any number of thousands of possible attacking Turcomans or Uzbeks.

The surrounding flat country is slightly cultivated, but is, for the most part, covered with a tamarisk and oleagnus jungle, which is thick and rather large along the dry course of Karanzak. Hereabouts, in 1873,

after the close of the Khivan campaign, a Russian camp was established on the banks of a stream flowing from the Amou into Kuwan-jerma, and the troops were employed in the construction of the fort. This military post forms a link between the base of Lake Aral and the advanced position of Petro-Alexandrovsk, which is situated some 200 miles further up the river on the same bank.

Petro-Alexandrovsk is the chief Russian post in the Amou-Daria district; and its garrison of some 2,000 men is lodged in a large fortified garden, which was the property of a Khivan magnate. It is two or three miles from the right bank of the Amou, in about the same latitude as Khiva, from which it is about thirty miles eastward. A small town, of the usual Central Asian steppe-pattern, is springing up at a little distance from the encircling wall and parapet of the garden, which has been won by irrigation from the adjacent desert. The verdure and foliage, as well as the varied life of the place, form a pleasing contrast to the sterility and desolation of the sands which lie at its very postern gates.

Notwithstanding their constant drill and rifle practice, the Russian officers on the Amou would find life dreary were it not for the occasional brush with the Turcoman tribes, which promises to become a periodical institution. Cut off as they are by eight days' post from Cazalinsk, which, in its turn, is separated by three weeks' post from Moscow, the Europeans in this part of Turkestan are placed in a disadvantageous position as regards a regular supply of European literature and news. Except a little tiger-hunting or pheasant and snipe-shooting, there are no means of recreation; and such an isolated position, besides tending to a considerable laxity of morals, is in itself an incentive to that military restlessness and yearning for decorations, which is taken as a sign of the aggressive policy of Russia in Central Asia.

Though the hospitality met with in Russia by a stranger is proverbial, the great cities of most countries are not very different from one another in this respect. It is in the standing camps of Turkestan, or still more, perhaps, in the desert bivouacs, that the geniality of the Russian officers impresses one as being not the least of their military virtues. The anniversary *fête* of a regiment is a good opportunity for observing this quality; and churlish indeed must that guest be who is inaccessible to the kindly, if somewhat boisterous, attentions of which he is the object.

The boundary of the territory of the Russians on the Amou is the main course of the river, from Taldyk mouth in Aral to Meshekli on the new Bokharian frontier, a distance of about 200 miles above Khodjeili. At the southern end of this line the eastern desert extends up to the low hills which skirt the river for a distance of thirty miles downwards; but in the next eighty miles below, a strip of country, about five miles in breadth, has been reclaimed by irrigation from the surrounding sands on the right bank. Excepting the half-drowned land of the Karakalpaks, this area of, perhaps 400 square miles, is the only productive part of the Russian possessions. Though it has been stated at a higher figure, the population of the Amou-Daria district, including Karakalpaks, Kirghiz, Uzbeks, and Tajiks, does not amount to more than 60,000 souls.

The revenue collected in 1874, the first year of the Russian occupation, amounted, as far as can be ascertained, to some 12,000 roubles (say £1,850), a sum which was about one-eighth of the expenditure. The assessment of the land has been reduced to less than that demanded in Khiva, with the view of attracting an influx of settlers; though it is doubtful whether the physical features of the ground will allow of any appreciable addition to the irrigated area on the Russian side of the stream. It is, however, evident that the diversion of water for the cultivation of the desert, and the consequent relief of the lands along the Lower Amou from inundation, would at least double the revenue, and enable the Russians to save large sums in their expenditure for raw cotton, for which they pay over £1,600,000 annually. The cultivation of cotton especially would be of benefit in attracting commerce and increasing the trade, which is even now carried on to a considerable extent with Indian teas, which fetch as much as four shillings per pound on the Amou. Trade would also receive a considerable impetus could means be devised to render the Amou navigable, whether by a system of locks or "regulation," which would enable the steamers to stem the current at less expense than at a cost of about £2 5*s.* a mile for firing, which was the sum paid for the fuel used on board the *Samarcand* and *Peroffski*. But even as it

is, a considerable traffic—taking the thin population into account—is conducted along the Amou and Syr-Daria by means of caïques and barges, which are towed laboriously up the river and float down to the lake, after the fashion of the barges on the Thames, or the rafts upon the Rhine. The absence of coal and timber adapted for fuel, however, will, for some time to come, prove a great obstacle to the development of trade in these regions; though, at the same time, there appears to be reason to believe that naphtha and petroleum exist in the neighbourhood of the rivers, which might be used instead of wood and coal, or in conjunction with them.

Meanwhile, however, the navigation of the river is tedious and costly in the extreme. The steamers are always bumping on the ever-shifting shoals, and not a day passes but that some more or less extensive repairs have to be made.

The Amou enters the lake by three chief arms, the Taldyk, the Ukun-Daria, and the Yeni-Su. Each of these arms has its delta; but practically the delta commences some eighty miles south of the lake, near Khodjeili, though the ground lying between the three branches is not a delta proper, inasmuch as it does not consist of soil carried down by the river, but has simply been cut through by the river, which has washed its tortuous course away through the soft clay and swamps. The banks are lined with dense rushes, beyond which appear fine rich pastures, whereon browse the cattle and herds of the Karakalpaks—a tribe some 40,000 to 50,000 strong, and which are still considerably astonished at the sight of a steamer, some of them plunging into the river and swimming after the snorting monster, whilst the others scamper away till lost to sight. The first place after entering the central arm—the Ukun-Daria—is Ak-Kala, or the White Castle, with crenelated mud walls, 300 feet square, with four circular towers; the walls being about 20 feet high. Here the Khivans attacked the *Samarcand* in 1873; but were soon forced to evacuate the fort, which with the adjacent village is now one mass of uninhabited ruins. Almost in an equally ruined condition is the town of Kungrad, with its population dwindled down from 6,000 to barely 2,000, in consequence of the war with the Russians. The place has been described by Vámbéry and others as one of the few towns where the women of Central Asia can boast of decidedly good looks and of correspondingly loose morals, though the presence of a Russian army there may have possibly conduced far more to the latter than the former has done. According to Major Wood, the propensities of the Russian officers and men thus far away from the voice of public opinion, are of such a nature that he was obliged to write his account of them in Latin. Close to Kungrad the river cuts through a bed of soft sandstone, in which masses of oyster-shells and sharks' teeth are conglomerated together with iron oxides, of which all along the lower course of the river there are numerous deposits. On the hills around the burying-places have been established, in order to prevent the remains from being washed out of their graves by the inundations. It is at Kungrad that the characteristic scenes of life in the oases of Central Asia are seen to their best advantage. The water is raised by Persian wheels worked by horse-power, to irrigate the surrounding fields of rice, melons, cereals, sesamum, which stud the green pasturage around, with its patches of jungle, &c., dense growth of tamarisk, poplar, elm, and willow swarming with bird-life, especially pheasants, gazelles, and hares by the herd.

On the eastern arm of the Amou there is no town; but between the Ukun-Daria and the Yeni-Su there is the Kigailee canal, on which the town of Ainbye is situated, rejoicing in a bazaar, which, poor as it is in comparison with those of larger towns, suffices for the wants of the inhabitants, and proves a great attraction to them when they come to exchange their produce for the manufactures of the far-west and the far-east. Round about, stretching on either side of the canal, lies the fort-like farm-houses embowered in orchards in quadrangles of 250 to 300 feet square, formed by smooth thick mud-walls some 15 to 20 feet high, with circular buttresses at the corners like towers; the interior divided off into courts containing the rooms, offices, and stables. The entrance is usually in the western wall, and is formed by heavy folding gates, bound with iron, and flanked and surmounted by loopholes to admit of musketry-fire being poured against marauders attacking the homestead. Nothing is more characteristic of the insecurity of life and property than these farms, all of which, unless within a town (which is usually also walled), are built in the above

fashion, recalling vividly to mind the granges and castles of mediæval times. And even now, as then, may be found in some of these habitations old suits or portions of scale and chain armour, mementoes of the days of the Crusaders and the fights of the Moslems against the Mongol tribes. The savagery of those days continued sporadically down to comparatively recent times. It was on the banks of the Oguz channel, joining the Taldyk and the Ukun-Daria, that Prince Bekovitch, an officer of the imperial guard, met with his death. He had been sent by Peter the Great to the Khan of Khiva with presents, in order to induce him to conclude treaties of commerce with Russia; but the khan, having got all the presents intended for him, wanted more, and on Bekovitch refusing, had him flayed alive and then murdered, together with his two brothers.

But the life of the inhabitants of these regions is dreary, rough, and rude enough to crush most of the higher sentiments in the struggle for existence. The lakes and channels are literally walled in with ramparts of gigantic reeds, which might almost be called trees, and which afford the chief fuel of the Karakalpak fishermen, who are almost as nomadic as their cattle-breeding fellow-men further off in the deserts, and take up their abode for a time on the floating and half-floating islands of *arundo* and *tipho*. Here they catch the fish which swarm in these waters, especially in the cave-like hollows formed by ancient mud volcanoes, in which the river eddies and foams with irresistible force, and over which hover the winged fishers, the gulls and sea-eagles, who dispute their prey with the Karakalpaks, or Black Hats, a tribe of Mongol Turks, numbering, as has already been said, about 50,000 souls, and who reach up the Lower Amou as far as Khodjeili. It is the poorest tribe of all in these regions, having had much to suffer from their enemies, the Uzbeks and Khivese, who inundated their pasturages by blocking up the mouths of the canals, whilst what their human enemies left them was periodically eaten up by the locusts, which came down in dense swarms of enormous extent. One of these clouds was estimated at fifteen miles long, two miles broad, and half a mile deep, so that, allowing only two locusts to every cubic yard, there were no less than 38,000,000,000 of them. In addition to these insects, which eat up the produce of the Karakalpaks, must be mentioned the mosquitoes, which almost eat him up himself. According to all accounts, the Amou mosquito is the most voracious and tormenting of his race; so much so, in fact, that the Russian soldiers, who are pretty well used to all varieties of entomological companions, are furnished with mosquito curtains; but, like the sailors on the Rangoon, they should jump into the river, and prefer drowning to being stung to death.

Yet in spite of all these drawbacks, or perhaps in consequence of them, the Karakalpak preserves his character of independence and pride. Major Wood relates how, whilst sketching the *aoul*, or farm-house of one of the tribe, he offered a twenty-copeck piece to a boy standing by with a hawk upon his naked shoulder. The coin was refused with a flashing eye, Major Wood being unable to decide which was the more untameable of the two, the hawk or the boy. As may be imagined, the Karakalpaks are very superstitious. They have an especial horror of leprosy; and if any of their number is seized with the disease, he or she is expelled from the *aoul*, and turned out into the jungle to die. On the whole they live well. They have an abundance of mutton, much game, sturgeon and other fish, and an unlimited amount of melons and other fruits; whilst *koumiss* (fermented mare's milk) exhilarates them into horrible song in the midst of their swamps, like whiskey the Irishman in the midst of his bogs.

At Khodjeili the Amou proper commences. It is here about 1,500 feet broad; but between this point and Toyonboyin, where it rushes through a narrow passage in a dyke of chalk and limestone, which stretches across its course, it attains a breadth of as much as 10,000 feet, the diminution being due to the countless number of canals and channels which help it to irrigate the country around. Opposite Khodjeili lies the village of Nukus, near which commences the barren Bishtabye range of hills, on which, at the northern extremity, stands a mausoleum in the midst of a cemetery, by the side of the graves of which the stretchers are placed in the ground used to carry the corpses up and down. There are numbers of caves in the steep slopes of these hills, inhabited by owls of such large dimensions that they are capable of knocking a man down, as

they suddenly fly out of their haunts when they are disturbed.

Such are the general characteristics of the country through which the Russians are extending their frontiers towards those of India. But it must not be imagined that the picture thus drawn is in every way complete. There is still much to learn, and that much is not easy to learn, although many attempts have been made to penetrate into the interior and explore it.

It was not until nearly the end of the 15th century that a systematic attempt was made to develop trade between Russia and the Central Asian khanates. After this, Englishmen took up the project by sending over commercial agents, one of the principal ones being at that time Anthony Jenkinson. Later on, Captain Elton went to reconnoitre Lake Aral, intending to establish a naval flotilla there. Still later on we hear of an English merchant, Djaké (Jacky), busy in commercial transactions with the Kirghiz; and in 1745, Jonas Hanway, the so-called "Handsome Englishman," traded here before settling down in England. This shows plainly that Englishmen had not a little to do with spreading trade over Central Asia. There certainly was a slight kind of commercial relationship between Russia and the khanates; but not until after the Siberian conquest was there anything like *direct* communication between the two countries. The first proposition for the Kirghiz to become subject to Russian rule was made at the close of the 16th century; but this was not carried out until 1730, under the reign of the Empress Anne. Some few years after this a commercial caravan was sent from Russia to Tashkend, but was plundered by the Kirghiz of the "Middle Horde," two days before reaching the town; and after this, a Khivan caravan, returning from Russia, was plundered by the same tribe. These acts of brigandage continuing, of course made it impossible for the trade between Russia and the Central Asian khanates to lead to any satisfactory results.

Russia now had a difficult task before her—to put down brigandage in the Kirghiz steppes; for though, of course, the Kirghiz could be driven eastward, this would not have insured the safety of the caravans, and therefore not have furthered trade between the two countries. For this reason it was necessary for Russia to endeavour to entirely subject the Kirghiz under her rule, which she succeeded in doing, as is shown by the flight of the Volga Calmuks to their previous home in the west of China in 1770, whence they had been driven by the oppression of the Zungars. They settled on both banks of the Lower Volga (about the middle of the 17th century), where the czar granted them pasturage.

After the Chinese (1756) had destroyed the power of the Zungars, the small number of Calmuks which had remained in their country joined their compatriots in Russia, who had been domiciled there for more than a century. These new arrivals soon succeeded in stirring up, in the breasts of their countrymen, an unconquerable desire to return to their forsaken home and old nomadic life. Preparations for leaving their adopted country were accordingly made, the time fixed for departure depending upon the freezing of the Volga, as a great number of the Calmuks had their home on the right bank of the river. The river, however, this year (1769-'70) did not freeze; and this is the reason that about 100,000 Calmuks are, at the present time, still found in the government of Astrakhan. However, 150,000 of them started on their journey to China on the 5th January, 1770. As soon as the governor of Orenburg and the Siberian government found this out, they informed all the Kirghiz, telling them that the Calmuks were about to attack them. All the Kirghiz tribes consequently assembled, and, being helped by the Cossacks, succeeded in ultimately reducing the number of the fugitives to only 70,000 who reached their old country.

As before remarked, Russia's aim now was to keep all the Asiatic tribes within her reach in subjection, for she was beginning to fear the invasion of the Asiatic barbarians. She therefore peopled her frontiers as thickly as possible, intending the possible invaders to expend the greater part of their force upon these outlying populations. The principal tribes who had been settled here were the Calmuks, the Kirghiz, the Bashkirs, and the Nogai Tartars, all of which Russia held under her rule and complete domination by skilfully creating and keeping up mutual jealousy, even hatred amongst them, and altogether alienating one tribe from the other as much as possible. This she did in order to prevent the different tribes from uniting against her. The wisdom of this policy

became very apparent when, in 1741, all the tribes might have been roused to action against Russia in consequence of a marriage between two members of the chief tribes. This danger, however, and many similar ones, were prevented by the exercise of that quality the Russians excel in—the art of setting one tribe against the other on the faith of promises, which were rashly made, but never rashly kept; although, from time to time, the infuriated Turcomans and Kirghiz would rise and massacre their aggressors in periodical rebellions, called forth by the fanatical preaching of the *mollahs*. Sometimes the thin line of Cossack outposts was menaced back and front by hostile tribes, as was the case with the Bashkirs in the north and the Kirghiz in the south. Thus, when the Bashkirs rebelled, the governor of Orenburg issued a proclamation to the Kirghiz, stating that though nothing could be said against the religious objects of the Bashkirs, still, if they succeeded in gaining their independence, they would probably follow it up by subjugating the Kirghiz themselves. He therefore, in order to annihilate the tribe, made over to the Kirghiz, in advance, all the women and children they might be able to capture, and thus secured the sensual nomads to give them their assistance by falling upon the rebels. The Kirghiz at once set forth on their expedition, the result being that the Bashkirs were forced to submit after having suffered great losses, and some numbers of their wives and children carried off. Naturally, the Bashkirs vowed revenge; and as soon as they could collect a sufficient number of men, they burst across the frontier with the connivance of the Russians, and commenced a general massacre, and pillaged and fired till the Russian governor thought his object was thoroughly gained, and Bashkirs and Kirghiz embroiled for ever in a bitter feud.

This policy is so traditional, so well characterises the Russians of the present day in their dealings with the natives of Central Asia—it has been so closely followed out in regard to the jealousies sown between the Khans of Khiva and Bokhara, that an account of the conquest of the Buriats—a tribe inhabiting the regions round Lake Baikal and the banks of the Yenisei, Oka, and Angara—will be of interest.

They are first named, as far as it is known, in the Russian annals in 1612, when we read that the Siberian tribe of the Arini submitted to the Russians, and that a short time before, the same Arini had been attacked by the Buriats. They are next mentioned in 1622, when we are told that they appeared on the Yenisei with a body of 3,000 men; but they seem to have retired again. It was not till 1627 that they came into actual contact with the Russians. In that year Maxim Perfirief, with forty Cossacks, was sent along the river Tunguska, and reached the so-called Buriat waterfalls or rapids, made tributary the Tunguses on its banks, and then went overland to the settlements of the Buriats, who refused submission. He returned to Yeniseisk in 1628. The same year the Cossack sotnik or captain, Peter Beketof, with a party of Cossacks, built the fort or settlement of Kibenskoi, whence he navigated the Tunguska in canoes, passed the waterfalls, and took tribute from the Buriats on the Oka. He also carried off a number of Buriats as slaves, but some were returned. The Cossack explorers of Siberia had a good deal of the buccaneer about them, and their brave and dangerous journeys were made in search of plunder, furs, &c., which were easily forced from the weak tribes. It would seem that rumours had reached the Russians that there was a good deal of silver among the Buriats. This came to them from China by way of the Mongols; and it was this which apparently induced the Vaivode of Yeniseisk, Yakof Khripunof, to make an expedition into their country. He set out from Tobolsk in the spring of 1628, and a year later reached the mouth of the Ilim, a tributary of the Tunguska. Leaving a small body of Cossacks there in charge of some guns he had taken with him, and sending thirty others towards the Lena, he marched with the remainder to the Angara. He met with the Buriats on the Oka, where we are told he was victorious; but his victory bore no fruits, for he returned and almost immediately died. This expedition also carried off twenty-one Buriats as slaves, but they were sent home again. The Russians now attempted to approach the Buriats in a more diplomatic fashion, sent them back some prisoners they had captured, and sent two Cossacks to them as envoys; but they were not well received, and one of them was killed.

In 1631, the Russians built a fort near the mouth of the Oka, which was given the

name of Bratzkoi, from the Buriats, in whose country it was built. After the murder of the Cossack above-named, the Ataman Maxim Perfirief, with fifteen Cossacks, had made an expedition to the Buriats. Each of them was presented with a sable skin by the latter, in gratitude for the release of their friends above-named. This present was construed by the Russians into a payment of tribute; but the construction was resented by the Buriats, who also persuaded the Tunguses to cease paying yassak.

In 1635 the Buriats killed Dunaief and fifty-two Cossacks who formed the garrison of the Bratzkoi ostrog, and carried off their guns and ammunition. A force was now sent from Yeniseisk to punish them. They were speedily reduced, and the Russians extended their authority so much among them that, in 1689, the district subject to the Ostrogat Bratzkoi extended from the Wichoreika, a tributary of the Angara, as far as the Oka.

Meanwhile the Cossacks were also advancing on the side of the Lena. The Tunguses there were tributaries of the Buriats, and were forbidden by the latter to pay the Russians tribute. The sotnik Beketof accordingly set out to punish them. He had thirty men only with him, of whom he left ten at Ust Kut. With the rest he advanced to the river Kulenga, where the Buriat steppe commenced. This was in 1631. After a march of five days he came upon a body of 200 Buriats, who fled. The Cossacks having intrenched themselves, sent to demand that they should become Russian subjects. They promised to send them some furs in two days as a tribute. Two of their chiefs accordingly went with sixty followers. They were allowed to enter the stockade after depositing their bows and arrows outside, and they then offered five wretched summer sable-skins, and a rotten fur-skin, almost denuded of hair. The Russian commander was indignant, and saw that a trick was being played upon him; while the Buriats, who seem to have had no intention of becoming tributaries, pulled out the knives and daggers they had hidden in their clothes: but the Russians were prepared, and laid forty of them on the ground, and wounded many of the rest, while they only succeeded in killing three Tunguses (who were *protégés* of the Russians, among them being the Tungus cheif Lipka), and wounding one Cossack. Meanwhile the Buriats assembled outside to revenge their dead countrymen. Beketof thought it prudent to retire, and having mounted his men on Buriat horses, made a hasty retreat, riding in one march twenty-four hours together, and at length reached the mouth of the Tutur, where his allies the Tunguses lived, and where he determined to build an ostrog, or settlement.

A few years later, in 1640, Wasilei Witesef was sent at the head of the Cossacks from Kimsk, along the Lena. He brought many of the Tunguses into subjection, and then went to the Buriats at the mouth of the Onga, a tributary of the Lena, from whom he demanded tribute. Some excused themselves on the ground that they had already to pay tribute to the Mongols on the other side of Lake Baikal, while others asked time for consultation with their friends. Wasilei having returned to Kimsk, it was determined to prosecute a campaign against the Buriats. One hundred men, under his command, were accordingly sent in the early spring of 1641. They marched on mud-shoes, and were guided by the Tunguses, and so surprised the Buriats, that in three weeks they were made to submit. Their chief, Chepchugai, kept up the struggle, however, and we are told he defended his post bravely, and wounded many of the Russians with the arrows he shot from it. He was only subdued when his tent was set on fire by the Russians, and he had perished in it. Having recovered from their panic, the Buriats afterwards recommenced the struggle; and we are told that Kurshum, Chepchuga's brother, collected a body of 2,000 of them, and made an attack, in the hope of releasing his countrymen who had been taken prisoners, among whom his son Cheidakum was the most distinguished. A bloody struggle ensued, which lasted from dawn till nightfall, in which the Buriats were at length beaten off, although not until the Russians had suffered severely. This struggle seems to have cowed the Buriats; and the Russians having offered to release their prisoners, who were chiefly women, if they would go to them and do homage, and agree to pay tribute, Kurshum, who was now their head chief, went to their camp. The prisoners were set free, except Cheidakum, Kurshum's son, whom the Russians wished to retain as a hostage, and whose freedom was only purchased by his father agreeing to become a

hostage in his place. Later in the year an ostrog was built on the Lena to control these Buriats. This was called Werkholensk. In 1644, a sub-chief of Cossacks, named Kurbat Iwanof, who commanded at Werkholensk, made an apparently unprovoked attack on the Buriats in the steppes of the Angara, and returned with much booty. This caused an alliance between the Angara Buriats and those of the Lena, who determined upon a joint expedition against Werkholensk. They accordingly carried off the Russian cattle there, and beleaguered the fort. They were 2,000 strong; were all mounted, armed with bows and arrows, with swords and lances, and many of them wore coats of mail; but they did not take the fort, although its garrison was only fifty strong: nor did they pay tribute that year; and they so frightened the Tunguses, that they also stayed away with their yassak. The following year, Alexei Bedaref, with 130 Cossacks, was sent from Ilimsk to relieve the fort. On the way he defeated a body of 300 Buriats; and when he came near Werkholensk the besiegers withdrew. He turned aside to attack one of the Buriat camps, which he surprised in the absence of the warriors, and took some prisoners. He then went on to Werkholensk, where he was followed by the Buriats. They prayed him to release their people, which he did, on condition that they became tributary. The following year, *i.e.*, in 1646, he marched against another of their tribes, but it showed a bold front. Notwithstanding this, the Russians overcame them, and also succeeded in subduing a third tribe. But meanwhile the Buriats began to collect together in large numbers from the neighbourhood round, and Bedaref deemed it prudent to retire to Werkholensk, which he had some difficulty in reaching. The same year Bedaref had a campaign with the Buriats beyond the Angara. In this he was at first successful; but as he returned, his retreat was cut off by 2,000 of the enemy, and he lost many of his men in a struggle with them. The Buriats, however, lost heart in turn, and retired, and he reached Werkholensk in safety. Emboldened by their success, they seem, in 1648, to have beleaguered Werkholensk, Ust Kut, and even Ilimsk; but the Russian fire-arms and their vigorous policy was an overmatch for the poorly-armed Buriats, and in the campaign which followed they lost many horses, cattle, and other booty. A portion of it was carried off by the Buriats in a subsequent engagement, but the Russians managed to secure their prisoners. In the following year the campaign was urged vigorously against them in the district of the Lena; their tribes were subdued one after another, their confederacy was broken up, and many of them fled beyond the Baikal to their countrymen the Mongols; but they were no better off there, and returned again. At length, after a devastating and bloody struggle, which lasted over many years, they were, about 1655, cowed and subjected. And after this the Lena Buriats may be looked upon as Russian subjects, and as following the fortunes of the Russians in Siberia. Let us now turn once more to their brethren on the Angara and its tributaries.

In 1647, the Buriats on the Uda, who were apparently threatened by Mongols, sent an envoy to Krasnoyarsk to make a treaty of peace with the Russians. Their chief, who was called Ilanko, went shortly after in person with his son, and a small party, to ask that the Russians would build an ostrog in his country, partly to protect them against the Mongols, and also as a place where they might receive their tribute. This request was acceded to, and a small fort was built on the eastern bank of the Uda, which was called Udinskoi. Their fidelity was not very firm, for, on the disappearance of the Mongol danger, they seem to have fallen upon the Cossacks who were sent to them to collect tribute, and to have killed them. This was in 1649. In 1650, they were once more brought to submission by a Russian force commanded by Kirilla Banakof. In 1648, the post of Bratzkoi was removed from its old situation at the mouth of the Oka on to the other bank of the Angara. Its new site was a very fruitful one, and the ground was especially productive in grain, and returned tenfold of what was sown. This removal seems to have excited the jealousy of the Buriats in the neighbourhood, who rebelled, and in 1650 paid no yassak or tribute, and were only restored to obedience by the practised and skilful hand of Maxim Perfirief, the former governor of Bratzkoi, who had gained considerable influence there. After this, Bratzkoi was once more removed to its old site on the Oka. This was in 1654; and the removal was superintended by Dimitri Firsof, who was ordered to build

another outpost on the Angara. This second post was called Balaganskoi, and was situated about six versts above the outflow of the Unga, and opposite the island of Osinkoi. It was so named after a tribe of Buriats called Bologat, who lived on the rivers Unga and Ossa. Before the ostrog was built, the Bologats had been plundered by the Russians under the pretence of collecting tribute from them, and directly after it was completed, 1,700 of them became Russian subjects, and the Angara became a Russian river as far as the great sea of Baikal. They founded a colony at Balaganskoi, and proceeded to work the iron-mines in the neighbourhood, which had long been known to the inhabitants. The Bologats desired the Russians to send to their brethren on the rivers Biela, Kitoi, and Irkut, three feeders of the Angara which flow into it from the west, to reduce them also; but, as the sententious Fischer says, it is often easier to conquer than to retain. In 1658, the heavy hand of Ivan Pokhabof, the governor of Balaganskoi, caused an outbreak among the Bologats, who killed the Russians who were sent to them and fled. The Russians pursued them to the rivers Biela, Kitoi, and Irkut, but they fled southwards to the Mongols. So great was the migration that, in 1659, hardly any tribute was taken to Balaganskoi. The following year the Mongols carried off the few remaining Buriats that remained in this part of the country.

The Russians now came close to the sacred lake of the Buriats, the great Baikal Sea. The first Russian who navigated it was Kurbat Ivanof, who had marched from Yakutsk in 1643, with not more than seventy-five men. With these he made a landing on the isle of Olkhon, and defeated the Buriats who lived there, and who were 1,000 strong. In 1646, another Cossack, named Kolesnikof, set out from Yeniseisk and skirted the northern shores of the Baikal with a body of men, and went as far as the Upper Angara, which flows into the Baikal, and built an ostrog there, which he called Werkhanganskoi. This was in 1647. While wintering there, he heard that some Mongols, who encamped on Lake Verafna (between the rivers Barguzin and Selinga), were rich in silver. This excited his cupidity, as it did that of Khripannof, already mentioned. He accordingly sent four Cossacks with a chief of the Tunguses to explore. They proceeded along the river Barguzin as far as the Lake Verafna; and as they met with no Mongols they continued on as far as the Selinga. They there met with a powerful Mongol chief named Turukai-Tabun, who received them well, and gave them some gold and two silver bowls. He also told them that these precious metals were not found in his country, but that they were obtained from the Chinese. He also sent a body of Mongols to escort them back to the Barguzin. Kolesnikof now returned to Yeniseisk, and thence to Moscow. This was in 1647. Meanwhile another expedition had set out, in 1646, from Yeniseisk to explore the Baikal. This consisted of eighty-four men, and was commanded by Ivan Pokhabof. He made tributary the Buriats who lived on the river Ossa, and built a fort on an island opposite, where that river falls into the Angara. He also imposed a tribute on the Buriats who lived on the Irkut, and the following year set out for the southern shores of the Baikal. He attacked the Mongols who lived there, and took some of them prisoners. They turned out to be subjects of Turukai, who had behaved so well to the Russians the year before, and with whom were then staying four Cossacks, who had been sent to him by Kolesnikof. One of them was sent to ask for the release of the captured Mongols. Mutual explanations followed, and peace was once more restored. Pokhabof had heard, from the Buriats on the Angara, that they obtained their silver from a Mongol khan (*i.e.*, the Setzen Khan of the Khalkas, who has been previously described), who was father-in-law to Turukai, and lived not far from the Selinga. Pokhabof asked Turukai to supply him with some guides to his father-in-law's urga, or camp. Turukai, who suspected the object of his visit, and knew how hopeless it was to seek for silver in Mongolia, nevertheless distrusted the policy of admitting such powerful neighbours into the heart of his country. He therefore adopted the plan of conducting them by such a circuitous route, that it took them two months to traverse what ought to have been gone over in a fortnight. The Russians learned from the Setzen Khan, that any gold and silver he had, he obtained by trade with the Chinese. Pokhabof returned to Yeniseisk in 1648. On his return the inhabitants of Yeniseisk sent Galkin, with sixty Cossacks, to subject the tribes about

the Baikal. When he arrived on the Barguzin he built an ostrog, which became the nucleus of the Russian possessions beyond the great sea. It was given the name of Barguzinskoi. In 1650, an envoy from the Setzen Khan of the Khalkas, who had been to Moscow, was returning home with some Russians, when several of the latter were murdered by the Buriats on the Baikal, at a place called Pasolskoi Muis—*i.e.*, Cape of the Envoys—and a monastery was afterwards erected on the spot.

The Buriats on the Irkut were made tributary, as already described, by Pokhabof, in 1646. It was not, however, till 1661 that an ostrog was built on that river, which became the nucleus of the now famous city of Irkutsk.

Now, seeing how this policy has resulted in the acquisition by the Russians of all the land north of China to the ocean, the process may well be compared to the spring forward and the recoil backward upon itself of an enormous snake. The tide of invasion first rolled westwards, then it rolled backwards; and now it is irresistibly moving southwards to the gardens of Asia, till it will be checked by the Afghans and the British troops of India in the shock of war.

CHAPTER XXXV.

RUSSIA ON THE SYR-DARIA.

It will have become abundantly evident, from the last chapter, that the Amou-Daria region is scarcely of a nature, from an economic point of view, to have warranted its annexation by Russia, and that the motives dictating the continued advance of the Russians southwards and eastwards, have arisen from an intense desire to secure what, in former ages, was an eminently rich and fertile country, the wealth of which varied in proportion to the energies spent upon it, and according to the changes in the beds of the rivers, induced by the different systems of irrigation, which again depended on the greater or lesser power of the potentates ruling the territories along their courses. Turning the river into a new bed, used to enrich the one and ruin the other; whilst there seems to be but little doubt, that if a central administration could be established, the waters which now run to waste when they approach Lake Aral, would be sufficient to irrigate a very large portion of the deserts lying on either side of the Amou—the Khwarazin in the west, and the Kizil-Kum in the east.

As it is, however, it is only at the mouth of the two great rivers, the Amou and the Syr, and at their sources, that fertility obtains, and the remains of ancient civilisation and art, such as the manufacture of brocades and carpets, can be found in a high degree of perfection. The intermediate space is barren and inhospitable; here and there an oasis breaks the monotony of the scene, where the kibitkas and aouls of the Kirghiz and Turcomans show that the sterile soil has become capable of sustaining vegetable and animal life.

Now the Russians having occupied the deltas and lower courses of the Amou and Syr-Daria (which, after the steppes, sands, and deserts north of Aral, appeared to them like the entrance to Paradise), naturally wished to annihilate the intervening space of arid, saltish desert that interposes a rude barrier to the fertile plains and valleys along the sources of the Amou and the Syr, and nestling under the snow-capped ranges of the Hindu Kush and Thian Shan mountains. On the Amou, their rule extends over the khanate of Khiva up to the limits of the tract adopted for sedentary life, whether pastoral or agricultural. Putting these limits at Meshekli, a stretch of about 100 miles runs between the desert of Khwarazin, west, and the desert of Khalatta, east of the Amou. Here the western spurs of the Pamir plateau stretch out between the Amou and the Syr, and form the water-shed between the two rivers. Round the spurs of this plateau, which juts out into the deserts in the shape of a triangle, lies Bokhara at the apex; Balkh and Kunduz at the southern, and Khokand

at the northern angle. The possession of Bokhara would thus be a strategic as well as a commercial necessity for any power wishing to push forward to the Indian frontier. It is, therefore, not surprising that the Russians should have seized their opportunity, and having pushed forward along the Amou, set themselves fast in Khiva, and practically, in virtue of their treaty with the Ameer, in Bokhara itself.

But this movement along the Amou-Daria has been but a flank movement, so to speak, to clear the ground for the central advance southwards—*i.e.*, across the Pamir plateau, which alone separates them from India and Kashgar.

This central advance lay along the banks of the Syr-Daria, and resulted, as we have already shown, in the occupation of Tashkend, Chemkend, and the khanate of Khokand. In possession of Tashkend on the right of the Syr-Daria, and of Samarcand on the left, the Russians are able at any moment to close up the throat of the valley which leads into the fertile basin of Khokand. The same motives which impelled them to occupy and annex Tashkend also impelled them to annex Khokand. Their excuse for annexing Tashkend and Chemkend, as made for them by Prince Gortchakoff in the circular of 1864, to which we have already alluded,* applied also to their position north of the khanate, and led to its annexation. It was the richness of the khanate which attracted them; and as soon as they annexed this state, the whole of the Syr-Daria flowed in Russian territory. Thus, when properly regulated, and its waters prevented from running to waste, the Syr-Daria will become the chief artery of a country in which there is boundless hidden wealth, and only requires proper attention for it to rival the glories of its ancient history.

The Syr-Dyria, or Yaxartes, rises in Russian territory, and the northern valleys of the Thian Shan, south of Lake Issyk-kul, which again is about fifty miles south of Fort Vernoë, one of the fortified points situated in the inhospitable regions which the Russians were so eager to leave for the more genial climes in the south. Four hundred miles from its source it unites the khanate of Khokand, which it traverses for about 300 miles, and passing the old Russian frontier again near Khodjend, flows northwards for another 400 miles, after which it meanders off to the north-west for about 450 miles, till it falls into Lake Aral, pouring into it about half of the water it brings down from the mountains, the other half running to waste in the sands and marshes, or being used in the khanate and Turkes, tan for irrigation purposes. The want of proper regulation along the last 400 miles of its course, has rendered the Syr-Daria not only of no benefit to the country along its banks, but, on the contrary, has even made it a cause of destruction. The same considerations apply also to the rivers Tchuy and Sary-Su, which were formerly tributaries of the Syr, but are now lost in the lake they have formed in the marshes about sixty miles from the Syr, at Fort Perofsky. The same want of regulation, and the action of rival tribes and States, have also contributed towards the Syr's splitting up into various channels along its lower course, and converting the country around into vast swampy tracts, bearing nothing but reeds and rushes. Formerly, the Syr-Daria, instead of entering Lake Aral at the northern extremity, branched off at Fort Perofsky, and flowed south-west till it mingled a portion of its waters with those of the Amou. This was the case as recently as 1816, when the Kirghiz dammed up the head of this branch, which since then has remained but a dry bed. But in the 14th century this was the chief channel; and the historian Shum-Suddin Dimashki relates that no less than 12,000 canals were fed by the Syr—a sufficient proof of the industry and wealth that must have prevailed in those days. On this point Major Wood makes some very appropriate remarks. He says—

"Generally speaking, it may be said that the flow, or the cessation of flow, of the waters of the Syr-Daria, by its different branches, are under the control of artificial means, and that the intelligent application of a very moderate amount of labour would turn the river into any direction across the Kizil-Kum desert, short of one actually running up-hill. The operation is facilitated by the circumstance, that during more than one-half of the year, the volume of water flowing in the channel is, at least, from three to four times greater than that of the remainder of the year. At the epoch of minimum flow the Syr-Daria is therefore a shallow stream, with a low

* *Ante*, page 238.

velocity, and a canal can then be excavated in such a position as would ensure a larger body of water passing into it on the advent of the succeeding floods. The set of the river having thus been influenced, no long time would elapse before the whole volume of the stream would change its direction into the artificial course, and flow to a new outlet.

"The frequent dry beds of irrigation canals, the numbers of ruined fortresses of mausolea, and of tombs, which cover the country on the banks of the Syr-Daria, show that in former times the population was more numerous and more sedentary than at the present day. Such remains and antiquities as have been examined do not apparently belong to epochs more distant than those of the Arab and Mongol denominations. Some are Mohammedan, while others are Buddhistic; but relics of ancient Greek and Persian origin remain still to be disinterred from the sands of the great unexplored Kizil-Kum desert, where they are probably buried. From these it may be hoped that some day the historian and the archæologist will extract revelations of the deepest interest.

"Nor are the traces of ancient peoples, and of past principalities alone, perhaps, to be recovered from these all-devouring deserts; for should the studies of physical geographers resolve the problems which are involved in the changes in the course of the Syr, the disappearance of its historical affluents, and the present condition of the Tchuy, the Sary-Su, and the Talass, a ray of light may be thrown on the obscurer and earlier days of the human race. The chaos of dried-up river beds, of salt marshes, and of far-stretching sand-wastes may be found to be but an antitype of the catastrophe which overtook European civilisation in the 5th century, and of the destruction which swept over Roman society on the descent of Attila and his Huns. The Asiatic wastes remain unreclaimed, while the Europe of the Huns has been renewed and restored, and thus the wreck and ruin of nature, the dry bones of a more fecund earth, which strew the deserts of the Kizil-Kum, may perhaps be due to a want of brain-power, and to an incapacity for scientific observation, that rendered the Turanian hordes powerless to appropriate and continue the civilisation which was current among the Arigan races, whom they swept away. But, on the other hand, it may be that the desolation of these deserts is a relic of the infant human intellect, with the as yet uncomprehended phenomena of nature—of a struggle, which has indeed left ruin behind it, but in which were, nevertheless, gleaned the first rudiments of that knowledge which has produced the modern art of irrigation, and which may once more restore culture and productiveness to the wastes of Turkestan.

"In any case, we have here a wide field for the observation of that power which is exercised by man upon the earth, and which an eminent Italian geologist treats as a new physical force, wholly unknown to earlier geological epochs, and not unworthy to be compared, in its energy and universality, to the most appalling effects of the volcano and the earthquake upon the surface of terrestrial nature."

As a means of communication, the Syr-Daria, although navigable by steamers for a distance of over 700 miles from its mouth to Chinaz, still presents so many difficulties through its varying depth, the velocity of its current, and being ice-bound for three months in the year, that it is a question whether it would not be advisable to abandon all idea of rendering it more suitable for navigation, and employ it simply for irrigation. This is, however, a question which is far more likely to be determined by military rather than by industrial considerations. That this is the case now, appears from a report which has been made to the Russian War-Office, pointing out the disadvantages expected to arise from the opening of two canals in the khanate of Khokand, which will draw off a large body of water from the river, and render it still more difficult of navigation, whilst probably furnishing, at the same time, a pretext for further interference by Russia in the domestic affairs of the much-harassed tribes dwelling along its course. Regarding the naval establishment of the Russians on Lake Aral, and the navigation of the river, Major Wood gives some interesting information in his work on Lake Aral. Writing in 1876, he says—

"The Aral flotilla comprises some half-a-dozen paddle-wheel steamers, varying from 70 to 180 tons burden, and furnished with engines of from twenty to seventy horse-power; and, besides these vessels, there are a few steam-launches, and a dozen heavy transport barges for the accommodation of troops. At Cazalinsk there is a floating

iron caisson dock, in which repairs can be executed, under the supervision of an American engineer and his staff of workmen.

"Owing to the Syr being ice-bound for at least three months in the year, and to the high gales which prevail during autumn and winter, the Russian vessels are on service between May and October only. During these months the summer floods provide in general a sufficient depth of water for the navigation of the river, though the current at the same time is increased to such a degree, that more than three weeks are spent in ascending to Chinaz, a distance of about 700 miles from Cazalinsk. Even with the increasing yearly diminution in the volume and velocity of the river, a current of from four to five miles an hour is experienced during the flood season, and the vessels scarcely possess sufficient engine-power to permit of much way being made against the stream, especially when they have heavy transport barges in tow.

"The fuel used consists of the gnarled roots and stems of the shrubby tree, known as saksaoul (haloxylon ammodendron), which grows, though it can be scarcely said to flourish at the present day, on the steppes east of Aral. It is somewhat plentiful near Fort Perofsky, where it costs about 10*s.* a ton; at Cazalinsk it is 12*s.*, and on the Amou-Daria, where it is scarce, the value rises to 25*s.*, and even to 30*s.* a ton. Its heating properties are equal to one-half only of those of Tashkend coal, whose prime cost, with good management, would not be much in excess of that of saksaoul, and the use of the mineral fuel promised therefore to result in considerable economy. The promise, however, has remained unfulfilled; for the working of the coal-mines has, for some mysterious reason, hitherto resulted in failure, though a handsome fortune probably awaits any one with the energy, the capital, and, above all, the talent for business matters, which are required to develop the mineral capabilities of Turkestan.

"As a mere financial enterprise, the working the Aral flotilla can scarcely be considered a success, for figures show the cost of such transport operations, as its effects, to be 8*s.* per ton a mile; while private merchants actually pay about 7*d.* per ton a mile, and the army Intendence perhaps 50 per cent. more than this last rate. These circumstances have suggested the abolition of the Aral flotilla, since the demands made upon it for merely military services upon the Syr-Daria, at the present day, are very few, and since the peculiar conditions of the Amou-Daria require a special naval establishment, whose foundation has already been laid.

"The Syr-Daria at Cazalinsk has a breadth of less than 1,000 feet, with a maximum depth of 12 feet; but these dimensions decrease considerably as it is descended to its mouths in Lake Aral.

"In June, 1874, the river appeared to be in moderate flood, though so much of its volume is lost in the Karansak marshes, and is diverted by many small irrigation cuts, that it was only six feet deep, at the most, in the largest one of the three mouths by which it enters the lake. The navigable channel becomes more and more tortuous as it is descended; and the *Samarcand*, in which I made the passage, frequently touched the ground at the bends, though without doing herself any damage, as the bottom was tolerably soft. The country along the lower courses of the Syr has little elevation above the stream, which is bordered on both sides by rushes, and which wanders through pasturages, where the number of cattle of every kind struck me as being large, when it was considered that the majority of Kirghiz had already gone north with their flocks and herds for the summer. As the steamer passed down, groups of horses and cows assembled on the banks at short distances, to look, with affrighted eye and distended nostril, at the smoking 'devil-ship,' as these vessels are called by the population of Turkestan.

"The cultivation practised hereabouts by the Kirghiz is of a primitive and limited nature; and all details of agricultural labour fall to the lot of the poorest individuals, who look after melon-beds or small plots of cereals, which are watered by means of a large wooden scoop suspended from a triangular gyn, erected upon the banks of the river, and having a long handle that is worked by two men. Near the mouth of the Syr are larger areas of ground, which are ploughed by means of bullocks, and are fertilised by canals conveying streams to these low levels from the river.

"From Cazalinsk, for fifty miles downwards, there are only a few clumps of trees, chiefly of a kind of willow. This timber ceases entirely about the low sandstone ridges lining both banks at a mile or two of distance, down to Lake Aral, whose

shores they certainly formed at a previous epoch, when its water-spread had a higher level than now. Excepting an occasional mud mosque, and the deserted and ruinous barracks of Fort Aralsk, there are no buildings to be seen along the lower hundred miles of the Syr; but the frequent small ferry-boats and the wary *aouls* which are dotted over the country, show that the locality is a favourite one with the Kirghiz. The actual numbers seen from the deck of the *Samarcand* were indeed large, and the rags and the dirt of both sexes showed that they were among the poorest of the tribe, and that the richer families were absent on their summer wanderings."

When, however, the *élite* of the Kirghiz tribes—the cream of Tartar, so to say—come "to town," their appearance is indicative of considerable comfort, not to say wealth. Cazalinsk, on the Syr-Daria, and the head-quarters of the district, is the rendezvous in these regions for the Kirghiz and their families. It is a small town of 1,800 to 2,000 souls, exclusive of the military population, which, of course, is continually varying; for though the standing garrison is 500 men, there is accommodation for 2,000. It is built of raw brick; the houses with flat roofs, made of rushes covered with mud, and the streets adorned here and there with the Central Asia tree *par excellence*, the poplar. It also has a square, with a public garden in the centre, fronting which there is a *gostonitza*, or hotel, of which perhaps the less said the better, except in winter, when the rude climate and piercing winds make almost any shelter as welcome as that of a palace. Small as the town is, it is the chief entrepôt for European goods, which, as might be supposed, are as dear as they are inferior in quality, the chief staple being iron and gaudy chintzes. Iron has to be brought all the way from Orenburg, at a cost of about £15 per ton for carriage; so that it is not surprising to hear that every round shot fired in Central Asia costs about £2. Of native produce, the chief articles are raw silk—a product which is steadily increasing—raw cotton, dried fruits, apricots, and hides; whilst the industrial products are chiefly brocades, and the fantastically patterned silks of Khokand and Bokhara. In addition must be mentioned the cattle supplied by the Kirghiz for the army, the troops here being allowed much more liberal meat-rations than in other parts of the empire, in consequence of the severity and peculiarity of the climate. Cazalinsk and Fort Perofsky are thus of considerable importance to the nomad population of the Syr-Daria, which is estimated at about 400,000 along the lower course of the river, with about 100,000 camels, 200,000 horses, and some 2,000,000 sheep. "They drive a brisk trade with the Russians, who come yearly to Perofsky to buy the skins of the sheep and bullocks; and they find profitable employment for their camels in the transport of merchandise between Europe, Central Asia, Siberia, and China. Their financial position being thus easy, their kibitkas, furs, and clothing generally, are of a better stamp than usually met with among other nomads; the silks of Khokand and Bokhara, the gay chintzes and woollen cloths of Europe, are worn by men and women, while gold coins are in great demand as ornaments. These Kirghiz are well-fed and good-looking, and the primitive ruggedness of their manners is evidently yielding to the softening influences of comparative luxury and wealth. Some few individuals among them have been advanced to the rank of local, civil, or military officers, and wear uniforms, and reside in houses at Cazalinsk and Perofsky. The carpeted rooms, and the number of brass-bound boxes to be seen in their residences, attest the comfortable circumstances of such families, whose relations frequently come in from an aoul in the country, and are entertained with tea for the females, and bottled English stout and *vodka*, to which they are too much attached, for the males. The nomadic habits of the masses of the Kirghiz must, if slowly, yet surely, be in process of modification by the material advantages they derive from the domination of the Russians, and the change is making itself evident by the increasing area of land which, year by year, is being brought under cultivation upon the banks of the river Syr. On such lands a small assessment is levied; but the chief item of the government revenue is a charge of three and a-half roubles—say ten shillings—annually, upon every inhabited kibitka containing about five souls. In 1873, the Kirghiz of the Lower Syr made a voluntary contribution of 100,000 roubles in cattle, both of carriage and commissariat, for the use of the troops during the Khivan campaign; and the circumstance gave rise to some hostile criticism and con-

troversy. But without entering upon this, or without attaching any very exceptional importance to the not unnatural assistance so rendered by the Kirghiz towards the discomfiture of their former Uzbek oppressors, it is beyond question that, at the present day, the relations subsisting between the Russians and their subjects on the Syr-Daria, are on the most friendly footing.

"The terms of familiarity which exist between the Russians and the tribes of West Turkestan are somewhat striking to an Anglo-Indian observer; and however creditable such a state of things may be to the ruling race, it seems to imply that the Russian *prestige* in Central Asia is less than it might be. Though the manners of Turanian peoples are certainly rough, if not indeed ill-bred, as compared with those of Aryan races, there would appear to be something more than mere roughness observable in their demeanour. For example, I noticed a sailor on board the *Perofsky* steamer, on the Amou-Daria, 'fend off' a native's boat from the paddle-wheel, upon which the Uzbek boatman immediately threatened the Russian (who was doing no more than his duty) with the pole he was using as an oar. This circumstance, it is to be noted, took place during the first year of the occupation of the Amou-Daria district, after the campaign of Khiva; and perhaps its explanation may be found in the personal pride of ancestral descent, which is one of the chief characteristics of these Mongol-Turk tribes when brought into relations with a race among whom this distinctive trait is wanting.

"As for the Kirghiz, I have seen one of these people sitting in the kibitka of a Russian district chief, eating melons, and throwing their rind and seeds, quite unnoticed, all about the tent, though its open doorway close beside him invited the discharge of this residue into the open air. There has been some misplaced touchiness displayed in Russia (chiefly by the apostles of what is called the liberation of Slav populations of the east of Europe), regarding the existence of the Turco-Muscovite race. This is supposed to be a myth expressly invented by the detractors of the subjects of the czar; but it is beginning to be acknowledged pretty generally, that it is impossible to understand the country without admitting the great influence which Tartardom has had upon it in the past. Whether the development of the empire in Asia is not likely to exert a similar and very marked influence upon that section of Russians who are withdrawn from the reach of European culture, is a question which is strongly suggested in observing their intercourse with the races of Turkestan, and in noting the comparatively small interval which divides them, as far as the small delicacies and conventionalities of civilisation are concerned. Russians meet the Kirghiz more than half-way in these matters, and are acted upon rather than the opposite. That the punctilious and polished Mongol of Hindostan should have so recently come from the same blood as that of the uncouth barbarians of the Central Asian steppes, is a wonderful tribute to the assimilating powers which have been exercised by the fastidious and mild Hindoos."

Such are the features of the Lower Syr. The fate of the lands along its course depends almost entirely upon the measures carried out along its upper course, within the khanate of Khokand. It is, therefore, highly interesting to know what are the views entertained by the Russians as to the future of the khanate, and what are the inducements which led them to extend their actual rules to this part of the Syr's course. It is very difficult to obtain accurate information regarding the khanate, because, as we have pointed out, the Russians do not allow any travellers of other nations to visit the khanate through their own territory, and always find means of impeding the movements of those who may have entered the khanate from the Indian side. Fortunately, not even the Russians are able to keep all that is known quite secret, and are perforce obliged to allow the experiences of their own officers and travellers to be published, whilst trusting to the prevailing ignorance of the Russian language to keep these experiences more or less within their own control. Thus M. L. Kostenko published a valuable account of his journey through the khanate in the *Russian Invalide*, which, up to the present moment, is acknowledged to be the best and fullest report on the condition of the upper valley of the Syr that has yet appeared. In the basin formed by the northern slopes of the Pamir plateau and the southern declivities of Aksa Dagh, closed up at the eastern end by the abrupt steeps of the Thian Shan, whose peaks tower up some 10,000 to 11,000 feet above the sea, lies the fertile portion of the khan-

ate, with its capital Khokand, on a tributary of the Syr, and the towns of Marghilan, Andijan, Namagan, and others, in the midst of what is called the Ferghana.

After Khokand, Marghilan is the most important town of the Ferghana, as regards size, population, and commerce. Although nearly in the same degree of latitude as Khokand, and only sixty-five versts to the east of it, the climate of Marghilan is much more severe than that of Khokand, in consequence of its higher position; all fruits and crops requiring a week to a fortnight more to ripen than in Khokand. On the other hand, the health of the population is much better than in Khokand. The *goîtres*, which are so frequent in Khokand, are quite unknown in Marghilan; and if here and there a case occurs, the sufferers are sure to be natives of Khokand. The town is six versts broad, and is surrounded by a wall eighteen versts long, which, in turn, is surrounded by gardens and houses, forming an external suburb all round, in intimate connection with the town.

The place is furnished with water by two canals. The one receives its supply from the river Isfaïran-Ssaja, the other from the river Schachimardan. The first river furnishes the town with water for ten days, the second for eight days. Whilst the Isfaïran-Ssaja gives its waters for the domestic consumption of the town, the Schachimardan is used for the surrounding villages and the irrigation of the fields. When the town consumes the waters of the Schachimardan, the Isfaïran-Ssaja supplies the villages and fields. There are no wells in the town, as the canals are amply supplied with water of a pure, clear, and wholesome nature.

The town contains 10,000 houses, and about 50,000 inhabitants, chiefly Uzbeks, who are called here, as in other parts of Central Asia, Ssartes. Amongst them there is a considerable sprinkling of Tadjiks, an Iranian race, remarkable for its beauty. Then there are also several hundred Jewish families who inhabit a special quarter; and finally, Afghans and Indians, who dwell in their own caravanserais.

Although the town is very old, there are no ancient monuments nor modern buildings of any importance. The mosques and medresschs are of the usual character. The chief ornaments of the best mosques are the ceilings, with their fantastic patterns and gaudy colours. The finest mosque is that of Iskander-Sulkarnain—that is, Alexander of Macedon, and so called after the tomb of this conqueror, who has been included amongst the Mussulman saints. The tomb in question lies in a small enclosed cemetery, and is only remarkable for its size. The chief industry of Marghilan is silk-weaving. The warp is laid in the open street by means of pegs knocked into the house-wall. The weaving itself is accomplished inside on ordinary looms. At the same time, Marghilan is also an important centre of commerce. The bazaars are well supplied with quantities of the most varied Chinese products, which are imported by way of Kashgar, and consist of silks, carpets, Kashgar felt, vases, cups, flacons for snuff, and, above all, tea. A speciality in the bazaars of Marghilan is the manufacture of the little caps, called *Tjubeteika*. Whole rows of booths are used for this manufacture. The proprietor sits here, impressing the most varied patterns on pieces of calico, silk, or velvet, which are then given out to the embroiderers, and made up by him after they have been embroidered into the little caps which play so prominent a part in the Central Asiatic costume, and are sold at the price of sixty copecks to one rouble. The Marghilan caps are in especial request, owing to the artistic manner in which the most intricate arabesques are executed upon them.

The third largest town of the Ferghana is Andijan, and lies seventy versts east of Marghilan, at the foot of the northern slopes of the Kashgar Dagh. To the north of the road, between the two towns, the country is full of settlements; but south of it, the barren steppe merges into the no less barren slopes of the mountains which close in the valley. Generally speaking, these settlements partake of the same character as the rest of the settlements throughout Central Asia. The same picture presents itself to the traveller here as along the larger canals in Khiva, or in the oases along the rivers in Bokhara. But on closer inspection, a considerable difference will be found to obtain between the settlements of Khiva and those of Khokand. In Khiva they are more isolated. There, every possession, every farm, forms a separate and isolated settlement, consisting of its mud castle, surrounded by gardens and fields. But in Khokand the dwelling-places are much closer together, and form regular towns, villages, and hamlets, which,

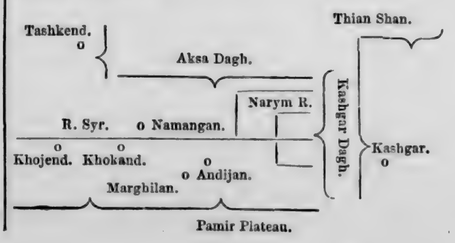
though separated from each other by gardens and fields, are not characterised by the occurrence of such semi-fortified habitations as those prevailing in Khiva.

The road leading through the district of Marghilan is furnished with verst-posts, painted with the Russian national colours; whilst the cross-roads are supplied with sign-posts with Russian inscriptions. The name of every village, the number of houses it contains, as well as the distance to the next place, are marked up on the last house at each end of the village; this information being also conveyed in the Russian tongue. Between Marghilan and Andijan, the only place of importance is the little town of Assaké, lying on the right bank of an insignificant stream flowing into the Syr. The town, which is celebrated for the beauty of its position on the slope of one of the spurs of the Thian Shan, is tolerably clean—the chief building the summer residence of the Khan of Khokand. It lies upon one of the terraces which cut up the mountain slope. Part of it lies in ruin; but what remains intact is still well preserved. It is two storeys high, with a gallery round the second storey, and differs from the usual Asiatic buildings in the number and height of the windows. The chief ornament of the rooms is the ceiling, surrounded with an edge of gilt and gaudy colours; the beams running across it painted green, and the intermediate spaces red. As it is always cooler in Assaké than in the valley of Ferghana, the khan has always resided here during the hot season, and enjoyed the beautiful view, to be obtained from the windows, of the town and the surrounding gardens. Now, however, as Kostenko relates, the broken windows give entrance to the winds and myriads of flies and mosquitoes, which effectually prevented his obtaining any rest when he was quartered in the palace.

Andijan, which was assaulted twice by the Russians (1st October, 1875, and 8th January, 1876), is one of the oldest and most celebrated towns of Ferghana. Up to the 16th century it was the residence of the khans—amongst them the celebrated Baber. At present, as in Marghilan, there are neither monuments of ancient times, nor any modern buildings worthy of mention. The whole of Andijan is nothing more than a mud town, inhabited by Ssartes. The only thing worthy of note is the bazaar, built by the Russians directly after their capture of the town. After the old one had been pulled down, this one was built, and laid out at right-angles. Each booth is roomy, well-lighted, neatly fitted up, and protected by a far-projecting verandah against the sun and the rain. Usually the Asiatic bazaar is covered in by a hap-hazard roofing of branches, twigs, and mud, lying on the poles thrown across the street from one house to the other. By this means the sun was kept out, but so was the fresh air, whilst the rain met with no impediment. Still, the commerce of Andijan has not yet recovered from the blow it received from the invasion of the Russians. The trade of the place is merely local, and consists chiefly in melons, cups, and rude pottery, &c. There is, however, but little doubt that commerce will speedily revive. The new bazaar lies between the Gul-Tjubé, a hill in the centre of the town, and the Urda, the residence of the former ruler of Andijan.

On this hill, which commands the town, the Russians have built a small fortress, with an esplanade along the foot. A part of the garrison is quartered in the buildings formerly used for magazines. This hill, Gul-Tjubé, like most of the hills in the Central Asiatic towns, is artificial, constructed in order to dominate the place, and keep the unruly citizens in order. The rest of the Russian garrison is quartered in the old and new Urdas, or palaces of the khans, the latter being an especially roomy building, and furnished with a spacious and beautifully laid-out garden, where the Russian military bands discourse sweet music to the astonished Ssartes and Kirghiz.

From Andijan to Namangan, the road follows the left bank of the Kara-Daria, which is crossed, fifty-five versts from Namangan, by a wooden bridge lying on piles, five versts before it is joined by the Narym-Su. The accompanying sketch gives a full idea of the whole of the Ferghana district.



The Narym is crossed a little above its junction with the Kara-Daria by a ferry, the two rivers flowing henceforth together under the name of the Syr-Daria. When it enters the Kara-Daria, or Blackwater, the Narym is split up into five channels, over the broadest of which, seventy-five fathoms wide, the above-mentioned ferry is worked. The other channels are also crossed by ferries, the boats being drawn by two horses, assisted by oarsmen. This is, however, in the eyes of the Ssartes or Uzbeks, a degenerate way of crossing the river. They prefer swimming it, in spite of the prohibition by the Russian government. Not only do they still insist on swimming across with their horses, but also with their waggons—their two-wheeled *arbas*—even when they are loaded. An empty *arba* may be got across without much risk; but a loaded one is not easy to manage, as may be supposed. Kostenko himself saw the attempt made with an *arba* loaded with wood, and drawn by two horses. The two drivers who accompanied it, supported themselves, one on the pole, and the other on the *arba* itself, to guide the horses. The current was strong, and before the adventurous party could reach the other bank, one of the horses was drowned, and the other, as well as the man, only just rescued in time by the assistance which was called to their aid. Many and many a life is lost in this manner; but the Ssartes will sooner risk losing their lives than pay the sum—thirty copecks—for the ferry. Besides this, as there is but one boat, the passage is only made every three or four hours, and the impatient horseman of the steppe does not care about waiting so long. From Kafra, where the ferry is situated, the road leads along the right bank of the river, through a well-cultivated district, the chief crop being rice.

Namangan, the fourth city of the khanate, has no walls, and verges imperceptibly into the gardens and fields around it. It contained formerly some 5,600 houses, and 50,000 inhabitants. The bazaar was more important than that of Andijan, and the town boasted of 210 mosques, and over 100 schools. Half the place is, however, in ruins, owing to the attacks of the Russians in the campaign of 1875—1876, and the population reduced by at least one-fourth in consequence of the massacres and emigration which took place on the arrival of the Russian troops. The citadel is an imposing edifice, and comparatively strong for an Asiatic town. It contains part of the Russian garrison, the remainder lying in camp, and in complete readiness, about a verst distant from it.

The chief pursuit of the Namanganese is the traffic in timber and fuel. They fell the trees in their gardens, chiefly poplars and willows, and, tying them together, make rafts upon which they load more valuable timber, dried fruits, skins and felts, and float them down the Syr as far as Fort Perofsky, supplying Khokand, Tchinas, and Turkestan on their way. The mountains around Namangan are rich in ferriferous ores and coal; and about fifty versts east of the town, there are a number of naphtha springs which have been worked by the Russians as far back as 1868, but which are now left unexplored owing to the unwillingness of the Khokandese to work under their conquerors.

After Namangan, Tchust, or Tus, is one of the most important towns of the khanate, and is the capital of one of the seven districts with which the Ferghana has been divided. It is composed of three distinct parts; the lower town, embowered in gardens; the upper town, or grad, with its citadel situated on the customary eminence; and a second citadel, also situated on a height, in which the Russian garrison and the civil authorities are quartered.

The word "Tchust" means "sudden," "unforeseen." This name was given to the place in consequence of the sudden flight of one of its ancient rulers, 360 years ago—the saintly khan, Chasret-Iman Mauljana, who was so grieved at the vice and dishonesty of his subjects, that he jumped up one night out of his bed and took to flight. He was, however, caught before he got further than about six versts, and brought back to his palace by the populace, who insisted upon having at least one honest man amongst them. His tomb, in the cemetery of the Djuma Mosque, near which the rest of his relations are also buried, is still held in high esteem by the natives. The other name, "Tus," is of a more practical origin, it being derived from the salt-springs not far from the town, which, in former times, was the chief entrepôt for this material in the khanate. The town and the fields around are supplied with water in the same way as Marghilan, by a system of canals alternating their supply every twenty days. There are also a number of springs in the

vicinity; and in the citadel the Russians have (1876-'77) taken good care to dig two deep wells, whence an inexhaustible supply can be obtained.

Kostenko mentions another well, or rather a spring, towards the northern end of the town. It is about one fathom square, with a soft, semi-sandy, semi-muddy bottom, through which a pole can be thrust for a considerable depth without touching any hard bottom. This spring is surrounded by three or four willow-trees, and is highly venerated by the population on account of its supposed healing qualities in cases of consumption; but still more because of its power in disclosing the future to those who come to consult it. The oracle is read by the Mollahs who dwell by it, and who decipher, in the shape of the mud when disturbed by some substance being thrown into it, the fate of the inquirer. Two days a week are set apart for consulting the oracle; one day for the men, the other for the women. The Russian medical men, however, who have analysed the water, find nothing in it to distinguish it from less celebrated waters.

The climate of Tchust is very healthy, though somewhat dry; and all the vegetable products which flourish in the east of the Ferghana, flourish here also. The town contains some 1,500 houses, with about 7,500 inhabitants, all belonging to the Uzbeks. The district around is rich in mineral products; but they are not exported, with the exception of salt; the chief springs lying about eighty versts from the town. The only mineral besides exported is chalk.

Khokand, the capital, is one of the finest towns of Central Asia. In size it comes after Bokhara and Tashkend. The town contains 12,000 houses, and about 60,000 inhabitants. The wall surrounding it is eighteen versts long, and has eighteen gates, called Darwasa, which, as the inhabitants say, lead to all ends of the world. Each gate is named after the town to which the road through the gate leads. Khokand lies on two branches of the river Soch, the Katy-sai and Kitschik-sai. Numbers of canals lead from these rivers, which partly furnish the town with water, and partly irrigate the surrounding fields. The water is clear, but is said to exercise an evil influence upon the health of the inhabitants. In fact, the opinion prevails that the goitres, so frequent in the towns and villages around, is owing alone to the use of the water. There are certain quarters in the town where every one out of three inhabitants certainly has a goître. These quarters are in the southern part of the town, where there is a little lake near the gate Mui-Mubarek. In the majority of cases the goîtres are not large; but in some they attain an enormous size. The chemists of the laboratory at Tashkend have, however, not been able to discover any difference in this water from any other. The chemical constituents of the water differ in nothing from the constituents of any other normal water. The cause of the disease must, therefore, be looked for elsewhere. Besides the goîtres, life in Khokand is rendered still more disagreeable by the continual west winds which come from the desert, to which the valley of Khokand lies open in the west, and whence, in summer, the Garm-sal (poison-wind) blows with as disagreeable consequences as the Hamseen in Egypt. It exercises no evil influence upon human beings or animals, but it is very destructive to the silkworm. The natives assert that it always blows twice a week, and strongest on Fridays or Saturdays.

Another drawback in Khokand is the ground-water, which is met with at a depth of about three feet, and renders it impossible for the inhabitants to get rid of the sewage and other organic remains. But, as for that, the natives do not trouble themselves much about it, and leave their refuse to lie wherever it may happen to fall, although the Russians are trying, in a mild sort of way, to remedy this state of affairs.

Khokand lies 1,540 feet above the sea; and as it is surrounded on all sides by mountains, the climate is very warm, the temperature rising to a very high degree in summer.

The Russians have quartered themselves chiefly in the Urda, the palace of the former ruler of Khokand, Khudojarkhan. The general staff, the civil administration, the post-office, and several companies of infantry, are quartered in it; the castle has also been fortified. Besides this, the Russians have fortified themselves upon the other side, in an open space opposite the castle. They still form but a small colony, lying under the protection of the guns of the citadel. The houses belong chiefly to married members of the garrison. Along the square, and along the chief street leading from the citadel to the bazaar, there are several Russian shops. Finally, individual

Russians, chiefly belonging to the administration, have settled in the Asiatic part of the town, where they live isolated amongst the natives, who seem, on the whole, to agree well with their conquerors. Although the town has received the title Chukandi-Lgatif (Pleasant Khokand), there is really but little difference between it and the other towns occupied by the Russians, such as Tashkend and Samarcand. In fact, in point of situation, Khokand does not enjoy so many advantages as Tashkend. The only thing to be said in favour of Khokand is, that it has larger and broader streets, and more of them than Tashkend and Samarcand. The bazaar, too, is much larger. It was built after the great fire in the year 1870, which consumed more than 800 shops. The greater part of the booths and shops belong to the khan, who was thus chiefly interested in rebuilding them; and the popular voice and public opinion accuses him of having taken advantage of the fire to extend the limits of his property. The advantages of this bazaar, compared to others, consist in its being carefully roofed over, and provided with openings for ventilation. Besides the shops, which are in the chief bazaar, and the two other smaller bazaars which are in the town, there are a number of booths along the bridges over the river.

In Khokand, as in all Asiatic towns, the chief traffic is conducted on certain market-days, which are held twice a-week, on Wednesdays and Sundays. The number of booths in Khokand is over 2,000. The chief industry of the town is the manufacture of calicoes and silks; the latter, however, is in a less degree of perfection than at Bokhara.

The most important building of the town is indisputably the palace of the former khan, Chudojar. The inscription on the gable states that it was built in the year 1870, by Said-Muhammed-Chudojar-Khan. It differs from the usual local kind of architecture, in consequence of the number of square courts successively enclosing each other—representing, in fact, the storeys of our houses. The two first external courts contained the dwellings of the servants, and the tailors who made up the uniforms of the army. At present, these two courts are used to quarter the Russian garrison in. The third and following courts belong to the palace proper, and lie upon an artificial hill, as in Bokhara. The gable of the palace does not become visible until the second court is passed. It is approached by a long passage, paved with wooden poles, along which the khan could ride right into his rooms. The wall of the castle is faced with yellow tiles, and adorned with inscriptions from the Koran. The chief gate is situated in the middle, and is an excellent specimen of the pointed arch. The first courts were always used by the khan to receive petitions, to pronounce sentence, and give audience to foreign ambassadors. The courts at the back were reserved for the harem.

The dwellings around the neatly-tiled courts are mostly furnished with galleries, supported by wooden pillars, and the ceilings decorated with gaudy and intricate patterns. The rooms obtain their light and air chiefly through the doors which lead out upon these galleries. The doors themselves are richly ornamented and gilt. The khan also possessed several rooms furnished in European fashion; of which one, looking out upon the second and third courts, was very richly decorated; the chief ornament being a chandelier, which almost touched the ground, and filled up the whole room. This chamber is now being altered into a Russian chapel, and will soon be finished. The back courts, as we have already said, were intended for the harem, in consequence of which the galleries looked out upon the gardens, and not upon the court. The garden is separated from the outside world by a very high wall, along which there used to be a number of guard-houses, used by the eunuchs, who kept the khan's wives under their surveillance. Their number amounted to several hundreds. The khan's method of obtaining his wives was a very simple one. As soon as he heard that any one of his subjects was in possession of an especially pretty daughter, he ordered her to be brought to his palace. Here the Mollah said a short prayer, gave the girl his blessing, and the marriage was completed. At a certain hour every day all his wives had to assemble to greet the khan. They all filed before him, bowed, and said, "Salaam Aleikum:" afterwards they were graciously dismissed.

As is the case with most Central Asiatic rulers, the life of Chudojar Khan has not been an easy one. He experienced many troubles before he succeeded in establishing himself upon the throne of Khokand. For twenty years he was alternately khan and fugitive, until, in 1864, he succeeded in gain-

ing the crown through the help of his heroic friend, Alim-Kul. But all the experiences and misfortunes he had suffered had not taught him wisdom. Throughout the whole of his reign he had to contend against the intrigues concocted against him; but he never discovered his real enemies, for they were there, where he never expected to find them—that is to say, in his immediate vicinity. They were Abderachman Awtobatschi, a son of Mussulman-Kul, who had been murdered by Chudojar. Abderachman did not fill any special position, but was regarded as one of the nearest friends and counsellors of the khan. Secondly, Issa-Aulju, a person who was held in much repute by the people, on account of his wisdom and sanctity. He was a sort of first minister to the khan, and possessed almost unlimited power. Finally, at the head of the secret opposition, were the brother of the khan, Murad Beg, the ruler of Marghilan, and his son Nasr-Eddin-Khan, ruler of Andidham. All these personages had been overwhelmed with benefits by the khan, who never thought that they were his greatest danger. Whilst he annihilated all his small enemies, they prepared the way for a revolution; and when everything was ripe for it, overthrew the khan, who was forced to fly to Russian territory.

The general opinion prevails that Chudojar Khan was deposed by the people on account of the oppressive taxation. That is not the case; the taxation played no part in the affair at all. The indignation against the khan must be attributed to his injustice in matters of inheritance. If the heirs, in certain cases, wished to evade the law, they only had to make the khan a present in order to obtain the decision they wanted. In addition, the army was very much dissatisfied with him, as the soldiers were scarcely ever paid.

The conspirators, however, did not gain anything by the fall of the khan. A few months after the first revolution, which cost Chudojar his throne, a second broke out, which ended most unfavourably for the heir to the throne and all his companions. Nasr-Eddin-Khan was obliged to follow in the footsteps of his father Issa-Aulju and Abderachman Awtobatschi were imprisoned by the Russians, and, with the two khans, father and son, are still interned in different towns of European Russia. Murad Beg was murdered during the riots at Marghilan, in 1875 and 1876, by Pulat-Khan.

The inhabitants of Khokand are almost entirely Uzbeks, or, as they are generally called throughout Central Asia, Ssartes; and do not differ in any material points from the inhabitants of Tashkend.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

RUSSIA IN THE CAUCASUS.

In the same way that Russia has been extending her empire in the far-east of Central Asia, she has also been extending herself in what, if not Europe, geographically speaking, is at any rate the cradle of the European races, and is as distinct from Asia as Africa is from Lapland.

She has proceeded in this direction much in the same way as she has in Asia. She has sent out her agents by the score to spy out the country, to acquire information, for which no detail was too trivial, and to sow dissensions amongst races naturally inclined to dissension, owing to the configuration of the country. When it is remembered how long Scotland and Wales were divided amongst their clans and families, and districts and interests, separated by hills averaging not more than 3,000 feet in height, it may be imagined how the communities of the Caucasus and its outspurs, which are cut up in all directions by ranges of 6,000 to 8,000 feet in height, have also been divided in interests, and unable to secure one united administration for any length of time. If one race, such as the Armenian, did succeed for a few generations in uniting these different tribes and communities under one banner, the work was soon destroyed by the invasion of the Mussulmans and the intrigues of the Russians.

But whilst the Russians, owing, in the

first place, to their communications with the highly civilised states of Europe, and the intermarriages of the imperial family with the royal families of Europe, advanced in that sort of civilisation which results in the establishment of a despotic power, the Turks, part and parcel of Europe, yet without its pale, and isolated from social intercourse with the rest of Europe by their religion and habits, have not only not succeeded in consolidating their power, but have failed to keep it up to the pitch it once possessed. Bit by bit they have had to yield up some portion of their empire. But it speaks volumes for them, and it is a most eloquent argument against the advocates of Russia's "mission" in the East, that no other State has felt it its duty or interest to annex any portion of the Turkish empire except Russia, and to no other State has any portion of Turkey been yielded or given.

The only explanation of this fact is, either that Russia is really ahead of the rest of the world in the conception of moral duties, and is justified in assuming the lead in civilisation, or that she has determined to gain a firm footing in what is, in all respects, the richest country west of the Caucasus.

If the former is the case, it is high time that Europe should awaken to a sense of its duties, and take that share in the civilisatory process which she has so long neglected. If the second, then there appears to be no reason why more civilised States than Russia—States which show, by their action, that they are striving after liberty and the welfare of the human race generally, should not step in and claim the property, or claim a voice in its administration, which has been abandoned or is abused by the Turks. In the meanwhile, the following account of the districts bordering the Russian frontier on the Caucasus, will be found highly interesting, not only on account of its intrinsic value, but also because of the point of view from which it has been written. It is the summary of a work* by Colonel Kasbek, of the Russian army, who was sent by the government, in 1874, to explore the country. The published work contains only 150 pages 8vo.; but the mass of information it gives, also conveys an idea of the minuteness with which every detail of any importance was described in his official report. It is, of course, scarcely necessary to say, that the report contained all those matters of military, strategic, and political importance, which are conspicuous by their absence in the published work. But even as it is, this work cannot be too highly recommended for the perusal and study of those who wish to see with what anxious care the Russians had been preparing their campaign in 1877.

Turkish Grusia includes the sources of the Kara and the whole of the basins of the Tschoroch and Lasistan. The whole of this district, together with the department of Akhaltzik, has borne, in the course of centuries very different names, such as Upper Kartalinia, Ssanzche-Ssatabago; but for the last two centuries, before its incorporation with the Russian empire, it was known as the Pashalik of Akhaltzik. It is characterised by the rich and varied vegetation peculiar to a northern and southern climate. The upper course of the Kara and the Tschoroch has always been colonised by Grusians or Georgians, whilst the north-western slope was peopled by Lases and Tschanes. It was nearer to Byzance than the rest of Grusia, and was thus more under its influence. It was owing to this influence that Upper Kartalinia became the cradle of the dynasty of the Grusian Bagratides in the 8th century, and became the centre which gave its unity and greatness to Grusia, under the Abchasian and Grusinian kings. It was here that the chief historians were born in the 10th and 15th centuries, and the greater part of the translators of the Old and New Testaments. Upper Kartalinia became studded with a number of ecclesiastical monuments, which served as a model for the rest of Grusia; and no doubt an energetic explorer would be well rewarded for his trouble in examining this district.

As it is, the information regarding it, in modern times, is of a most scanty nature. In 1843, the geologist, Karl Koch, travelled through the whole region; but the result of his travels were only a few geographical and ethnological notices. In 1844, Professor Rosen, who subsequently became Prussian consul in Jerusalem, and wrote a history of the Turkish empire, travelled through Lasistan in company with the German poet, Friedrich Bodenstedt; but his inquiries were chiefly limited to the

* "Three Months in Turkish Grusia." By G. Kasbek. Tiflis: 1877.

language of the Lases. On this subject he published a book, showing the relationship between the Lasian and Grusinian languages.

All this was, doubtless, highly interesting to philologists and scholars; but it was scarcely the kind of information the Russian government required; and so Colonel Kasbek was sent to supply the want in the spring of 1874.

"At this date," Colonel Kasbek writes, "a journey through Asiatic Turkey is fraught with danger to Russians. Our neighbour," he says, referring to Turkey, "is always afraid that we are planning some attempt against his life, and places all the impediments possible in the way of obtaining accurate information. Neither government or people have any idea of scientific exploration." This suspicion, on the part of the Turks, can scarcely be said to be unfounded when regarded in the light of subsequent events. Colonel Kasbek made his journey in the summer of 1874, accompanied by ten mounted men, and seven men on foot, with three baggage-horses, with whom he left Abbas-Tuman on the 22nd May.

After leaving Abbas-Tuman, a watering-place in the district of Akhaltzik, the travellers proceeded along a very bad road up the Arsian mountains, which form the water-shed between the Kwabliani and the Adtscharis-skali. The Arsian range was held in antiquity to be the frontier of the Greek domination. The highest peak is the Chirchati; this is 8,534 feet above the level of the sea. On these mountains, or at least upon their northern slopes, the forest comes to an end at the height of 6,900 feet, where it is replaced by a rich and luxuriant Alpine vegetation, which serves as a rich pasturage for the cattle, which is driven up into the heights during the summer months. At this period the whole of the Arsian range becomes animated, and is covered with yaitas, or summer camps. On one of the highest points a magnificent view spread itself out before the caravanserai. The peaks of the mountains were covered with snow. The whole of the Arsian range presented the appearance of a serrated range, in which there was no especially prominent peak. At the foot of the range lay the dark valley of the Kwabliani.

After passing the frontier posts between Russia and Turkey, on a height of 7,450 feet above the level of the sea, the road winds along the mountains between masses of rhododendrons and pine-woods, the dark-green of which is frequently relieved by numbers of weeping birches, with their light-green foliage. In the first Ardscharian village, called Gordshomi, there is a sulphur spring of 20° Réaumur, and the remains of two walls of a church, which bear the Grusinian name of Nassakdrali, which means the place of a former church. The fields and meadows of Gordshomi are all surrounded with wooden palisades, and are carefully cultivated.

The chief occupation of the inhabitants is cattle-breeding; the more wealthy of them owning as many as three and four dozen milch-cows, and twenty to sixty sheep. The village contains 300 farms, in isolated groups, each one having its own name. All these groups are under one common administration, and united very closely, through their attendance at one mosque.

The road from Gordshomi leads along a foaming torrent, and in many places is cut in the living rock, impeded by masses of stone, over which the horses have carefully to pick their way in a manner that is highly suggestive.

Fifteen versts from Gordshomi, the travellers arrived at Chula, on the right bank of the river Did-Adtscharis-skali, spread about a wide uneven space, and containing about 100 farms, built of wood on a stone foundation, grouped around the residence of the most influential man in the whole of Adtschara, the Shereef Bey, Chimschia-Schwili. His house is large, well-built, and covered with tiles, after the fashion of most of the houses in Chula. There is also a mosque erected on the foundations of a Christian church, a fountain and large water-basin, a medresseh, or mosque school, and, close to it, the tombs of the Bey's ancestors, executed in stone. The "bazaar" consists of a row of booths contained in a long wooden building; and, above all, south of the village, rise the views of the Bey's castle, which was destroyed by General Ostensacken in the campaign of 1829, without any further rhyme or reason than because a group of Mussulmans resisted his troops here for a short time, till they were all massacred, and the castle razed, to remain a proof of the power of the white czar.

Major Kasbek's party was heartily welcomed by the son of the Bey. The young

Mustasa Bey, who had been governor of the Adtschara district in 1873, and after enjoying his hospitality for two days at Chula, went with him to Ischalta, a village celebrated as possessing the only church in the whole of Adtschara. Here the party was welcomed by the Bey himself in his new house, built in semi-European fashion. Shereef Bey belongs to one of the younger, but most powerful families of Adtschara. His great-grandfather was a simple peasant; but his grandfather soon acquired such influence by his rectitude and energy, that he defied the tyrannical Pasha of Akhaltzik, and, at the head of an armed body of Adtscharians, drove him away from Akhaltzik, and "reigned in his stead." Subsequently he incurred the wrath of the sultan, and fled to Adtschara in 1805; but in 1815 was captured, and decapitated in the fortress of Chirchatis-ziche. His son, Achmed Bey, however, soon attained the same power as his father; and in consequence of his blockade of Akhaltzik, which had been captured by the Russians, was made pasha by the sultan. Prince Bebutoff, who commanded the Russian garrison in Akhaltzik, opened up negotiations with Achmed, who expressed his readiness, under certain conditions, to become a Russian subject. The Emperor Nicholas presented him with his brevet as a major in the Russian army, and he was invited to come to Akhaltzik. But before the visit could be arranged, Prince Bebutoff, whom Achmed was personally acquainted with, was recalled, and succeeded by General Ostensacken, in whom Achmed Pasha had no confidence. He therefore refused to appear, and General Ostensacken, at the head of his forces, marched against him. The Russians arrived at Chula, where, after a long resistance by some of Achmed Pasha's men, they succeeded in obtaining possession of the castle, as already related. But on their way back they were attacked by Achmed and his men, and forced to retreat precipitately to Akhaltzik. Peace was soon afterwards concluded, and Achmed Pasha, in return for his services, was nominated governor of Kars, and died with the rank of Seraskier in Erzeroum.

After the war of 1829, the whole of Grusia was only nominally under the sultan. Like the Basques, they only paid the tribute of blood; that is, they supplied so-and-so many men to the sultan in his war.

The present Bey produced a very pleasing impression upon M. Kasbek. He is forty-five years old, above the average height, well built, clever, animated, witty, and, for a Grusian, even learned; but, above all, an adept at almost everything. He showed his guests a schaselika (sword) made by his own hands, a cannon which he had founded himself, and a number of walnut-wood chairs and divans, of excellent workmanship, which he had made during his leisure hours. He is, besides, a painter of considerable power, specimens of his art hanging on all the walls of his house. In the summer he lives in Chula, but in the winter goes down to the warmer climate of Ss-chalta, with his three wives and thirteen children, whom he educates himself in the Koran, in Persian, in the Grusinian tongue, in Russian, and music. His library consists of a few Turkish works and one Russian book. He has none in the Grusian tongue, nor do his children speak the language. "Strange as it may appear," said the Bey, "that my children do not know the language of their fathers; but the fact is, that they were educated in the house of their mother at Ardahan." He is very proud of a mighty box filled with firmans and patents which had been given to his father by different sultans. Amongst the documents there is a parchment rolled upon a staff, as was the custom in the time of the Grusinian princes. It was torn and yellow, and the date was wanting; but the signature showed that it had been written in the name of the Atabeg John, by the patriarch Gerassim Dshaketi, to the villagers of Chula and Alme, which puts the date at some time before 1444, when the patriarch died.

The village of Ss-chalta lies at a height of 2,274 feet above the sea; more than 1,117 feet lower than Chula, and is characterised by its luxuriant southern vegetation. Shereef Bey's garden contains walnut-trees, vines, cypresses, olive-trees, and specimens of the ziziphus. Ss-chalta itself is rather noted for its malaria. The church, which M. Kasbek erroneously calls a ruin, is much damaged, it is true, but it is very far from being what is usually meant by a ruin, and will stand the onslaught of wind and weather for many a day yet. It is faced with masonry, and the interior adorned with frescoes of considerable power and some traces of art. They represent the Saviour, the Virgin Mary, and John the Baptist, with other New Testamentary personages, and are furnished with inscriptions

in Greek. In the apse behind the altar there is a colossal figure of Christ, holding a book in his hand with the old Grusinian character. Standing around him are the figures of various saints, each having a Grusinian inscription. During their stay with the Bey, M. Kasbek's party were accompanied by him on their excursions through the district, when they saw that he had caused a road to be laid out, which permitted waggons to be used on it. The Bey, however, had been obliged to abandon its further consideration on account of the opposition he met with from his superiors, who did not approve of the intercommunication becoming so easy between the villagers whom they oppressed. The country all around Chula is described, by M. Kasbek, as highly picturesque, and abounding in luxuriant vegetation, the woods composed of mighty oaks, interspersed with nut, pear, and chestnut trees. He, however, makes no mention of the mineral riches of the country, which are very great, and consist in an abundance of excellent lead, iron, and copper ores; and, in many places, nickel and cobalt. The whole character of the country reminds one forcibly of the beautiful terraces, valleys, and heights of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon—especially of that portion east of Tripoli which includes the valley of Eden.

The most picturesque point in the whole region is the castled fortress of Chirchati, where the grandfather of the present Shereef Bey (Selim Pasha) was beheaded, as we have already mentioned, in 1815, and his head sent to Stamboul. It lies at the limits of the forest, 6,500 feet above the level of the sea, with a lake some 200 yards wide at its base. The fortress itself consists of four towers, literally hanging to the precipices which tower over the village of Ballo, whence a narrow, steep, and winding path leads to the only accessible portion of the stronghold, which is said to have been built by Queen Tamara.

The whole district of the Adtschara, from its sources to its junction with the river Tschoroch, or Tschorok, some fifteen miles south of Batoum, is excessively rich in its flora and fauna, from its deepest valleys to a height of 6,500 feet above the level of the sea, where the Scotch fir begins to show itself. The woods consist of oak, beech, elm, birch, ash, larch, and pine; apple and pear-trees abound, as well as cherry-trees, plum-trees, and vines. Tobacco is also cultivated, and equals the commoner Samsun kinds. Maize produces, on an average, thirty to fifty-fold; wheat, ten-fold. Cattle-rearing is conducted on an extensive scale, chiefly oxen. Sheep are not much cultivated. One Bey alone has a flock of 800; otherwise the flocks can only be counted by a few dozen heads each. Horses are the only beasts of burden; and it is estimated that each household possesses one. Roads, in the Alpine region, there are none; and those in the valleys are very bad, and in the rarest of cases are they available for conveyances.

The predominant characteristics of the Adtscharian are, the respect for aged people, domestic affection, and the most profuse hospitality. The reception accorded to M. Kasbek and his party of seventeen men and thirteen horses, by Shereef Bey, who entertained them from May 24th to June 9th, sufficiently shows to what an extent hospitality is carried out in these regions; and it is within our own experience in Lasistan, that it has been impossible to spend one single farthing during a tour of seven weeks' duration. The Adtscharians make excellent soldiers; they are brave, indomitable pedestrians, and cool and collected in danger. Commerce and manufactures are not to their taste; they are an essentially agricultural people, and excellent cattle-breeders.

The language of the people is either the Grusinian tongue or Turkish. In the majority of cases, and in every-day public life, it is invariably Turkish. No greater proof than this fact can be adduced to show that there is nothing in the Turkish tongue, or in the teachings of Islam, that is unsuited to the character of this people, for it is scarcely 250 years since they were first subjected to Turkish rule. And it must be remembered that the Turks do not make propaganda, but leave every one to follow his own convictions in religious matters: only, as is but just in such a state of affairs as prevails in these districts so close to Russia, they give the preference to those of their own creed in appointments to the service of the State. But it is very amusing to hear M. Kasbek complain that the mosque schools are thronged with boys learning Turkish and the Koran; "so that," as he says, "the brave Grusinian race is rapidly becoming Turkish." M. Kasbek here finds it convenient to ignore the fact that, in Russia, dissenters from the Greek

church are flogged into compliance with its creed and dogmas, whilst the Turks, at any rate, allow their subjects to choose for themselves.

Having sufficiently explored the Upper Adtschara regions, Colonel Kasbek next turned his attention to the Schawschethi, that is, the district closed in on the east by the Arsian mountains, on the south by the Yolanustschami, by the Kartschchali and Schawschethi mountains in the north, and bounded on the west by the Ardanudsh Tchai. This district, which is almost entirely unknown to the rest of Europe, is the richest in minerals of all parts adjoining the Russian frontier, and especially in sulphur-springs. Agriculturally, it is also richer than the Adtschara: the Schawschethi wheat is preferred at Batoum to that of Kars; and at the same time there is much room for the development of the resources of the whole district.

The population, which is composed of Grusinians and Armenians, is divided amongst some fifty-eight villages, containing altogether about 2,000 chimneys, according to which the taxes are levied. The population, taking on an average seven souls to each household, would number about 14,000 of both sexes. In the upper part of the valley they all speak the Grusinian tongue, with the exception of about 1,000 Armenians, who are scattered amongst them. "But as we approached Ardanudsh," says Colonel Kasbek, "we found that Grusinian gave way to Turkish, and that the constant contact with the Turks had had a very evil effect upon the morality of the people. This race, which, under the kings Bagrat III. and IV. (in the 10th and 11th centuries), was noted for its courage, has so degenerated that its cowardice has become a proverb amongst the more valorous races around. The inhabitants of the Imerchawi valley produce a more disagreeable impression than those of Schawschethi proper. They are gloomy, deceitful, rancorous, and treacherous; but, on the other hand, are also more manly and determined. The peaceable character of the Schawschethians was remarkably demonstrated about twelve years ago, when the sultan issued an *iradé*, calling upon all the frontier tribes to disarm. The Schawschethians were the only tribe which obeyed this order, in consequence whereof they are quite at the mercy of their more warlike neighbours."

From Bako Colonel Kasbek proceeded to cross the ridge leading into the Schawschethi; but before he and his party had attained the summit, their further progress was impeded by the thick mists and rains which came on, and forced them to seek refuge in the house of a Russian deserter. This fact led Colonel Kasbek to indulge in wandering speculations as to the reasons why Russians should prefer the rule of the sultan to that of the czar; for it appears, at this part of his account, that he had already met with several Russian families in the Adtschara, who, he at last discovers, had fled to Turkey to escape from the rigours of Russian military discipline. The lot of these families, if the Russians should annex this portion of the Turkish frontier, will not be enviable. In all probability they will emigrate further west.

After leaving Tichi-Dsiri, where the Mudir of Schawschethi resides, Colonel Kasbek saw the "celebrated" church of Tbeti, which formerly belonged to the Bishop Mtbewari, under whose jurisdiction the whole of Schawschethi formerly (in the 10th century) lay. "This church, alas!" says Colonel Kasbek, "is now turned into a mosque." He then gives a minute description of the building in a tone which implies that it is the duty of Russia to restore this building to the descendants of the Bishop Mtbewari, who owned it in the 10th century. Every detail which can be traced to former ages, when the Byzantine church and the Byzantine empire ruled over those districts, is given as a reason why Russia should annex these regions. Colonel Kasbek may not say so in so many words, but that is the tendency of all he does say; and the care with which he notes down every fact that might be turned to advantage later, points clearly, when the official nature of his mission is taken into consideration, to an intention on the part of the Russian government to put forth claims to these regions at the first opportunity.

From Schawschethi, Colonel Kasbek proceeded into the district along the right bank of the middle Tschorok, which is called the Livana, and in which lies the fortress of Ardanudsh. Here he directed especial attention to the new high-road from Kars, *viâ* Ardanudsh and Artvin, to Batoum, which was being constructed by the Turkish government, but which, owing to the difficulties—not great for scientific

engineers, but far beyond the control of the Livanian population—had to be abandoned in its original conception, and dwindled down, in many places, to the modest dimensions of a mule-path.

The soil of the Livana, favoured by a splendid climate, is richer than any of the adjacent parts. Wherever there was a handful of earth amidst the depths of the rocks, it was covered with vines, pomegranate, almond, lotos, olive, and mulberry-trees. In the early days of June the harvest had been gathered in, the wheat and barley all garnered, and the fields being sown with maize, which would afford a fresh and luxuriant crop by the end of August.

In this district there are a number of monasteries and villages which are not set down in any published map, and the very existence of which is only known to the inhabitants and the Russian government. All these monasteries were visited by Colonel Kasbek, who evinced the greatest interest in their circumstances and history; and, when he arrived at Artvin, tried very hard to secure a copy of the New Testament, written in the Grusinian tongue, to which a silver cross was attached by a silver chain. "But," says the colonel, "the Mollah would not allow me to take it from the church *because I wanted to buy it.*" This is a fine specimen of the way in which official Russia writes the riddles which are to be read between the lines.

From Artvin the party proceeded on its way through Lasistan to Batoum, after having explored all the chief passes, and collected a vast amount of information regarding the roads and other subjects, which might be of use at a future date.

The result of this expedition was a complete picture of a series of districts which are unknown entirely to the rest of the world, and unknown one to the other. The value of the information thus gained has, no doubt, been amply demonstrated by the assistance which the commanders of the Russian army, especially General Heimann, derived from it in their campaign in the summer and autumn of 1877.

It is as difficult to give a picture of the scenic beauty of these regions, as it is to convey a full idea of their wonderful fertility—to say nothing of their mineral riches. Perhaps the attractions which here enchant the traveller would best be described by comparing them to the most beautiful portion of the Alps and the Pyrenees, if they were transported to Southern Italy. And it should be remembered that these regions are not only the cradle of European races, but also the cradle of most of the vegetable products which we count amongst the choicest of their kind. In fact, it is scarcely too much to say, that one-fifth of the land around the southern shores of the Black Sea, is richer, and more accessible to development, than the whole of Russia from the Vistula to Behring's Straits.

Some of the most recent information regarding the Russians in the Caucasus has been given by Mr. Bryce, who might have made his work as valuable as that by Colonel Kasheki, had he not been too much influenced by his Russian friends and surroundings. As it is, he has written the most perplexing book it is well possible for a man to write who has the power to treat his subject from various points of view, and in a style that would not only perplex but attract the reader and sustain his interest in the subject. As long as he recounts what he saw, and relates his own and his friend's experiences during his tour through the Caucasus, we read on, well satisfied with descriptions which faithfully recall these regions to the memory of those who have visited them, and furnish a vivid idea of the scene to those who have not. But when he quotes Strabo and Herodotus, and enters into an academical disquisition on the geography and ethnology of the regions lying between the Caspian and the Black Sea, the interest inspired by the narrative of the traveller quite vanishes. A writer cannot proceed with much spirit when he knows he is simply interpolating encyclopædical information that is not sufficient for the scientific world, and too much for the general public. His desire to plead for the Russians often leads him into strange contradictions. On one page he says that "the saying about scratching Russians and finding Tartars is pretty well exploded;" yet on another, after saying that the Russians are not thoroughly civilised themselves, and cannot impart what they have not got, he says, "Civilisation in Russia is like a coat of paint over unseasoned wood—you may not at first detect the unsoundness of the material, but test it, and it fails." If this is not precisely the sense of the exploded saying—expressed, it may be, in a paraphrase more adapted to the understanding of the general public unversed in the niceties of ethnological distinctions—it is difficult to discover what can have been in Mr. Bryce's mind. Still stranger are the contradictions Mr. Bryce falls into when speaking of the Armenians and other races inhabiting Transcaucasia. "There is no unity amongst them," he says, "no common national feeling to appeal to, nothing on which a national kingdom could be based. Nothing, in fact, keeps them together but the Russian army and administration; and the loyalty of both these to the czar is that which keeps Russia together, rising as it does almost to the dignity of a national worship." These views, expressed in the very home of the only race inhabiting these regions who ever formed an empire there, who have a rich literature, who are commercially and industrially above the Greeks of the empire, seemed very strange indeed; and still more inexplicable is the contradiction when he says that they are only kept together by the sword and the bureaux, which alone keep Russia together. Had Mr. Bryce continued his journey further south, he would have found Armenian colonies as flourishing as the best of those the German settlers so favourably impressed him with; for instance, the Armenian colony on the slopes of Mount Kesab—the Monte Cassius of Pliny—at the mouth of the Orontes. And in addition to historical facts, traditions, language, and literature, there is the religion of the Armenians, an item which goes far towards making up the basis for a national kingdom. On this point, Mr. Bryce himself says—"Amongst the Christians themselves, the *separate existence and strongly national character* of the Armenian church keep its children apart, not only from Protestant Germans, but from those who own the orthodox Eastern faith. And it is only where such a religious repulsion does not exist, as, for instance, between Russians and Georgians, that any social amalgamation goes on." These words show that Mr. Bryce would not ignore the fact that there are important elements existing to frame the basis for an Armenian State. Probably he yielded up his own judgment to the representations of his Russian friends; for when he arrives at Tiflis, and writes under the influence of immediate impressions, he estimates the Armenians at their true worth. Here he says of them—"They are the most vigorous and pushing men in the country, and have got most of its trade into their hands, not only the shopkeeping, but the larger mercantile concerns. A good many, too, are in the Russian service, and have thriven in it; in fact, more than half the *employés* in Transcaucasia are said to be Armenians. * * * Among them there are several people of learning and ability; and as their education improves and their wealth increases, the number of such persons is likely to grow; so that altogether one seems to see a considerable future before them." Then Mr. Bryce repeats what he has already said, and states once more that they do not mix or intermarry with the Russians or the Germans, but have a society of their own which is quite self-sufficing.

From these contradictory views it would seem as though Mr. Bryce had given himself a brief to plead for the Russians, and determined to regard everything through Muscovite spectacles, but could not resist the temptation to peep over the rims, and deprecatingly say what he saw with his own eyes. For, in his very spirited account of Tiflis, amidst whose vines Bodenstedt composed his *Mirza Schaffy*, after describing the picturesqueness of the motley crowd, the quaint head-gear of the German women, which makes them wonderful ornaments of the streets, the huge cylindrical hats, veils of black crape and serge robes of the clerics, and the pointed hats and yellow robes of the Persians, he deplores his meagre account of the place, whose "picturesque side even suffers in the hands of a traveller, who must own that he has no eye for costume." The same repugnance to relating what he saw, Mr. Bryce also feels to recounting what he heard from the Grand Duke Michael's adjutant-general, to whom he mysteriously alludes as one of the ablest men in the Russian service, now (1878), as he believes, commanding one of the divisions of the Russian army in Bulgaria. There can be no reason why this gentleman should not have been named. It was Prince Imeritinski with whom Mr. Bryce had a long conversation both before and after dinner, "in which the prince showed a mastery, not only of European politics generally, but even of English party politics, and the views and sympathies of our leading statesmen, which few of our own soldiers or diplomatists could have equalled. Remembering that conversation, I can understand the temptation which an 'interviewer' has to report what an eminent person says to him, that I will resist." How Mr. Bryce can imagine that an interviewer's duty is a

temptation it is not easy to understand; and, in all probability, Prince Imeritinski will scarcely feel grateful to Mr. Bryce for withholding from the public the proofs of that mastery of European and English politics "which few of our own diplomatists could have equalled."

However, having bid farewell to Prince Imeritinski, Mr. Bryce and his companion set out on their journey from Tiflis towards Ararat, and Mr. Bryce the advocate, gives place to Mr. Bryce the traveller, a change which is so agreeable that few persons will care about renewing the former gentleman's acquaintance outside of any court of which he may choose to be an ornament. Henceforth he recounts his experiences and impressions with vivacity and a true feeling for colour and the thousand-and-one beauties of picturesque detail which fill up the requisite pictures of harmony Nature is never weary of presenting, or surrounding the varied works of her children with. Thus his description of Erivan, with its little bit of Russian varnish here and there in the streets, is an excellent photograph coloured by a master-hand; and the "busy parti-coloured crowd," vibrating in and out of the mouths of the dark arcades of the bazaars, clustering like bees round the stalls where heaps of huge green and golden melons, plums, apples, and, above all, grapes of the richest hue and flavour lie piled up, conveys a most accurate idea of Eastern life. Still Mr. Bryce manages to spoil even this picture when he finishes it with the words —"It is a perfectly Eastern scene, just such as any city beyond the frontiers would present, save that in Persia one would see men crucified along the wall, and both there and in Turkey might hear the shrieks of wretches writhing under the bastinado." No doubt this is literally correct; but to make the meaning of the sentence plain to the ordinary reader, the hiatus at the end ought to be filled up by the necessary "if," which the conditional mood requires for its amplification. The crucifixions *would* be seen, and the shrieks of the bastinadoed wretches *might* be heard, if there were any, and if anybody were there to chronicle them. But naturally Mr. Bryce does not seriously mean to say that these are the ordinary sights and sounds greeting the traveller "beyond the frontier." If he did say so, his assertion would have precisely the same value as the harassing stories recounted on hearsay by Captain Burnaby regarding Russian barbarity, and would merit grave reproof when proceeding from men of such culture and penetration as Mr. Bryce.

At Erivan, Mount Ararat was in sight, and Mr. Bryce was naturally eager to press forward and stand upon the sunny cones that glittered down upon the sunny scene below. Engaging a tarantass, the two travellers jolted over the rocks embedded in fine dust, termed by courtesy a road, and drove past the cotton-fields, bright with yellow blossoms and snowy puffs of down, and the vineyards "loaded with purple fruit," which were surrounded by high mud walls, and guarded by peasants to warn off travellers who might be inclined to counteract the effects of the dust with the luscious fruit. Thus they arrived at Aralykh, the Russian frontier station at the foot of Ararat, where they were received by a Moslem noble, Colonel Shipshof, whose culture and education, comprising a full knowledge of such works as those by Mr. Buckle and Mr. Herbert Spencer, show that Islam does not in itself prevent the adoption of Western ideas and habits. The only drawback to his enjoyment of his host's hospitality was Mr. Bryce's inability to cope with the mosquitoes, which he endeavoured to combat with carbolic acid with no more success than burning a hole in his forehead, and counteracting one pain by another and a greater. Had he tried ammonia he would have been less tormented, and perhaps have foregone his revenge, which he inflicts on his readers, and not on the mosquitoes, in the shape of a physiographical and historical account of Mount Ararat, occupying forty-five pages, and which form as tiresome a prelude to his account of the ascent of the mountain as the wranglings and difficulties of procuring guides and the rest of the paraphernalia which preceded his attack on the snowy giant. At last he succeeded in starting, with his companion and escort of Kurds and Cossacks, whose energy, however, was not equal to his own, for they gave in when the ice-axe had to be used, and left Mr. Bryce to attain the summit alone, and gaze alone on the vague, misty scene below, dim and indistinct as the traditions which arise from it, and envelop the venerable peak with a cloud of mystery impenetrable to the faithful. But though he found a piece of hewn timber high up the slope beyond the tree-line, which might be a piece of gopher-wood and a remnant of

the ark, though he has his own private theory about the relic, which he does not communicate to his readers, Mr. Bryce was not believed by the Archimandrite of Etchmiadzin when he told him he had ascended the mountain. "No," the venerable man smiled sweetly; "no, that cannot be. No one has ever been there. It is impossible."

The foregoing descriptions, it will have been seen, apply to the country south of the main range of the Caucasus. Colonel Kasbek describes territories which, at the time he wrote, were still under Turkish rule. Mr. Bryce, on the other hand, describes regions which have for some time been under Russian rule. In Colonel Kasbek's work, it will also have been observed, the history of the races inhabiting these parts is treated as though the Russians had some sort of historical claim to them, and the names given to them such as are unintelligible to a large number of readers. It will have surprised a good many people to hear that the race which the Russians call Grusinians, or Grusians, are our old friends the Georgians. This family, split up into a number of more or less closely-related branches, Mingrelians, Imeritians, &c., is scattered about as far as the river Tschorok, where they become merged with Kurds, Armenians, and Turks.

Now, after Georgia had been handed over to Alexander I. in 1799, and the country was fully taken possession of by the Russian troops, the government at once proceeded to annex the history of the Georgians even as they annexed the land. That has been the principle on which the Russian government has proceeded from time immemorial. As soon as they acquired a fresh territory, they at once adopted its history and its claims. Beginning by overthrowing these claims in one direction, it ended by enforcing them in others. Thus the Tartar, having overthrown one section of the Slavs, at once decked himself in the stolen plumes, and made his new position the basis for attacking the other sections, acquiring them by diplomatic means if possible, but otherwise by completely crushing them, as in the case of Poland. From such beginnings has arisen the claim of the Russian government to be the protector of all the Slavs.

The same process is now in course of execution in the Caucasus. Having subjugated the Circassians, the Georgians, and the Armenians, they have also taken possession of their history; and now, in endless works of larger or smaller dimensions, *brochures* and newspaper articles, they lay claim, in their character of Circassians, Georgians, and Armenians, to the history, traditions, and former possessions of these races. Amongst each section they stir up the ambition to regain what once they lost. Russia is thus the Revolution incarnate and personified. This mode of action is just the same as if England, in virtue of her once having been conquered by the Saxons and Normans, were now to claim, and make war upon, Germany and France; or as if Prussia were to consider herself justified in claiming the whole of France in consequence of her possession of Alsace and Lorraine.

Thus, having assumed the championship of the Slav races in Europe, of the Georgian and Caucasian races in Turkey, we may now be prepared to find Russia assume the protectorate of all the Mongolian races, and so on, till she is stopped when she comes into contact with other European powers, if it be not too late then. It is also quite within the range of probabilities that she will one day lay claim to Germany, in virtue of her possessing the German provinces on the Baltic.

This is one of the phases of the Eastern question it is well to bear constantly in mind. It must be regarded from a broad point of view, and not from one of petty details, which can always be explained away.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

PANSLAVISM AND THE RUSSIAN PRESS.

THE procedure of the Russians in annexing the history and traditions of the people whose territory they seize, was never more strongly exemplified than in the case of Poland, especially during the period immediately preceding the Polish rebellion of 1863-'64. Of this rebellion it is here scarcely necessary to say more than that it was a final effort of the Polish nobility to recover their heritage, which was frustrated partly by the apathy of the peasantry, partly by the hostile attitude of Russia and Austria, but chiefly through the exceptionally severe measures—exceptional even for Russia, which is saying all that can be said—adopted by the Russian commanders, both military and civil, to crush the movement.

The rebellion broke out in 1863; and, led by Langievicz, who was named "Dictator," dragged on, without any hope of success, until the autumn of 1864, when the last bands, under the leadership of Lelewel, a pumpmaker of Warsaw, were finally routed at the battles of Batorsch and Panisoufka. Lelewel himself was killed; the leaders of the enterprise abroad, such as Czartoryski, threw up the sponge; the secret committees dissolved, and the Polish rebellion of 1863 became a matter of history—added a fresh blood-stained page to the bloody annals of the Muscovite empire.

But though a military defeat, though the crushing nature of the blow was for the moment complete, the Polish rebellion had consequences which are being felt to the present day; for it was this rebellion which set the Panslavonic party into practical action, and brought Panslavism forward from the region of philosophical theories into the domain of what Lord Derby called practical politics.

We have already alluded to the fermentation preceding and following the Crimean war. Liberal ideas, democratic ambitions, socialist plans, were all mixed up together, and prosecuted for this, that, and the other. Meetings were held demanding a constitution; journals attacking the government were eagerly read, and none more than the *Kolkol*, or "Bell," which was published by Hertzen during his exile.

All this agitation soon produced a considerable effect. The students at Moscow and St. Petersburg entered into and formed a number of secret societies; in the country, the "Red Cock"—as the Russians call incendiary fires, and to which we have already alluded—spread terror all around. The government at once proceeded to act in its customary manner; and, instead of listening to the complaints of the people, and furnishing redress where it was necessary, commenced a series of those persecutions which have excited the indignation of all civilised communities in all ages.

The poet Michaïlof was exiled to Siberia, where he was soon killed by the hardships he had to undergo. The journalist Tchernychewski was condemned to two years' solitary confinement, and then to perpetual exile and hard labour in the mines. Martianoff, an ex-serf, whose only crime was his advocacy of a constitution, and the substitution of a constitutional monarchy in lieu of a despotic rule, was shot, with a number of others for the same reasons. And worst and most contemptible of all, the government carried on its crusade against the advocates for a constitution by causing a proclamation to be issued, commencing with the words—

"PEOPLE! YOU WISH FOR A DESCRIPTION OF THE INCENDIARIES WHO DESOLATE YOUR HOMES AND LAY YOUR VILLAGES IN RUINS. Here is their description:—They are the people who do not believe in God; who do not confess regularly; who do not go to church assiduously; who do not respect the authorities, and who preach the revolutionary doctrines of the West. Those are the incendiaries who deliver your homes up to the flames! Whenever you meet them, stamp them out like weeds and vermin."

It is scarcely credible that any government laying claim to civilisation should act in this manner. But so it was; and, as might be supposed, the general discontent soon spread to Poland, where the excitement became intense, and resulted

in the outbreak of open rebellion. It might have been thought that, with the agitation in Russia itself, the Poles would have received assistance from the discontented and oppressed within the empire. The government itself was afraid that such might be the case, and that the discontented might take advantage of the troubles in Poland to try to enforce their own wishes. Thus the czar addressed the imperial guard in tones which showed plainly how great his anxiety on the subject had become. But, at the same time, the government was not sorry to see the rebellion in Poland break out. It was held that it would serve, first of all as a diversion, and, secondly, it was determined that such an example should be made of the rebels as would effectually deter the disaffected Russians from assisting them or forwarding their constitutional projects. In accordance with this decision, the wretched prisoners taken in Poland were marched to their destination in Siberia by the most circuitous routes, as a warning to those who might be inclined to follow their example.

But it was just at this critical moment that the government received an ally in a quarter where it was least expected. Panslavism came to the rescue. What Panslavism is, we will endeavour to make clear to our readers.

The first features which most strike the inquirer into this subject, are the similarities and dissimilarities of the various Slav dialects to and from each other, which are very puzzling to the foreigner who has made himself passably acquainted with one of them, and trusts to this knowledge to carry him through the various countries where the rest are spoken. He then finds, if he is trusting to Polish, that his knowledge is of very little use in Russia or in the Servian and Bulgarian provinces; and by the time that he has acquired a knowledge of Servian, he finds that, though Russian is not quite so strange a tongue, still he is unable to carry on a conversation with a Czech. The contention of the Panslavonians, therefore, that there is no greater difference between the Slav dialects than there is between the dialects of France or Germany, is apt to strike one as considerably exaggerated. The enthusiastic Panslavist, however, at once replies that this is an entirely erroneous impression, due to the foreigner's not having studied the various dialects, and being consequently unable to perceive their identity. The objection that the very necessity of a study of these dialects proves their non-identity does not weigh in the least with the Panslavist. Such study, he asserts, should form an integral portion of every Slav's education; but he will not acknowledge that this is still only a desideratum until he has been quite driven into a corner, and forced to confess that the difference between a dialect and a language is, that whilst the dialect-speaker is always able to speak the standard language of his country, there is no obligation for the speaker of one language to be able to speak another. Thus the Catalan, who habitually prefers speaking his own favourite *patois*, is always able to speak Spanish; but there is many a Basque who cannot speak a word of Spanish or French. Plattdeutsch is very similar to Dutch; but though the Plattdeutscher is always able to speak German, he is not able to speak Dutch. Spanish and Basque, Dutch and German, are distinct languages; but Catalan and Low German—Plattdeutsch—are dialects; and the Panslavist's contention is, that all the Slav languages are equally dialects. But when he is asked what the standard language is, the reply varies with his nationality. M. Aksákoff would at once answer, Russian. Prince Czartoryski or Prince Lubomirski would reply, Polish. Herr Skrejschowski would say, Czech. M. Mijatovich would stoutly insist upon Servian, and Cardinal Mihailovich claim Croatian for the standard tongue. Others, like Bishop Strossmayer, would still deny any fundamental differences, and assert that all that is required to furnish the Slav races with one common tongue, is a judicious arrangement of the grammar and the choice of a common alphabet. Nothing could be droller than to compare Bishop Strossmayer's statement that there is really no difference in the various dialects beyond the alphabet, with the fact that he is obliged to talk French, German, or Italian with Count Drohojowski, his secretary, a Polish nobleman, who might be seen working hard to master the mysteries of the Servian tongue, in order to prepare himself for his *curé* at Belgrade. And not only was he unable to talk Servian, but he was equally unable to converse in Croat, and had to speak German with his colleague, Canon Vorsak, and others.

But there are other facts of historical

notoriety which prove that there must be a very fundamental difference between many of the Slav languages. For instance, the rigour with which the Russian government excludes Polish from the national schools, and makes the secret teaching of the language an offence against the law. No less great is the rivalry between the academies at Agram and Belgrade. And, finally, there is the evidence of the czar and czarina themselves, who, in reply to a deputation in 1867, expressed their sorrow that the Slav races were not in possession of a common alphabet and a common orthography. In addition, the czar said to this deputation—"We have always regarded the Serbs as our brethren, and I hope your affairs will soon take a more favourable turn. Meanwhile, I welcome you all, my beloved Slavonic brethren, on this our common Slavonic soil, and hope you will be satisfied with your reception in Moscow and St. Petersburg." The deputation, be it remembered, to which these words were spoken, consisted of Austrian, Servian, and Turkish Slavs.

Now, taking the imperial words literally, the mere fact of these Slav races being linguistically divided by different alphabets and orthographies alone shows a considerable difference between them; and this difference becomes still more glaring when we consider the possibility of the imperial wish being fulfilled. There are three alphabets in use amongst the Slavs. The Russians, Ruthenes, Montenegrins, and Serbs employ the same Cyrillian character. The Bulgarians make use of an ancient form of this alphabet; whilst the rest of the Slavs, both north and south of the Danube, have adopted the Roman letters, with the addition of various accents—the acute, grave, inverted circumflex, and others—in order to represent the combinations of letters which correspond to the number of sounds used by the Slavs, for which the Roman alphabet possesses no single equivalents. This modified Roman alphabet is thus a bastard product, for which there is really no excuse except in so far as it may save time. But it is very questionable whether it is easier to write "Cernavoda" than it is to write "Tchernavoda" or "Chernavoda;" it would be much the same as if we were to write *muc* instead of "much," or *sall* instead of "shall," whilst still keeping the characters *c*, *s*, and *h*, for other combinations. In short, all these signs and accents with which the Poles, Czechs, Croats, and Slovaks have burdened the Roman alphabet, are scarcely more than national vanities, which could only be justified by the national importance of the races indulging in them; and it can scarcely be expected that the vast Slavic majority of Russians, Serbs, Montenegrins, and Bulgarians, should give up one of their great national characteristics—the Cyrillian alphabet—in exchange for a bastard Roman alphabet. Whether the world would not be a gainer by their doing so, and whether the Roman alphabet would not be made to represent Slavic sound without an encumbering mass of accentual excrescences, is of course another question, to which there would be different replies. But there is no doubt that, from a national and Slavic point of view, the Russian alphabet would afford by far the best medium for Slavic intercourse. As Dr. Carl Abel says, in an article on the subject in the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, the Czechs and Poles would gain as much by using the Cyrillian letters as the Russian and Serbs would lose by adopting the Czech-Polish alphabet.

But whilst there would be no difficulty in adapting the various Slavic languages to the Cyrillian character, the introduction of a common orthography presents far more difficulties. It is true that the Slavic idioms are closely related, and have many roots in common; but, in very many cases, not only are the roots very different, but also the endings, prefixes, and other inflexions. Generally speaking, the roots, even when they are identical, possess different endings in the different idioms. Thus we find that the Russian for "to smoke" is *Kur-iti*, the Polish, *Kur-zic*, so that whilst the root *Kur* might be subjected to one common orthography, a choice between Russian and Polish would have to be made for the ending. Still less possible would it be to find one common form for the Russian *tem-ny*, the Polish *ciem-ny*, and the Serb *czer-ny*, "dark;" or for the Russian *sve-ti*, the Serb *sev-ati*, "to gleam," the Russian *zec-i*, and the Slovak *Kuh-ati*, "to burn, glow, roast."

But the difficulties presented by these more or less awkward forms are small in comparison to those which arise when the word not only differs in form but also in meaning. The reduction of the Slovene *kutati* and the Russian *zigati* to one common form would be useless as long as the

former signified "to cook" and the latter "to burn." The Russian cook would have to be pitied if, in obedience to her Slovene master's orders to cook the fowl, she were to burn it instead! What would be the use, again, of reducing the Serb *disati* and the Slovene *zdihati* to one common spelling as long as one word means "to breathe" and the other "to sigh?" But so it is throughout. Words which average the same signification are just as rare as the words averaging the same form. And not only this, but the development of one root assumes widely different proportions amongst the various families, and to a much greater extent than is the case in other European languages.

For instance, whilst such words as *voda*, "water;" *kraj*, "edge;" *koza*, "goat;" *dati*, "to give," &c., are the same in Russian and Servian, the roots of other words have received a different development. Thus the Russian *udariti*, "to push, knock," becomes *turiti* in Servian; *polk*, "a company," becomes *puk; zli*, "wicked," becomes *zao; boloto*, "swamp," becomes *blato* —with the additional equivalent of *mlaka; seci*, "to break," becomes *tuci*, and so on *ad infinitum*.

The establishment, therefore, of one common standard for all the Slav tongues would be no easy undertaking. The difficulties will be best realised by supposing a plan set on foot for a Pan-Teutonic language, comprising German, English, Dutch, and the Scandinavian tongues. It would be found that the first difficulty would be to induce the Germans to abandon their peculiar alphabet, or the English and Dutch to abandon the Roman alphabet, whilst the Swedes and Norwegians agreed to give up their peculiar accentuation and compound letters. This having been accomplished, say, in favour of the English alphabet, the next step would be to introduce a common orthography. The simple words would first be disposed of by groups, varying according to their differences. The beginning would be made with those words identical in sound and meaning, but differing in spelling, such as—fish, *Fisch;* stool, *Stuhl;* mouse, *Maus;* house, *Haus:* sour, *Sauer;* beer, *Bier*, &c. In these words it is clear that one nation must yield to the other, or compromise—say, "sour" become *sauer*, and "stuhl" become *stul*—the *h* being superfluous even according to German views, *wohl* frequently being written *wol*. The next step would be to take the words identical in spelling and meaning, but differing in pronunciation, such as—land, *Land;* hand, *Hand;* band, *Band;* brand, *Brand;* stand, *Stand;* all, *All;* ball, *Ball;* fall, *Fall;* stall, *Stall*, &c. To harmonise the difference of pronunciation it would be necessary to determine the quantity of the letter *a*. Then it would be necessary to determine the quantity of the other vowels, and to decide whether the English *i* should represent the German *ei*, or *vice versâ*—whether "fine" should not be written *Fein*, or *Schein* be expressed by "shine," and so on with the rest of the vowels and diphthongs. After this had been settled, the consonants would have their turn, and the interchanges of *d*, *t*, *v*, *f*, *p*, *b*, have to be fixed. Thus, whether Garden or *Garten;* hard or *hart;* before or *bevor*, should be the standard. And when all this, and much more which is very simple, is satisfactorily settled, there would be the question of the development of the various roots. In such a series as—

English—to flee	to fly	fledgling	flutter
German—*fliehen*	*fliegen*	*Vogel*	*flattern*

the question would arise as to which development would have to be the standard, and also as to what is to become of the English word "bird." Would that disappear in favour of *Vogel* or *vice versâ*, or would they both have to be adopted? Or, for instance, in a series like—

English—to flow	float	flood	flush
German—*fliessen*	*Floss*	*Fluth*	—

what part would these words play in the standard tongue? Would "float" take the form of *floss* with its signification of "raft," or the verb "to float" be retained, as it has no equivalent in German beyond *schwimmen*, "to swim?" And, finally, would "flush" (in the sense of sousing), for which there is no similarly sounding expression in German, also become one of the standard words?

The difficulties in the way of establishing a standard Panslavonian tongue will now be evident from this comparison; but, on the other hand, it must not be considered as an impossibility. It is a question of power. It is a question as to which language is entitled by its development and literature to form the standard, and then, as to whether the race speaking this language possesses the power to force the

others to accept it. There can be no doubt that the Russian tongue fulfils the first conditions. It is well developed; it is a rich and a powerful language, and it possesses a noteworthy literature—a literature which, though young, has already taken no mean place amongst the literatures of the world. The Poles and Czechs, it is true, possess tolerably developed languages and a certain literature, but they cannot be compared to the Russian; whilst the Croats, Serbs, Bulgarians, Slovaks, and Slovenes have neither a grammatically fixed language nor any literatures. They could therefore only gain by being grafted on to the Russian tongue and literature. The Poles and Czechs, it is true, might also advance a claim to establish the standard; but here the second consideration comes into play. Have they the political power? Clearly not. But assuming that Servia, Bulgaria, Croatia, and Bohemia were incorporated with Russia, there can scarcely be any doubt that their own linguistic differences would speedily disappear in the Russian tongue, a process that would be forwarded in no small degree by the wonderful facility the Slavic races possess in acquiring other tongues. The difficulties, which would be almost insuperable, in the way of amalgamating English and German would scarcely be felt by the Slavs. Giving up *ciem-ny* or *czer-ny* for *tem-ny* would not incommode them in the least if they once sacrificed their little national vanities in the distinction of their languages, or if they were forced to abandon them by the strong hand Russia has made felt in Poland, in Lithuania, and in Finland. If by such means the Germans in Alsatia were turned into Frenchmen; if by such means these Frenchmen are to be turned again into Germans; if similar processes were and are carried out in Schleswig-Holstein, what is there to prevent the Russians from achieving the same success, especially when the differences in the languages are so much slighter? There is nothing to prevent it. On the contrary, granted the power, it would be the most natural process. The only thing which could prevent it would be the national jealousies of the various families. Hence the great error of the Austrians in trying to stifle the national tongue and literature of their Slavonic subjects instead of forwarding them, and thus make Czech, Pole, and Croat less willing to merge their own national languages in another, though a kindred one. This also explains how political Panslavism and literary Panslavism act and re-act on each other; how one is impossible without the other; and, the chances of success being so much in its favour, why the Germans regard Panslavism with such horror. Hence the German's fear of Russia as the one power which might make Panslavism a reality, and which advocates the establishment of minor Slavonic States along the Danube, with Austria's becoming a Slavonic power, as the best means of erecting a charmed barrier between them and the Panslavonic spectre, behind which lurks Russia with her vast military organisation.

But, apart from these philological difficulties, the existence of so many rival nationalities and churches within the Russian empire; the disorders and disturbances arising therefrom; the close relations of these nationalities to each other and those of kindred race in other countries, also caused the want to be felt of a unifying element. Unity was desired, and various measures were adopted to attain it, into which we need not now enter. Suffice it to say that they were not successful. The "great idea" was still wanting in a clear, definite shape, though it had presented itself more or less vaguely and dimly to many enlightened men. The first who began to see his way more clearly was the author of the well-known "Chronicles of a Russian Family," Sergei Timofeyevitch Aksákoff. The ideas he gradually formed on the subject were eagerly imbibed and developed by his two sons, the elder of whom (born 1817, in Moscow, and died in the island of Zante, 1860) was in fact the practical founder of the Slavophil party, and the author of the theory according to which Russia, as the most powerful of the Slav families, is to regenerate the Pagan West in the future, but for the present to break with it entirely, and confine herself to the development of a purely national life, and restore the power and unity of the Eastern Orthodox Church. This idea soon found many advocates and disciples; amongst them were the elder Aksákoff's intimate friend, Khomiakoff, the late Samarin, and the brothers Kireyeffski, who were the first to seriously study the national life of the Russians, their peculiarities, their resemblances, their dissimilarities; to seek for common ground on which all could meet, and to give Panslavism a scientific basis in the history of Russia.



How successful this little band of enthusiasts was, the progress of Panslavism sufficiently shows. Still, though an ever-growing idea, it remained an idea until the events of 1854-'56 greatly increased the more or less latent repugnance to Western nations and habits, and changed it into a bitter animosity that has been growing stronger and stronger for the last twenty years, and furnished the younger brother, Ivan Aksákoff, with a basis to put his ideas into practical execution. Unanimously he was accepted as the chief apostle of the doctrine founded by his brother. Excluded under the old *régime* from all public activity, his labours had been confined to occasional works on the national industries of Russia; but in 1861, after the reforms of 1860 had granted to the Russian press considerable liberties, he established a weekly journal, the *Dyen (The Day)*, which was speedily recognised as the chief organ of the national party. The object of this party, in the first instance, was to gain the old, orthodox Conservative Russians—the Muscovites proper—over to the doctrines of Panslavism. Regeneration was to proceed from Moscow, and Panslavism was to be its *cheval de bataille*. That being the case, it was of course necessary, first of all, to enforce these doctrines at home before propagating them practically abroad. Hence the chief objects of the *Dyen's* attacks were the nobility, the bureaucracy, and the higher clergy, a bitter article against the latter causing its suspension in 1862. Old-fashioned Conservative Moscow was, in fact, attacking innovating St. Petersburg with its varnish of Western civilisation and employment of foreigners in various branches of the service. It never wearied in its attacks, bitter sarcasm and fiery invective being freely and undisguisedly applied, so that the friends it had gained in the immediate vicinity of the czar could not prevent its suspension. But in that short year the *Dyen* had already become a power. It had focussed into its pages, as it were, the desires and demands that had been growing louder and louder throughout the empire since the Crimean war, and presented them with a concentrated intensity that showed there was here an immense force for good or for evil, and an engine the government would do well not to destroy, but keep under control for its own use in case of necessity. We are able to state, on the best of authority, that at this period the czar was much harassed in reference to the *Dyen* and its principles. The Court party of St. Petersburg nobility, as well as the higher clergy, and all the German party with one or two exceptions, insisted on the total suppression of the obnoxious paper, and advocated strict measures against the apostles of its doctrines. One person, however, pointed out to the czar that this phenomenon was in a great measure the result of his reforms, and an inevitable stage in the development of the national life, to suppress which would be practically to suppress the reforms just granted. It was but the natural fermentation the reforms had given rise to, and was simply carrying out their further work by ejecting the dross and scum, to eliminate which the czar had initiated these reforms that had so much redounded to his credit. The czar fully perceived the truth of these observations, and the *Dyen* was, as we have said, only temporarily suspended. Aksákoff was made aware of the opinion the czar entertained of the movement, and, relying on this bulwark, redoubled his attacks. A special opportunity for the exercise of his talents was offered by the Polish rebellion in 1863-'64. The *Dyen*, seconded by the *Moscow Gazette* and M. Katkoff—of whom more hereafter—was the most violent of all the journals which waged a bitter war against those degenerate Slavs, the Poles, who had been corrupted by the evil ways and habits of the West, who had forsaken the Holy Orthodox Church, and fallen a victim to the snares of Romanism. It demanded the sternest measures—the abolition of Roman Catholicism, the complete Russification of Lithuania, the liberation not only of the Polish provinces under Austrian and Prussian rule, but also of the Ruthenians, the Zechs, and the Croats, &c. This language of the *Dyen* led to such remonstrances from the Prussian and Austrian embassies and parties, that the government was at last forced to proceed against it. But as neither warnings nor suspensions succeeded in forcing Aksákoff to moderate the tone of the paper, it was finally suppressed. Aksákoff, however, knew the power of the force at his back, and he knew also that the czar still favoured his views. Thus the *Dyen* reappeared in the form of a large daily paper, which, under the titles of *Moskwá* and *Moskwityánin*, according as it was suppressed or suspended, still carried on a bitter war against the foreign elements in the government and the empire. Foreign

affairs, however, especially since the abandonment of the Cretans, and the relations of Russia to Germany—or, rather, Prussia—were in a condition that made this attitude very awkward for the government; and, finally, the czar was obliged to withdraw from the protection of M. Aksákoff, though he did not withdraw his favour.

These things, coupled with his endless quarrels with the *Bureau de Presse*, caused Aksákoff to retire for a while from public life, again confining his labours to scientific studies, and presiding at the sittings of the Slav committee he had established, or helped to establish. In truth, however, the Court party had become too strong for him; and for a time he was in danger of becoming a forgotten man, as far as the czar was concerned, when an event occurred that not only brought him to the front again, but was also the means of his acquiring influence in another and probably more powerful quarter—at least for the future. This event was the famine of 1867-'68. As president of one of the committees formed for the relief of the sufferers, he entered into correspondence with the hereditary grand duke, and was afforded the opportunity, besides, of giving his imperial highness some very valuable information and counsel touching home and foreign affairs. Several highly interesting documents of this correspondence fell into the hands of the Chancellerie, which resulted in a very lively exchange of letters between the grand duke and the guardians of public security, resulting in the victory of the latter for the time being. The influence, however, which M. Aksákoff thus gained over the grand duke—or, to speak more correctly, the influence M. Aksákoff's theories had gained—was not shaken by this victory of the police, and the grand duke is believed to be the most dangerous enemy the foreign, and especially the German, party can have in Russia. The relations of some of the members of the imperial family to each other and to the State authorities would form an interesting chapter, not without importance for our own relations with Russia; but these things are not cognate with the present subject, which is an account of the character and objects of Panslavism and its chief leaders, whose triumph in influencing the policy of the empire is becoming more manifest day by day, and, as far as can now be seen, will continue for some years to come.

Panslavism has thus two objects in view—the extension of its doctrines beyond the limits, and their development within the limits, of the empire. To this fact are due the alternate favour and disfavour with which it is regarded by the authorities. At times like those of the Polish rebellion, or the present, its assistance is invaluable; and as an engine for the Minister of Foreign Affairs it is unrivalled. But in quieter times the home minister looks very much askance at the movement, for he has to reap the whirlwind his colleague has sown, and to try to prevent its growing into the tornado it threatens to become. In fact, the spirit has been raised, and no counter-spell is able to lay him again.

Such is Panslavism in Russia. In other countries, in Austria and Turkey, it naturally assumes another form, and more approaches the character of a secret society than in Russia. But even here it is very far from being a secret society in the common sense of the phrase; and it resembles the Russian movement also in having a protector at Court, if not in the person of the emperor himself, at any rate amongst his surrounders; although it must not be forgotten that this Slavophile party at the Court of Vienna do not endorse the whole of the Panslavonic theory. But this party—of which the Archduke Albrecht is the reputed chief—is just in the same predicament as the Russian government. They have raised the storm and cannot control it. They raised it in 1848, when they appealed to the loyalty and national feeling of the Slavs to support them against the Hungarian revolt. Till then, Panslavism had made scarcely any progress in Austria. But the moment that the Vienna government invoked one nationality against the other, and made a distinction between the two within the empire, they also taught them that they had distinct interests. Thus arose that consciousness of the possession of a distinct nationality of which the Slavs, and especially the Croats, Slavonians, and Dalmatians, had almost forgotten, or at any rate ignored, the existence. But this consciousness once aroused, old privileges that had been disregarded, old customs which had fallen into desuetude, and old traditions, claims, and pretensions and rights that had long remained dormant, were recovered one by one from the *débris* of the past, and resuscitated into fresh and vigorous life. There was, in consequence, a complete Slav revival; and after the brilliant campaign of

the Ban Jellacich with his Croatians, and Stratimirovich with the Hungarian Serbs in 1848, nothing would content the newly awakened sense of nationality evinced by the Diet at Agram but the creation of a triune kingdom composed of Croatia, Dalmatia, and Slavonia. To strengthen the movement which was to attain this object, the Citonisca was founded in 1849 at Cattaro. This Citonisca was a society formed for the propagation of Slav ideas, the union of the various Slav races and families throughout the Adriatic, Istrian, and Slav districts, and to pave the way to an autonomy within the empire. Branches of the Citonisca rapidly multiplied. One was founded at Ragusa, and another at Spalato in 1863; these were followed by others at Sebenico in 1866; at Trau in 1867; at Zengg, Macarsca, Imoschi, and Gelsa in 1870; and at present there is not a town from Cattaro to Agram, from Agram to Essegg, that has not its branch society, or a village where there is not an agent. Owing to the exertions of the Citonisca, the Slav tongue has been introduced into the schools where hitherto only Italian and German had been taught. It has been introduced into the law-courts, and forms a portion of the examination of the candidates for the public service, who were formerly only examined in German and Italian. A Slav library has been founded at Zara under the title of Bibliotheca Patria, a museum at Agram, as well as an academy, both of which have been richly endowed and assisted by Bishops Strossmayer and Mihailovich, by MM. Gliubich, Cullsch, Miklosich, and others; in short, Slav history, language, and art, received an amount of attention that has richly borne its fruits, so that in all parts of the provinces the Slavs have a majority over the Italians and Germans—just the opposite to what was the case even as recently as 1861. The Citonisca has thus been eminently successful, and has completely gained the victory over the Italian party, especially since the events of 1866, before which the Austrian government had more interest in securing the favour of its Italian subjects than it has now that Lombardy and Venice are lost to it. There is, therefore, no secrecy about the Citonisca, in which the Court party at Vienna does not participate. Its object, the autonomy of the Slav provinces in one or more groups, is avowed; and it is allowed to advocate this object in the Diet, in its periodicals and daily journals, without let or hindrance. As M. Aksákoff and the Moscow committees thundered against the Poles and the foreign elements at St. Petersburg, so does the Diet at Agram, so do Bishop Strossmayer, Canon Vorsak, and others thunder against the Magyars, the Jews, and Germans who support the Beust abortion of 1866. In a certain sense it is true that the Citonisca is a secret society—it is so in all that concerns the Hungarian government, and its organisation is so complete that nothing short of the sword could break it up. It entertains intimate relations with the Omladina, with the Moscow committee and the Czech Club. It has special agents at the Vatican; it is in connection with the various branches of the International, and certainly neglects no opportunity of striking a blow at its deadly enemies, the Magyars. Though the Hungarians have the control of the post and telegraph offices, the Citonisca has its own system, which ensures the safety of its correspondence; if arms, ammunition, &c., are required for a rising, the Citonisca purchases them, and provides for their introduction into, and transmission through, the country, in spite of the government at Pesth, for it knows that its accomplices at the Court of Vienna, if not powerful enough just yet to procure the object in view, is at any rate strong enough to prevent its persecution. Thus we have here the singular exhibition of a government being practically a member of a society directed against itself, and seeing the time approach when, like the government of St. Petersburg, it will have to break with its accomplices, or adopt their views entirely, and carry them into execution. And the government at Vienna is, in our opinion, much nearer to this decisive point than is that at St. Petersburg. An amusing instance of this strange state of affairs occurred in 1866, during the Austro-Prussian war. An English gentleman was arrested at Dalmatia, on a charge of *espionnage*, by the Austro-Italian authorities. He was handed over to the care of two Hungarian Hussars, who had orders not to let him out of sight. The Hungarians were greatly disgusted at having to do police duty for the "Slovaks," and advised their prisoner to apply to the Hungarian commander-in-chief. This he did, and an order came speedily for his release. But meanwhile the Vienna authorities had ordered him still to be kept in durance vile, and

sent on to Vienna. But the Hungarian officer who had charge of him, and possession of his body, put him on board one of the Lloyd steamers bound for Corfu. The matter was subsequently quite satisfactorily settled at Vienna. But in 1876, the same individual, on landing in Dalmatia, happened to meet the same officer, who, remembering the circumstances, conceived a suspicion that perhaps after all he was a spy, and had him arrested for some irregularity in his passport, and ordered not to leave his hotel. Within half an hour, several members of the local Citonisca had called upon the "prisoner," and before the day was out he was released—this time by an order from Vienna, in spite of counter-orders from Pesth.

The Omladina, with which the Citonisca co-operates for the time being, differs considerably in its objects from the Citonisca. Its organisation is, however, precisely the same, though not publicly so developed as the Citonisca, as it is of more modern origin in its practical form, and the Hungarians have, not quite unsuccessfully, opposed it from the first, having taken warning by the progress of the Citonisca. Though more frequently mentioned, it has nothing like the power of the Citonisca as an independent body; but, co-operating with the Citonisca, the Moscow committees, and the Czech Club, it is so far of great importance, and able to create a diversion that might seriously embarrass the Hungarian government. Besides the general objects of Panslavism, the Omladina pursues a separate object, that object being to unite the Serbs as distinguished from the Croats, and to procure not only an autonomy within the limits of the Austrian empire, but the absolute independence of a Serb State, under the rule of Prince Milan, Prince Karageorgevitch, or any other Serb. The person of the future ruler is a matter of secondary importance. The distinction between Serb and Croat is the same as that between Muscovite and Pole; the Serbs belong to the Orthodox church, and the Croats to the Roman Catholic church, so that there is, *ab initio*, a cause for opposition between them, and the co-operation of the two more or less of a temporary and artificial character.

The cause for the existence of the Omladina within the bounds of the Austrian empire, is furnished by the presence of the Serb colonies in Southern Hungary, ranging, roughly speaking, from Sissek on the Save, and Vukova on the Danube, down to Orsova, the chief centres being Neusatz, Carlovitz, the seat of the Serb patriarchate, and Panscova. These colonies were founded at different epochs, on the invitation of the Austrian government, under the guarantee of certain rights and privileges, which, however, had become gradually disregarded and merged in the interests of the empire. But having, on the whole, little to complain of, the Serbs of Hungary did not insist on the observation of their privileges. They got on well enough with the German administration, though they did not escape the influence of the general Slav revival; and in 1848, following the example of the Croats, they began to clamour for the restitution of their rights, and all the more so when they were placed under Hungarian rule. Thus arose the Omladina, or Young Servia, the chief leaders of which are the well-known agitators Miletics and Dr. Michael Polit, both members of the Hungarian Diet for Neusatz and Panscova. Miletics is by far the most powerful of the Omladina leaders; is of untiring energy, rancorous and persistent in his hatred of the Hungarians, against whom he never ceased his attacks in his journal, the *Zastava*, published at Neusatz. He is, in fact, the Aksákoff, and his paper the *Dyen* of South Hungary. Dr. Michael Polit, a native of Neusatz—where his brother carries on the business of a linendraper—was brought up to the bar, and is more a man of the world, more ready to give and take, especially the latter, than his friend Miletics. While Miletics would be content with nothing less than a great Servia, Polit would be satisfied with an autonomical compromise; but the Omladina supports Miletics, and Moscow supports the Omladina, which, therefore, as far as Hungary is concerned, is a secret society in the fullest sense of the phrase, and a treasonable society in so far as it demands the incorporation with Servia of the Serb districts of Hungary, or, *vice versâ*, the incorporation of Servia with the Serb portions of Hungary under an independent *régime*. It is, therefore, not surprising that the Hungarians should have arrested Miletics on a charge of treason, and have prohibited Omladinist meetings. At the same time, they have not molested Polit, as being the man of compromise through whom they can preserve direct relations

with the malcontents. What the Omladina wants in numbers and means, it amply replaces by redoubled energy and agitation, for which the proximity to Servia offers favourable opportunities. The organisation is very complete. A general letter of introduction from any of the leaders of the party ensures the owner the welcome and assistance of all the members, every town and every village having its committees and agents, who are ready for anything, from procuring an oka of Turkish tobacco duty-free from the other side, to sending over a cargo of arms and gunpowder. Yet, notwithstanding the difference between the objects of the Omladina and the Citonisca, the Austrian government makes use of it as a means of playing off the Serbs and Slavs against the Magyars, and is thus as much a member of the Omladina as it is of the Citonisca. Through it the government is made aware of all that passes in Belgrade, and of much that passes even in Moscow and Cettinje. It is chiefly owing to this knowledge, and keeping up relations with the party, that has enabled the Austrian government to keep its way open, and reserve to itself the leadership of the Slav party against the Hungarians, as soon as the forces become too strong to be controlled in any other way. As for the Polish societies, such as the Sila and Ogynsko ("Strength" and "Hearth"), as well as the Czech clubs and associations, Mercury and so on, both Poles and Czechs are such good Catholics, that the government can well afford to ignore the frantic attempts to frighten it by a pretended or real understanding with the Orthodox committees of Russia. The attacks of Skrejschowski, the proprietor and editor of the *Politik*, published at Prague, have not much more than a local interest, except in so far as they are made on behalf of a section of financiers and capitalists who are waging war against the Jew interest, as represented by the *Neue Freie Presse* of Vienna.

Such is the general aspect of Panslavism. It was this force which came to the assistance of the Russian government in 1863. It was led by a triumvirate—by Prince Gortchakoff, General Mouravieff, and a more powerful leader still—by M. Katkoff, who did practically for Panslavism what M. Aksákoff did theoretically and philosophically.

M. Katkoff is the editor of the *Moscow Gazette*, of whom Mr. Mackenzie Wallace gave a short account recently. Mr. Wallace says—

"M. Katkoff is the son of a parish priest, and was formerly professor of philosophy in the University of Moscow. He first came prominently before the public during the first years of the present reign. At that time the stern repressive system of administration practised by the Emperor Nicholas, in imitation of Metternich, was abolished, and a considerable liberty of opinion was allowed by the Russian government. Taking advantage of that new freedom, M. Katkoff founded a fortnightly review, called the *Russki Vyestnik*, and soon afterwards became editor of the *Moscow Gazette*, which was then an insignificant organ belonging to the Moscow University. Very soon circumstances brought M. Katkoff to the front. When, in 1863, the outburst of Liberalism which followed the Crimean war was at its height, the Polish insurrection broke out, and there was naturally a moment of hesitation. Those who had been talking of liberty, equality, and fraternity could not consistently blame the Poles for attempting to cast off a foreign yoke, and at the same time they could not, as Russian patriots, sympathise with the insurgents. What was to be done? Some oracles gave forth an uncertain sound, but M. Katkoff did not follow their example. He declared boldly that much of the prevailing Liberalism was absurd sentimentality, which, if indulged in, must lead to the dismemberment of the empire; and he preached that doctrine with such energy and eloquence that he rapidly acquired enormous influence. Since that time he has always advocated the consolidation of the empire by the abolition of such local privileges as exist in Finland and the Baltic provinces, and the suppression of what a German would call Particularismus, wherever it appeared. When, for example, an attempt was made to revive the peculiar dialect of Little Russia—differing from Great Russian pretty much as Lowland Scotch differs from English—he thundered against the movement as a symptom of this so-called Particularismus. In foreign affairs he always recommends to the government a 'spirited foreign policy;' and when complications arise with foreign powers, he generally waxes bellicose, and uses strong language regarding those whom he regards as the enemies or rivals of his country. Though an admirer of English

institutions—to such an extent that he was at one time often called, jocularly, 'Lord Katkoff'—he commonly speaks of England in the most hostile and unflattering terms when he discusses the Eastern question."

We have quoted this passage by Mr. Wallace just to show how party history is made. He slurred over the Polish rebellion of 1863, because the deeds then done by the Russians were scarcely of a nature to recommend them even to the most optimistic persons, who refused to see any evil in Russia.

We will supplement Mr. Wallace's meagre information regarding M. Katkoff. He received his education at the German universities of Königsberg and of Berlin, where he was a pupil of the philosopher Schelling. It was to this connexion with Schelling that M. Katkoff owed his aptitude for philosophical problems, which his ambition led him to turn into practical measures, whereby he climbed the ladder which he placed on the foundation of blood and misery, in Poland, he was the chief advocate of. Up to the year 1862 he had been professor of philosophy at Moscow; then he became editor of the *Moscow Gazette*, which is the property of the university; but resigned his position, as the authorities were then still unprepared to go the length he wished. At the commencement of Alexander II.'s reign he established a paper called the *Russian Messenger*, which soon became more notorious than popular. In this paper he advocated liberal measures; and it was owing to his articles on the British constitution that he gained the name of "Lord Katkoff," to which Mr. Wallace alluded. The government, as may be imagined, did not regard M. Katkoff with favour. He was excluded from society, but at the same time bitterly attacked by the *Contemporary*, a Liberal and Socialistic journal, which seemed instinctively to know the character of the man.

Suddenly, when the Polish troubles commenced, and the government was sore pressed with anxiety, M. Katkoff turned completely round, and commenced a series of the fiercest attacks upon Hertzen and all the Liberals of any denomination. He proclaimed the bitterest war against the Poles, insisted on crushing all rebels who endeavoured to sow dissension amongst the Slav races, and called upon the government to adopt the strongest measures in its power. He exhorted all true Panslavists to support the government in its holy work of re-uniting all the Slav races, and annihilating the enemies of Slavonic unity.

Of course, M. Katkoff was energetically supported by the government authorities and papers; and his success soon became so great, that for the time he was the most popular man in Russia—a fact rather significant for the Russian character. But bold as were all his propositions, none was bolder than the one advocating the appointment of Mouravieff to the military governorship of Poland. How Mouravieff accomplished his mission, how the atrocities of Wilna caused his name to be execrated as intensely as that of Haynau, the woman-flogger, is too well known to need recapitulation. Yet this was the man whom Katkoff elevated on a pedestal, and called upon the Russian people to worship.

And they did worship him. He was presented with a golden image of the Archangel Michael, to whom he was compared in a most fulsome address, which was signed by a number of the most influential persons, especially women, such as the Blondoff, Mestcherskoi, Strogonoff, Dolgoroukoff, Karamsin, Bouterlin, &c. Prince Suwaroff, however, refused to sign this address, saying that Mouravieff's apotheosis was of far too bloody a nature for him to soil his hands with. For this refusal Prince Suwaroff was fiercely attacked by M. Tuschef, whom the Russians at this time honoured with the title of the Russian Juvenal. Tuschef wrote a number of verses addressed to the prince, in which he reminded him of the sacking of Warsaw by his grandfather.

"Sensitive plant," he said, "tender grandson of a warlike grandfather, pardon us, O sympathetic prince, pardon us Russians for honouring the great Russian Anthropophagus—the Russian cannibal—without consulting Europe. If we are to be dishonoured for writing him our address, so be it, prince; but—your valiant grandfather would have signed it!"

Having once started on the path of inciting the government to crush any attempt at liberty, and all endeavours of the races subjugated by Russia to regain their freedom, M. Katkoff had the satisfaction of knowing that he would never be at a loss for material to fill his paper with. He had only to look round him. When the Armenians revolted in Tiflis in 1865, M. Katkoff

at once came to the front, and demanded Polish measures. When disturbances broke out in Georgia, M. Katkoff at once bade the government quell them with the bayonet, and bring out its chains to lead the rebels captive to Siberia—*those who might happen to be left*, as the energetic editor euphoniously expressed himself. And if by chance there did not happen to be a rebellion anywhere, M. Katkoff protested against the continued oppression of the Lettes by the Germans, and shrieked out for the complete Russification of the Baltic provinces, with their German populations. In short, his anthropophagism (to use Tuschef's expression) was so great, that even his own countrymen could not abstain from ridiculing him. A satirical paper, the *Iskra*—the Spark—represented him in the guise of a monster half-human, half-bred, intently studying two turtle-doves, and trying to discover whether they had any separatist tendencies, or were contemplating a rebellion against each other.

Such is M. Katkoff. His relations to the Russian government, and the way in which he is regarded at the Russian Court, are best described when we mention that, in 1877, he was highly honoured by the czar, and Madame Katkoff appointed maid of honour to the Russian empress.

At the same time, the relations of the Russian press to the government, are best exemplified by a description of the censorship.

A number of censors are employed at the post-office, whose duty consists in marking the objectionable passages in the foreign journals, which are then stamped out with a layer of printer's ink, so that when the subscriber gets his paper it presents very chequered reading indeed. Means were, however, discovered of removing this veil without obliterating the incriminated passage, and the authorities were forced to employ a fresh mixture of colour, which defied all attempts to remove it. It is, however, the censorship as applied to books and home journals that most tries the patience of author and reader. Thus the Dorpat censor, De la Croix, took great umbrage at a passage in a statistical work, which stated that "the Cossacks ride on little, insignificant horses." "Little" and "insignificant" were words he considered derogatory to the dignity of anything belonging to the Russian empire, so he struck them out, leaving the astonishing news that "the Cossacks ride on horses." In an article on "Learned Women," the Polish journalist Liebalt began with the sentence—"There are some things which, like a couple of rough-hewn blocks, do not fit together. To such things we must add Woman and Learning." The censor, Herr von Peucker, struck out the whole of this sentence because Catherine II., having been a learned woman, the author thus indirectly asserted that her majesty of blessed memory was a rough-hewn block also. During the Crimean war an account was given of the famine in some Swedish provinces. The censor allowed this article to pass with the exception of one word—Swedish—which was altered into "French," inasmuch as the Russians were then at war with France, but at peace with Sweden. In an article on Italy, the words "O sanctissima dulcis virgo Maria," were struck out, with the observation that the censor was not supposed to censorise Italian! On another occasion Herr von Peucker struck out the whole of an article from the *Invalide Russe*, replying to the editorial remonstrances by writing on the proof-sheet the words, *naprassnoye mnogosslowiye* (unprofitable gabble!)

In the first volume of Mr. Wallace's "Russia," the only chapter upon which the censor has put his black finger is that dealing with the imperial administration and the officials. Thus, at p. 313, Mr. Wallace has been allowed to tell some very plain truths about the corruption of officials; but the following sentence has been deleted:—

"The czar, indeed, might do much towards exposing and punishing offenders, if he could venture to call in public opinion to his assistance; but in reality he is very apt to become a party to the system of hushing-up official delinquencies."

No censor could expect to retain his post who allowed such an accusation against the government to pass his office! At p. 314, Mr. Wallace is permitted to say, that "no individual, even though he should be the Autocrat of all the Russias, can so case himself in the armour of official dignity as to be completely proof against personal influences." But the patience of the censor stops there, and he deletes the two sentences which follow:—

"The severity of autocrats is reserved for political offenders, against whom they naturally harbour a feeling of personal resentment. It is so much easier for us to be lenient and charitable towards a man

who sins against public morality, than towards one who sins against our own interests!"

In Mr. Wallace's second volume, the chief excisions are made from the chapter on "The Crimean War and its Consequences," in which he gives an account of the dissatisfaction felt throughout the country at the defeat of the Russian armies. Mr. Wallace speaks very frankly of the absolutism which was the cause of this disaster; and a very stringent censorship, such as existed under Nicholas, would have taken out the whole chapter, but now all but a few passages have been allowed to stand. Some of the historian's remarks upon the late czar have apparently been considered too free. Thus, at page 201, the censor has taken exception to the following passage:—

"Nicholas has been called the Don Quixote of autocracy, and the comparison which the term implies is true in many points. By character and aims he belonged to a time that had long passed away; but failure and mishap could not shake his faith in his ideal, and made no change in his honest, stubborn nature, which was as loyal and chivalresque as that of the ill-fated knight of La Mancha. In spite of all evidence to the contrary, he believed in the practical omnipotence of autocracy. He imagined that, as his authority was theoretically unlimited, so his power could work miracles. By nature and training a soldier, he considered government a slightly modified form of military discipline, and looked on the nation as an army which might be made to perform any intellectual or economic evolutions that he might see fit to command. All social ills seemed to him the consequence of disobedience to his orders, and he knew only one remedy—more discipline. Any expression of doubt as to the wisdom of his policy, or any criticism of existing regulations, he treated as an act of insubordination which a wise sovereign ought not to tolerate."

All this is forbidden reading to the loyal Russian subject! At page 210, again, it seems to have been thought that Mr. Wallace's description of the prevailing dissatisfaction in 1856, was too dangerous a re-awakening of old memories:—

"This deep and wide-spread dissatisfaction was not allowed to appear in the press, but it found very free expression in the manuscript literature and in conversation. In almost every house—I mean, of course, among the educated classes—words were spoken which a few months before would have seemed treasonable, if not blasphemous. Philippics and satires in prose and verse were written by the dozen, and circulated in hundreds of copies. A pasquil on the commander-in-chief, or a tirade against the government, was sure to be eagerly read and warmly approved of."

In this chapter Mr. Wallace gives a translation of a tirade against the government (circulated soon after the Crimean war, but never printed), as an illustration of the public opinion of the time. Most of it has been authorised, but the following impassioned appeal to the czar has been struck out:—

"Awake, O Russia! Devoured by foreign enemies, crushed by slavery, shamefully oppressed by stupid authorities and spies, awaken from your long sleep of ignorance and apathy! You have been long enough held in bondage by the successors of the Tartar khan. Stand forward calmly before the throne of the despot, and demand from him an account of the national disaster. Say to him boldly that his throne is not the altar of God, and that God did not condemn us to be slaves. Russia entrusted to you, O Czar, the supreme power, and you were as a god upon earth. And what have you done? Blinded by ignorance and passion, you have lusted after power and have forgotten Russia. You have spent your life in reviewing troops, in modifying uniforms, and in appending your signature to the legislative projects of ignorant charlatans. You created the despicable race of press-censors, in order to sleep in peace—in order not to know the wants and not to hear the groans of the people—in order not to listen to Truth. You buried Truth, and rolled a great stone at the door of the sepulchre, placed a strong guard over it, and said in the pride of your heart: For her there is no resurrection! But the third day has dawned, and Truth has arisen from the dead.

"Stand forward, O Czar, before the judgment-seat of history and of God! You have mercilessly trampled Truth under foot; you have denied Freedom; you have been the slave of your own passions. By your pride and obstinacy you have exhausted Russia and raised the world in arms against us. Bow down before your

brethren and humble yourself in the dust! Crave pardon and ask advice! Throw yourself into the arms of the people! There is now no other salvation!"

The censor has evidently all a courtier's care not to let anything pass that would wound the feelings, even where it could hardly be expected to shake the authority of the czar. Thus, at page 309, where Mr. Wallace is attributing the credit of the emancipation of the serfs to the personal influence of the czar, he remarks, that "had the czar not shown a decision and energy of which no one believed him to be capable, the solution would have been indefinitely postponed." The censor has intimated his belief in the emperor's decision and energy by obliterating these words.

Next to the emperor's dignity, nothing can be dearer to a censorship than its own. No one will, therefore, be surprised that the following exclamations in the translation to which we have referred should be sternly excised.

"A stable-boy became press-censor! an imperial fool became admiral!! Kleinmichel became a count!!! In a word, the country was handed over to the tender mercies of a band of robbers."

A short passage reflecting on the *gendarmerie* has shared the same fate. It is a curious fact, too, that while these passages have been expunged from the English version of the book, it is allowed to circulate intact in a French version. This is simply owing to a desire not to annoy the French, whom the Russians hope some day to secure for their crusade against Germany, when M. Katkoff gives the sign.

The declaration of war against Turkey, in 1877, produced, in the educated classes, a certain intellectual fermentation, which may, perhaps, like the intellectual fermentation during the Crimean war, generate important results. It is quite possible, therefore, that the future historian may devote special attention to the year 1877 as the beginning of a new epoch in the history of Russian literature. As yet, however, this is apparent only to the prophetic eye. To ordinary eyes the year 1877 was in no way remarkable so far as literary activity is concerned. All classes in Russia were so engrossed with current military and political events, that they had little time or inclination to think of science or art. As a compensation for this there ought to have been a rich harvest of works relating to the Slav races and the Eastern question; but, in reality, there was little or nothing of the kind—certainly nothing destined to have more than a very short-lived reputation; nor could the press-censors have allowed anything to pass their hands which would have been a contribution of real value to their literature. For any increase in their knowledge of the southern Slavs, they were indebted almost exclusively to the newspaper correspondents. The professors and literary men among the Slavophils have always been philosophers rather than historians, political economists, or travellers, and consequently, instead of studying carefully the past and present, have dreamed about the future of the Slavonic world. Hilferding may be cited as an exception to this rule; but he is dead, and has had no worthy successor. On the whole, however, the world will not be sorry that the Slavophils did not publish much, except in the domain of poetry and rhetoric. Strong confirmation of this opinion is afforded by Orest Müller, who published, to the detriment of his literary reputation, a volume of collected articles; and by Mr. Kotchubinski, who, in a work on the phonology of the Slavonic dialects, comes to the conclusion that philology confirms Russia's right to the holy mission which she took upon herself to fulfil in Bulgaria. The method of solving political problems by philology is still better illustrated by Mr. Lukashévitch, in a *brochure* on the "Cause of the English Hatred against the Slavonic Peoples," which deserves to be mentioned, not exactly as a specimen of Russian philological literature, but as a literary curiosity. In reply to the question, "What is an Englishman?" the learned author says, that in Mongolian, the root *eng-ong* means a wild beast; and that in Chinese, *meng-mong* means a man, or people. From this it is evident that Englishmen are descendants of Mongol hunters, who, in ancient times, conquered the British Isles and subjugated the Slavonic aborigines, commonly called Britons. That the Britons were Slavs is proved by the fact that *Britz*, in Russian, means "shaven." To the Slavs, therefore, the English are indebted for their knowledge of agriculture and political institutions, and for those physiognomical traits which distinguish them from the inhabitants of Northern China. But the modern Englishman has still Mongol

customs, such as the habit of eating raw meat and destroying human beings, and he has still in his veins Mongol blood, which makes him sympathise with the Turks, and delight in Bulgarian atrocities!

Authors with such a wild, luxuriant imagination might naturally be expected to write in verse rather than in prose; but versification has of late fallen into disrepute in Russia. Time was, and not so very long ago, when the Russians delighted in poetry; and many middle-aged men amongst them can still repeat from memory whole pages of Púshkin and Lérmontoff. But with the accession of Alexander II., the public taste completely changed. "Questions" of every conceivable kind—social, political, scientific, philosophical, and economic—so monopolised public attention, that the poet feels himself "out of his element," much as a resuscitated alchemist or astrologer might feel at a meeting of the Royal Society. Those who are conscious of being no longer children, naturally put away childish things. Even patriotic enthusiasm, which generally encourages poetic aspirations, expresses itself now in rhetorical prose rather than in melodious verse. There remains, however, one poet of the former generation, Nekrassof, who is still listened to with respect and admiration, because he has contrived, while retaining the metrical form, to imbibe the spirit and adopt the tone of the new epoch. For thirty years he depicted the dark sides of Russian life, and gave expression to the sorrows of the people, but is never maudlin or lachrymose. In all his writings there is a ring of energetic protest, which has sometimes brought him into contact with the Press Censure. In his "Last Songs" he is still true to himself and to his past. A melancholy interest attaches to this volume, for its title must be taken in the literal sense of the words. Struck down by a painful disease, and with no hope of recovery, the author is in a condition analogous to that of Heine in the last years of his life; and his words thus acquire additional pathos.

Though very little poetry is written, there is no lack of imagination and literary talent, much of which finds expression in tales and novels. The Russian writers of fiction have been much influenced by the contemporary literature of England and France; yet it must be said, to their credit, that they have followed the quiet realistic, but not the sensational school. Aiming at photographic accuracy rather than strong artistic effects, they generally content themselves with making careful studies from the social groups with which they are best acquainted, and use the plot simply as a means of stringing together their studies from nature. In their works, therefore, we have a mirror of contemporary Russian society, with its numerous lights and shadows. As most of these authors, like nine-tenths of their educated fellow-countrymen, are dissatisfied with the existing order of things, the shadows in the pictures are very prominent. We constantly meet with the poor over-taxed peasant, the ignorant, money-loving parish priest, the corrupt official, the commercial swindler, and other types of a similar kind. A few writers, such as Prince Mestcherski, show us the *grand monde* of the capital, but the great majority choose their subjects from the lower classes. Among the delineators of the peasantry, the most remarkable is Mr. Mélnikoff, better known under his pseudonym, "Andrei Petcherski," who continues his sketches, "On the Hills," descriptive of the Raskolniks, and in general the peasants and traders of the Volga region. If we regard this work, not as a novel, but as a series of descriptive sketches, we may place beside it Maximof's "Nomadic Russia," a spirited description of the homeless people who, from various motives, wander about the country and live by charity. In this category, too, may be put "The Land of Ice," a description of the far north, by Nemirovitch-Dantchenko.

Of the numerous works of fiction in the higher sense, the only novels likely to have more than an ephemeral reputation, are "Anna Karénina," by Count Tolstoi, and "Nov" ("Virgin Soil"), by Tourguénief. Count Tolstoi's work will certainly be a lasting monument for the author's reputation. It displays a wonderful power of depicting human characters and analysing complex human motives. Some of the descriptions are tediously minute, but they have considerable artistic merit, and, as a whole, the work is much less tedious than the author's previous novel, "War and Peace." Count Tolstoi is a man who is not in harmony with "the spirit of the age," as that phrase is commonly understood by his countrymen; and as he does not desire to conceal the fact, he is often led into philosophical discussions, which are out of

place in a work of fiction. In "War and Peace," this discursive element was painfully obtrusive; in "Anna Karénina," on the contrary, it is scarcely felt. In the construction of the plot there are serious defects, which may, perhaps, be explained by the fact that the first chapters had been already published when the later chapters were being written. Of Tourguénief's "Nov" it is scarcely possible to speak without assuming at once a polemical attitude, and taking part in the discussions which it has raised. As a work of art, it is generally considered inferior to the author's earlier efforts; but it is seldom judged from a purely æsthetic point of view. To understand the reason of this, the reader must know something of a curious episode of Russian literary history, which cannot be more than briefly referred to here. Twenty years ago Tourguénief was one of the idols of the young generation. He had written his "Memoirs of a Sportsman," in which he had shown warm sympathy with the oppressed serfs, and he had been subjected to administrative annoyance in consequence of his Liberal opinions. During the first years of the present reign (1856-'60), he wrote several works which were thoroughly in harmony with the prevailing spirit, and his popularity consequently increased. But, in 1861, he published his famous "Fathers and Children" (translated into English some years ago by Mr. Schuyler), and was at once condemned by the young generation as a man behind the age. In vain he declared that his aims and intentions had been misunderstood and misinterpreted. Young Russia continued to hold that he was an antiquated, aristocratic, *dilettante* Liberal, of the years 1840-'50, incapable of understanding the new, serious, practical, genuinely democratic Liberalism. It was, apparently, in order to disprove this accusation that he wrote "Virgin Soil," in which he has represented a little group of revolutionary Liberals at work.

Turning from fiction to fact, we meet with several important historical works. First comes Solovieff's yearly volume, which appears as regularly as the almanacks. In 1851, Mr. Solovieff began his gigantic "History of Russia," by a sketch of the geographical and ethnographical conditions of north-eastern Europe in the 9th century. During the last twenty-six years he has laboriously and conscientiously traced the geographical, political, and intelligent growth of the nation; and now, in his twenty-seventh volume, he relates the history of the years 1766-'68. Nine-tenths of that enormous mass of printed matter is little more than a collection of valuable historical data, loosely strung together; but, here and there, when the author stops for a moment, and looks back on the ground over which he has been travelling, he displays a certain power of description, analysis, and generalisation. The most interesting part of this last volume is the account of a famous commission for preparing a new code of laws, created by Catherine II. in 1766. The so-called commission was a kind of temporary National Assembly, composed of deputies from various parts of the empire, and from all classes of the people. Catherine supplied them with "instructions," taken from the works of her friends, the French philosophers of the time, and watched, with great interest, the effect which these "principles elaborated by contemporary science" would have on her unphilosophical subjects. Those who are curious to know the result, may find much information, though by no means all that could be desired, in Mr. Solovieff's pages. More likely to attract attention is the "History of the Crimean War," by Bogdanowitch, who has had access to many valuable sources unknown to his predecessors. From Mr. Tratchèvski we have a history of the famous *Fürstenbund*. In the form of raw material, but none the less interesting on that account, appears a new instalment of the Woronzoff archives, being the twelfth volume of the collection. It contains a long series of interesting letters, written by Count Zavadovski to the brothers Woronzoff, from 1770 to 1807. For the publication of historical material of this kind, there are two special periodicals, the *Rûsski Archio* (Russian Archives) and *Rûsskaya Starinâ* (Russian Antiquity), both of which, strange to say, have a large circulation. From this we may conclude that a considerable section of the reading public like to get history in the raw state. Of works on the history of literature, two deserve mention—Dashkèvitch on the "Legend of the Holy Grail," and Vesselovski's "Investigations in the Poetry of the Middle Ages." Messrs. Py'pin and Spassevitch are preparing a new and enlarged edition of their "History

of Slavonic Literature," a work of great merit.

Among juridico-historical works, may be mentioned the first volume of Azarèvitch's "History of Byzantine Law;" the first volume of Zagoskin's "History of Muscovite Law;" the second volume of Dityátin's "History of Municipal Self-Government in Russia," containing an account of Russian municipal institutions, from the beginning of the eighteenth century to the year 1870; the second volume of Gradovski's "Course of Russian Public Law;" and the ninth volume of "Historico-juridical Materials relating to the Province of Vitebsk." Special attention is being paid to custom law, which is, in Russia, a very important subject, because the peasants have their own courts (Volostníye Sudy), in which all cases are decided according to traditional conceptions of right, irrespective of ukases and the code. In 1872, an imperial commission examined the condition of these courts, and afterwards published a large quantity of interesting materials. Private investigators have also been at work. In 1877, appeared the first volume of Pachman's "Customary Civil Law in Russia, relating to Procedure and the Right of Property," and Kostroff's work on the "Juridical Customs of the Province of Temsk" (in Siberia). For those who wish to prosecute this study, Matveef has published a "Programme for the Collection of Popular Juridical Customs." It is worthy of remark, as a sign of intellectual decentralisation, that some of these works have been published in provincial towns. Azarèvitch and Dityátin hail from Yaroslaf, where there is a school of law; and Zagoskin from Kazan, where there is a university. There are several books on land tenure, a subject which has special interest for Russians. The emancipation law of 1861 gave to the village communes the perpetual usufruct of the land which they possessed, and thereby transformed the serfs into communal landholders. The preservation of the communal tenure is a curious experiment, on the success of which depends, to a great extent, the future prosperity of the country. Most Russians believe that it will succeed, and will enable Russia to avoid many of those social and political evils from which Western Europe is suffering, in consequence of having expropriated the peasantry. But, to escape these evils, Russia ought to profit by the experience of older countries. It is in this spirit that Prince Wassiltchikoff has written a large work on "Land Tenure and Agriculture," in which he compares the history of landed property in England, France, and Germany with the history of landed property in Russia. He explains how, in the countries of the West, the majority of the peasantry have been, during the course of centuries, legally and illegally deprived of the land which their forefathers possessed; and he endeavours to prove that this gradual expropriation has been the chief cause of revolutions and social disorders. In Russia, where the land still belongs to the peasantry, measures ought to be taken, he thinks, to prevent its passing out of their hands; and "these measures must be taken at once; otherwise Russia will fall into the same mistake as other nations, who took to thinking and writing about agrarian matters when all the land was already allotted, and social relations had lost their primitive elasticity." It is the old story which we have heard again and again since 1857, that Russia may be for ever saved from pauperism, the proletariat, and revolution, by the rural commune. It is not, however, at all necessary to adopt this view in order to read Prince Wassiltchikoff's work with interest. The historical part will be welcome to many who do not accept the dogmatic conclusions. Written in the same spirit is the "Historical Sketch of the Rural Commune in the North of Russia," by Sokolovski, who thinks that "the Western nations, in the person of their best scientific representatives, regret the premature annihilation of this institution among themselves." The book does not contain much new material; but it presents, in a connected, readable form, a good deal of matter which was formerly scattered about in books, newspapers, and magazines. New data for the history of the rural commune may be confidently expected in the "Pistóoviya Knigi" (Old Land-registers), which are being published by Mr. Kalatchoff. The big volume of 1,560 pages, recently published, refers to the north-eastern provinces.

Above the "Mir," or rural commune, stands the "Zemstvo," that organ of local self-government resembling, in some respects, our county administration, which we have already described. Unlike the "Mir," it is a direct product of imperial

legislation, and has been in existence only ten years. Its activity during that period is described and criticised by Mr. Mordovtsef in his "Ten Years of the Russian Zemstvo."

The educated classes are so occupied with these and other mundane concerns, that they pay very little attention to the supernatural; and one might live amongst them for years without ever suspecting that they possess a theological literature. As a rule, the educated Russian has no taste for theological speculation or religious discussions. He may be a very good Christian so far as rites and ceremonies are concerned, and may be warmly attached to the church as a national institution, but his intellectual interests lie elsewhere. In the theological academies, however, there is a certain amount of intellectual activity. They are four in number; and each of them has its special organ, with a certain distinctive character. The Academy of St. Petersburg, being nearest to the Protestant West, pays special attention to German theology; Kazan, possessing the valuable library of the Solovetsk monastery, which was formerly a "nest of heresy," occupies itself with the Dissenters and their doctrines; Kief, situated on the frontier of the Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic worlds, studies the historic influences and dogmatic peculiarities which distinguish Roman Catholicism from Orthodoxy; and Moscow, round which the empire has been gradually formed, seeks to embrace all these subjects. Of the theological books recently published, may be mentioned, the "Scripture Commentary," by the Archimandrite Michael, and "The Sacred Chronicle of Primitive Times," by Mr. Vlastof. This latter work is characteristic and important, as showing that some Russian theologians are leaving the field of ecclesiastical history and religious ceremonial, and entering the wider region opened up by English apologists and German critics. Mr. Vlastof treats of the spiritual principle in man, of natural religion, and the necessity of revelation; of the creation and the fall; of the flood and the confusion of tongues. "All these questions," in the opinion of a committee appointed by the Holy Synod, "have been solved according to the principles of sound philosophy, in harmony with the true indications of history, and of natural and social science, and in complete accordance with the doctrines of Divine Revelation." In the accomplishment of this herculean task, in which so many of his predecessors have failed, Mr. Vlastof has been assisted, not only by native authorities, but also by foreigners, such as Lenormant, Inatrefuges, Gerlach, George Smith, Rawlinson, Ferguson, Max Müller, Franck, Kuenen, and others. Independent critics of a sceptical turn of mind may, possibly, have some doubts as to whether all the "questions" raised have been solved as completely and satisfactorily as the learned committee of the Holy Synod believes; but all who desire to see a little more intellectual vitality in the Russian church, will hail with pleasure the appearance of such works.

Those who prefer science without any theological alloy, have their wants plentifully supplied by native *savants* and by translations from the works of foreign authors. The names of Darwin, Tyndall, Huxley, and Herbert Spencer, are as well known in St. Petersburg as in London; and some of the native investigators are making for themselves a European reputation. Natural science is, in fact, one of the most popular subjects of study in Russia, and the number of scientific works published is, consequently, very great.

The magazines have long played an important part in Russian literature, and continue to flourish as before. There are four large monthlies, about the size of the *Quarterly Review*, and they have all a respectable number of subscribers. The articles are of the most varied character, including tales, novels, essays, historical treatises, literary criticism, popular science, philosophy, social questions, and current political affairs. Whilst these periodicals have all much in common, each of them has a special character of its own. The most serious and weighty is the *Vestnik Evropy* (European Messenger), representing what in Russia is considered moderate Liberalism. *The Otétchestvenniya Zapiski* (Memoirs of the Fatherland) is of a more "advanced" hue; but often refrains from discussing important political and social questions in consequence of the regulations, or rather the unregulated action of the Press Censure. *Dyelo* takes as its speciality, sociology, and natural science in the popular form. In opposition to these, the *Rússki Vestnik* (Russian Messenger), published by M. Katkoff in Moscow, is regarded as the organ of the Conservative or Retrograde

party. To these must be added the *Sbornik Gosudarstvennikh Znanii* (Collected Essays in Political Science), published at irregular intervals by Mr. Bezebrázof, and containing most valuable papers intended for the more serious part of the reading public; and *Die Russische Revue*, published in German.

Of the regular writers in the monthlies, the most prominent and influential is Mr. Soltykoff, better known under the assumed name of Shtchedrin. He is generally regarded by his countrymen as one of the greatest satirists, if not the greatest of the age; but he is very far from being a perfect master of the art. Certainly he possesses enormous satirical talent, and makes his readers laugh heartily; but he almost always allows his humour to run wild, and in that way his satire loses its point. As a caricaturist he very often leaps far beyond the limits of reality, so that his writings resemble broad farce rather than legitimate comedy. Involuntarily the reader asks himself—What does the author mean by all this comical mystification? Has he any serious purpose, or is he simply indulging in boisterous fun? In answer to this, Mr. Soltykoff might point to Rabelais and other great humourists who have sinned in the same way Besides this, he might justly remark, that the present system of Press Censure compels him to hide the keen edge of his satire under a broad humour, occasionally approaching to buffoonery. An amusing hint to this effect appears in his last article. He is describing commercial swindlers connected with the army, and brings forward a trader in secrets, who opens negotiations with Osman Pasha, and delivers to him important State documents. Among these is a project for introducing order into the Russian empire by means of destroying the printing-presses, and reducing the number of types to the quantity required for advertisements and official circulars! The Press Censure has certainly not gone quite so far as that; but it exercises an influence on literary composition so great, that it should always be borne in mind when judging the writings of Russian authors, as the examples we have already given of the way in which it is carried out, sufficiently show.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE POLISH REBELLION OF 1863.

In January, 1878, two events occurred, insignificant in themselves it is true, that brought back to the mind the occurrence of 1863-1864 in Poland, which at one time threatened to produce a European conflict, and in any case first brought Prince Bismarck into prominence as a European statesman, and laid the foundation to that alliance between the Russian and Prussian Courts, the results of which have been seen in all their momentous significance in the wars of 1866, 1870, and 1877-'78.

The first and least important of these events was the announcement by the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, couched in a tone of petty triumph singularly out of proportion to the matter, that Madlle. Pustowojtoff, the lady-adjutant of the ex-Dictator Langiewicz, had been sentenced to a term of imprisonment at Rothenburg in Silesia, and to a long period of subsequent confinement in the House of Correction at Schweidnitz. The lady's crime was "vagrancy"—that is to say, being without means. She was directed to Dresden, where she was domiciled, by a certain route. From this route she deviated, owing to the offer of a gentleman to pay her fare to a station on her way, by which she would have been spared half her weary journey on foot. "Such," exclaimed the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, "is the end of a rebel adventuress. May she serve as a warning!"

Unfortunately for the German paper, but fortunately for Madlle. Pustowojtoff, the person arrested at Rothenburg was not the former adjutant of Langiewicz; for a letter appeared in a Swiss paper, stating that the Prussian authorities had been pre-

mature in their triumph, and that Madlle. Pustowojtoff had been married for five years to a Dr. Löwenhardt in Paris, where she was now living with her husband and daughter, who, she hoped, would live to fight the Russians as she herself had done.

The second event was the death of the Marquis Wielopolski, whose disappearance caused scarcely more than an obituary notice of a few lines in the daily press. There was a time, however, between the years 1861 and 1863, when "the Marquis," as he was called—he was the only person bearing that title in Poland—held a prominent position among the political men of Europe. He had undertaken to grapple with the Polish question, which destroyed him, as he, in the opinion of many of his countrymen, destroyed, or helped to destroy, what still remained of Poland. Throughout the insurrection of 1863, as during the two years of open agitation and secret preparation by which the actual rising was preceded, Wielopolski was detested by all Poles except a few among the high aristocracy, who, while approving his policy, had not the heart, in the face of the strong popular feeling which had set in against him, to give him their active support. He had no following in Poland, and thus the task he had undertaken of bringing about a reconciliation between Poles and Russians was an impossible one. Very decided in his opinions, he was, unfortunately, of a reserved and haughty disposition; so that if he was free from some of the defects of the Poles, he was also wanting in many of their amiable qualities. Not only his policy, but he himself was unpopular. It used to be said of him that he had "the English manner," which would not, in most continental countries, be considered a high compliment, as it is there synonymous with a cold, haughty, and exclusive bearing of self-conscious superiority. He was consistent enough; but his consistency was that of a man of one idea, who is determined to carry out that idea without regard to circumstances. It must be admitted, however, that circumstances in 1862 were terribly against him; and it may be doubted whether any other Pole, if such confidence had been placed in him as the Emperor Alexander placed in the Marquis Wielopolski, would have succeeded any more than did the Marquis Wielopolski in averting the threatened insurrection.

If Wielopolski's unpopularity told heavily against him in his endeavours to gain acceptance by his own countrymen of the concessions granted by Russia, the fact that he was far from being regarded in Poland as a Polish patriot may have helped him in his negotiations with St. Petersburg. Like most mediators, he was looked upon with suspicion by both sides. The Poles, when Wielopolski desired them to make peace with Russia, on condition of receiving the completest possible system of what would now be called "administrative autonomy," regarded him as a sort of Russian agent, and accused him of wishing to sacrifice his country's hopes of independence for a few trifling reforms. The Russians, when he went so far in his demands for Polish self-government as to require that all Russians, without exception, should be excluded from the Polish administration, saw in this stipulation, to which the emperor consented, a first menace to their dominion in the conquered country. Yet it was not until after the insurrection of 1863 had actually broken out, that the system introduced into Poland by the Marquis Wielopolski met with any serious opposition on the part of the Russians. When the Poles took up arms, the Russians declared that the insurrection had been carefully prepared by the Marquis Wielopolski with his perfect system of administrative autonomy. The Polish functionaries recognised the authority, and worked as the willing agents of the insurrectionary government; and it might, of course, be said that but for the Marquis Wielopolski and his pretended measures of conciliation, all the public offices in Poland would not have been filled with Poles. The case against the marquis, from a Russian point of view, was clear enough; and when the national feelings of the Russians had become excited to fanaticism by the continued resistance of the Poles, supported as they were by the diplomacy of France, England, and Austria, it was whispered about that Wielopolski, a traitor from patriotism, had found a fellow-conspirator in the Grand Duke Constantine, a traitor from ambition. The grand duke, as lieutenant of the kingdom, had indeed accepted all the Marquis Wielopolski's suggestions. Fired at and wounded immediately after his arrival in Poland on what was known to be a mission of pacification, he had abstained from taking any repressive measures in consequence of this act, and but for the protests of the

more resolute Wielopolski, would have commuted the capital sentence passed upon the assassin. The intended reforms were all introduced; and personally the grand duke and, in at least an equal degree, the grand duchess, strove to gain the good-will of the inhabitants of Warsaw. All this was afterwards interpreted in Russia as proving the complicity of the grand duke in the designs entertained by Wielopolski, who was accused of aiming at the complete severance of Poland from the Russian empire, and its erection into an independent kingdom under the Grand Duke Constantine's rule.

If the Poles, instead of giving themselves up to their own impulses, and to the hopes excited in their breasts by the successful intervention of the Emperor Napoleon on behalf of the Italians, could have looked coolly around them, they might have learned, from the view taken of the Wielopolski reforms by the Russians, Austrians, and Prussians, that they possessed far more value than was generally accorded to them in Poland, when even those who approved of them were afraid to say so. There were some Poles, however, who believed that, by keeping up a vague agitation on behalf of Polish independence as an idea, they could prevail upon the Russians to grant much more important reforms than those already conceded; whilst there were others, of the extreme party, who held that Poland must form no compact of any kind with Russia, and that the aim of Polish patriots should be, not good government under the Russian sceptre, but absolute independence. To render the position of the Poles in the kingdom of Poland tolerable, and even in the eyes of the Austrian and Prussian Poles enviable, was to run directly counter to the views of this party; and while no one seemed willing to receive the good things brought by the Grand Duke Constantine and the Marquis Wielopolski with the least degree of favour, the sworn revolutionists looked upon them with undisguised aversion. If the political caricatures of this period were referred to, it would be found that the Marquis Wielopolski was regarded, by the least intelligent of his countrymen, not only as a would-be tyrant, but also as an idiot and a buffoon. One of the public monuments of Warsaw represents John Sobieski on horseback, riding over the Turks; and it was thought humorous, in 1862, to depict Wielopolski as a sort of *bourgeois* Sobieski, trampling on the Turks of the Revolution. When a crisis was approaching, the marquis did indeed take a severe and culpable measure against the men who had resolved that Poland should not be pacified, and that, whatever endeavours might be made to bring about that result, the experiment of an armed rising should be resorted to. He decided to seize the irreconcilable enemies of his government, who were on the point of taking up arms. But he did not seize them by legal means to bring them before legal tribunals. He executed a sort of *coup de police;* and reviving, for this particular occasion, a form of conscription which had just been abolished, ordered that the most notorious of the revolutionists should be arrested and carried off to serve in the Russian army. It was generally believed in Europe, that this peculiar kind of conscription, which was described at the time as "proscription," had been invented by the Marquis Wielopolski. It had been the customary method, however, of recruiting the Russian army in Poland, till it was abolished in 1859 by an imperial ukase. Inconsistent for once, the Marquis Wielopolski spoiled the effect of his flagrantly illegal measure by seeking to give it a legal form. He announced beforehand, in the official journal, that the new mode of conscription on the French model, which he had himself introduced, would not, for the present, come into force. This could only mean that the conscription about to take place would be executed in the old style, as under the Emperor Nicholas, and the announcement had the natural effect of making numbers of those against whom that measure was directed, take flight, and prepare for the appeal to arms, by which the execution of the conscription was immediately followed, and proceeded to set in force the barbarous system of recruitment by designation in Poland, in lieu of the humaner plan of conscription by lot, which had been prescribed by the above-mentioned law of the year 1859, but which had never been exercised, as no levy had been made since that date. Nor was a recurrence to the former scheme by which the Emperor Nicholas exhausted and subdued the energies of the Polish people the only bad feature in the enactment: the scheme was partially applied; it was to be put in force in the towns, but not in the country, the government having a double



THE GRAND DUKE CONSTANTINE.

BROTHER OF THE CZAR

THE ... NON PRINTING AND PUBLISHING COMPANY, LIMITED

object in view—on one side to conciliate the landed proprietors and peasantry, and on the other side, to seize upon the most obnoxious persons in the urban population, and carry them off as soldiers. About 8,000 recruits were to be levied in the Polish towns by mixed commissions composed of military officers and civil functionaries, who had an absolute power of selection. Without affirming that, in all cases, this faculty was abusively exercised without regard to the numbers or resources of families, or to the station and avocations of the parties liable to service, it is certain that the selection of the authorities was frequently prompted by considerations of a political character, and the instruments of government were frequently animated by motives of a corrupt nature. In fact, it was a design to make a clean sweep of the revolutionary youth of Poland, to shut up the most energetic and dangerous spirits in the restraints of the Russian army. It was simply a plan to kidnap the opposition, and carry it off to Siberia or the Caucasus. This proposal, so totally out of keeping with the humane and intelligent order of things recently inaugurated in Poland, created great surprise even among many persons well affected to the Russian government; for it was rightly apprehended, that even if the government should succeed in disposing of a number of dangerous antagonists, yet the moral obloquy attending this act would greatly outweigh the material advantages to be gained. It seemed to be the single considerable error committed in Poland since the nomination of Marquis Wielopolski; yet, as we have seen, it had his approval, was suggested by him, and had the sanction of the Grand Duke Constantine. How far the revolt was the work of men driven to desperation by the prospect of being caught up and made Russian soldiers, or how far it was the work of revolutionary incendiaries availing themselves of this opportunity, was a question which could not be answered clearly at the time; but the arbitrary recruitment greatly excused the resistance and acts of the revolutionary party in the eyes of Europe. They had, if not a justification, at least an extenuation, which nothing but some great act of injustice on the part of Russia could have afforded them. At the same time, however, it was obvious, to all acquainted with the facts, that, under every provocation, insurrection in Poland, under any circumstances, was a senseless proceeding; for it had not the least chance of success, and only terminated in increased severities and aggravated hatred.

Among reflecting Russians, the only defence ever given for the suspension of the law of 1859, and the return to the old system, was, that the regular military conscription was not introduced in Russia itself, and that if the levy had been taken in Poland on the modern European plan, Poland would have been better treated than the empire; that it was most equitable to continue the arbitrary method in both countries until a good law could be contrived for both. But as the institutions of Poland were in many respects more advanced than those of Russia, this was but an additional reason for improving the Russian laws, and not for debasing those of Poland.

Referring to this matter, Lord Napier wrote to Lord John Russell—"There is no reason why the French law of conscription should not have been matured for application in Russia Proper during the last six years, in which there has been no levy of soldiers in the empire. The measure complained of is, in my humble opinion, simply a malignant, and, I hope, expiring effort of the old system of despotic violence. The result is deplorable, but it is natural. We can only hope that the emperor will not allow himself to be drawn into a reactionary course in other respects by an incident which has been, in part at least, provoked by the imprudence of his representatives and advisers."

That Lord Napier's hopes were scarcely justified, the whole course of events, up to the declaration of war in 1877 against Turkey, has sufficiently shown. Then, as in 1860, the czar was too weak to resist the counsels and demands of the purely Muscovite party—of the Katkoffs, the Aksàkoffs, and the rest of the Panslavonic section.

In the beginning of January, 1863, certain discoveries were made by the police at Warsaw, to which very great importance was at first attached by the highest authorities in the country. But their value was considerably diminished by the activity of the revolutionary faction remaining unabated, notwithstanding the arrest of those individuals whom the police supposed to be the chief leaders of the conspiracy.

These arrests comprised several railway officials, one of whom, of the name of

Kowalewski, was spoken of as the head of the police department of the revolutionary committee; another person, of the name of Epstein, the son of a wealthy Jewish banker, was supposed also to have taken an active part in seditious measures, and great joy was manifested in official circles at his apprehension.

A few days later the police seized several persons in the very act of printing a revolutionary newspaper, and the letterpress was also taken upon that occasion. The house where these were found was taken possession of by the police; and in the course of the following day, a man of the name of Schwartz was arrested when coming to that very house, probably with a view to get some copies of the paper. He attempted to make his escape on seeing the police, but he was followed and taken after some attempt at resistance. Several important papers were found in his possession; among them his commission appointing him an agent to the revolutionary committee. Schwartz was a French subject, but the son of Polish parents; he appeared to have received a good education as civil engineer in Paris.

About the same time the French government arrested three Polish refugees in Paris, whose papers were searched, and whose connection with Mazzini, and with the revolutionary committee at Warsaw, appeared to have been beyond a doubt.

All these discoveries were made at a time when numerous agents of the revolutionary committee were driving about the country, both in the kingdom and in Lithuania, enrolling members for the secret society, threatening the government officials with their vengeance, and spreading alarm among all peaceably-disposed inhabitants.

It was hoped at first by those persons in the government who were more sanguine, that they were on the eve of very great discoveries on the subject of the revolutionary organisation; but these hopes were not realised.

One of the most important persons seized was a man of the name of Abicht, a native of Lithuania, who was taken quite by accident in the small town of Garwolin, about fifty miles from Warsaw, by the legal authorities, who suspected him of belonging to a party of highwaymen who had robbed the post in that locality. This suspicion arose from the circumstance of the Jewish waiter in the inn where Abicht and his companions were staying, having discovered pistols in his portmanteau, which made the Jew give information of this to the local mayor, or Bürgermeister, who arrested them at once.

As the execution of the measure of forced enlistment drew near, the revolutionary faction continued to deceive the masses by a bold attitude, pretending all along that it possessed the power of resisting the orders of the government, and that the carrying out, in a peaceable manner, of this exceptional measure would be attended with insurmountable difficulties.

A few days after the seizure of the types of the insurgent paper, *The Ruch*, a fresh number of that newspaper was published, denying the fact of the discovery of their printing-press, with a view to prevent the discouragement which this might produce among their partisans.

Immediately afterwards the revolutionary committee issued a circular, which was sent to various local authorities throughout the country, threatening with vengeance and summary punishment any person in the employment of the government, or any magistrate, aiding or assisting in any way to carry out the recruitment.

A few days after that, the Jewish waiter, whose information had led to the apprehension of Abicht, who had come to Poland from England with a British passport, came to Warsaw to receive a pecuniary reward, of the amount of 200 roubles, bestowed upon him by the grand duke for having given that information. The Jew applied for three days at the Treasury for payment, but the third day he was stabbed at the gate with a dagger on coming out of the paymaster-general's office, evidently with the intention of intimidating informers and the provincial authorities during the approaching conscription. The Jew was not mortally wounded it appears; he was even able to follow his murderer through the streets, when he fell: a man was taken by the police, a locksmith by profession, who was supposed to be the guilty party, but his identity was not established.

The lists of persons destined to be taken as recruits were made out, and the conscription was to begin in the course of a few days in Warsaw, and to follow in the provinces and the other towns of the kingdom. No effort was spared to include in it all able-bodied men suspected of revolutionary

tendencies, and who were marked out as such by the police during the last two years; but, owing to the inefficiency of that department of the government, it may be easily supposed that this sort of information could not always be relied on.

The number of recruits to be raised from the kingdom was kept strictly secret; but it was intended to get at the rate of 5 per 1,000 of the population; and as this amounted in the towns to about 1,200,000, the number would have been 6,000 men. As the rural population was exempted, the villages had only 2,000 men to supply; thus making a total of 8,000 men.

The exact number, however, was not definitely settled, and the grand duke was allowed a certain margin as to the number of recruits to be supplied this time by the kingdom.

The result of this measure was looked forward to with intense interest both by the rulers and by the governed; and if the expectations of the former had been attended with success, the conscription would have been over in a month's time; and it was said that the grand duke would have proceeded to St. Petersburg for a few weeks, to submit to the czar projects for the further pacification of his Polish subjects.

Thus the measure was carried into effect in Warsaw on the night of the 14th, when about 2,000 men were taken for service.

The members of the government were under considerable apprehension that carrying this resolution into effect would produce disturbances throughout the country, as the agitators of the revolutionary party had used their utmost endeavours to incite the people to resist the levy, and, if necessary, even to appeal to arms. The date on which the levy was to be made was kept a secret, and steps were taken by the authorities to repress any hostile movement should such take place; but notwithstanding the threatening attitude of the ultra party, the measure was carried out without any disturbance, as far as the town was concerned, for it was executed suddenly in the night.

The effect produced by the sudden and complete success of the government in this matter was most marked; the revolutionary party appeared to be paralysed, and the working classes commenced to open their eyes to the folly of further resistance, and to the importance of the ultra party to offer any effectual opposition to the government. But a number of working-men and others belonging to the secret societies, had been induced to assemble not far from Warsaw, in obedience to the orders given them by the chiefs of the movement; their numbers were, however, not more than 500 or 600, the greater portion unarmed. Troops were despatched to disperse and capture these insurgents; but it was thought that the weakness of the ultra party, and the impossibility of their resisting the government, would at least be clearly demonstrated by this foolish attempt, and therefore it might be anticipated that the Polish movement would shortly be brought to an end, and the country assume, if not a peaceful attitude, at least one of comparative quiet and freedom from revolutionary attempts.

But the conscription had still to be carried out in the country districts; and the date on which this was to be carried out was still kept a secret; but after the success of the measure in Warsaw, no serious opposition was feared in the provinces: no doubt numbers of persons liable to be taken would endeavour to leave the country; and it was highly probable that the forests of the kingdom would for some time be used as places of refuge, and the roads of the kingdom be rendered unsafe for travellers by the presence of these persons, who would be reduced to brigandage to obtain means of support.

But in the meantime the insurgents assembled near Warsaw; and two other bands, 500 strong, who had gathered together at Blonic, managed to elude the troops sent against them, and crossed the Vistula into the forests of Nasielsk, where they were joined by another band—the united forces amounting to about 1,000 men. Other isolated parties joined them, and assembled in various parts of the country; and whilst the government troops were seizing the "proscripts" in their beds at Warsaw in the night, from the 10th to the 11th of January, attacks were directed almost everywhere in the provinces against the troops in separate cantonments. The insurgents penetrated into the houses, and killed the soldiers one by one, until troops came up, and drove their enemies into the woods. Amongst the losses incurred on the 10th and 11th, were Colonel Kozlianinoff, who was killed whilst reconnoitring the woods; whilst General Kanabich was seriously wounded. Encounters took place at Plock, Plonsk, Radzit, and Siedlce; and a telegram was sent off from Warsaw to

St. Petersburg, to the effect that the revolutionary party had decided to make a St. Bartholomew's night in the night of the 22nd to the 23rd January. "At midnight," says the telegram, "there occurred, simultaneously in all the provinces, attacks upon different towns and upon detachments of troops cantoned in the towns and the villages. Surprising the soldiers in their sleep, the insurgents slaughtered them in their beds. In a village in the neighbourhood of Siedlce, where some soldiers were defending themselves vigorously in the house which they occupied, the insurgents set the house on fire, and burnt alive the brave men who were in it. Everywhere these atrocities were immediately checked by the troops, who made the insurgents experience very great losses, being driven back at all points. Martial law has now been proclaimed throughout the kingdom."

This news, as well as the intelligence coming from Wilna and other parts of the empire, created a deep impression in St. Petersburg, and led the czar to make the address to the guard to which allusion has already been made.* The address was delivered on the occasion of a review of the Ismailoff regiment in the Grand Manège, near the palace.

At the conclusion of the parade, the emperor, who was on horseback, having assembled around him the officers of the regiment, as well as the general officers of his suite, among whom were the Grand Dukes Nicholas and Michael, proceeded to inform them of the news that had reached him, the day before, of the disturbances in Poland. One of the emperor's aides-de-camp, who was present, stated that the emperor, who spoke in a tone of great sadness, but at the same time with much firmness, related the circumstances of the outbreak in almost the same terms as those in which they were given in the above-mentioned telegram. He described the formation of bands of insurgents on both banks of the Vistula, and the atrocities said to have been committed by them; of their having fallen upon small detachments of soldiers and murdered them in cold blood; and, in one instance, when they were unable to drive a small number of soldiers out of a house in which they were defending themselves, of their having set fire to it and burnt the soldiers alive. Besides the death of these unoffending men, the emperor said he had to lament the loss of a comrade who once served in this regiment, Colonel Kozlianinoff, who was killed in a *reconnaissance* near Warsaw. After expressing the grief and indignation with which he had heard of these events, the emperor said, "You must not suppose, however, that I consider these atrocious deeds are to be laid to the account of the Polish nation; they are the work of agents of a revolutionary party who are employed in creating disturbances in various parts of Europe, and who will stop at no crime in the accomplishment of their designs."

In conclusion, the emperor made the remarkable admission referring to disaffection existing in the Russian army. That instances of such a feeling existed, he said, cannot unfortunately be denied; but, he added, he felt convinced that if he should be obliged to call upon his troops to assist their comrades in Poland, he could rely on their unshaken fidelity. He himself had commanded the Ismailoffski regiment during the lifetime of his father, and he knew he could implicitly depend upon them; but it was not only in the guards that he had this confidence, he was convinced the same loyal feeling existed throughout the Russian army. This address, which was received with enthusiastic acclamation, was pronounced in such an earnest and impressive manner, that many of the officers were moved to tears, and the Grand Duke Michael is said to have sobbed aloud.

Sobbing, however, is a peculiar characteristic of the Slav races. They are always crying. Tchenaieff wept when he related his story of the Servian campaign to the czar. The grand duke also wept; and on numerous other occasions the august eyes were filled with tears. However, the imperial sobbing had no effect upon the insurgent chiefs, who issued the two proclamations to the country, one on January 16th, 1863, and one on January 22nd. Both of these documents were forwarded by the French, Austrian, and English consuls and ambassadors to their respective governments. The first ran as follows:—

"The recruitment has partially commenced in Warsaw. Our enemy, like an assassin and vile criminal, has come to attack people asleep, and to carry off the fathers of numerous families, and the younger children in place of the elder. In a word, it has seized all whom it has found

* *Ante*, page 277.

to take the places of those who were absent. A system of recruiting like this has never yet been seen. It is worthy of its author, of that great and vile criminal, that traitor to his country, Wielopolski.

"The Central National Committee had made every preparation to prevent the recruitment; but it has encountered obstacles which it was impossible to foresee, especially on the part of the French government, which condemns our movement, and opposes to it obstacles similar to those with which the Russian police strive to oppose it. It has hindered the importation of arms into Poland in numbers sufficient for a simultaneous uprising. The committee, not suffering itself to be baffled by such measures, was occupying itself in the discovery of other means to this end, when the recruiting suddenly took place in the middle of the night.

"Poles! must we succumb to the difficulties which are before us? Shall we give up our brothers to a degrading service? No! Let us march on with faith and courage, with God, and with confidence in the sanctity of our cause. The Central National Committee comes forward with a vigour and energy proportioned to the difficulty of the circumstances. Our standard has not fallen, and never will fall! Gather around it, brothers; and with the more vigour and ardour as our enemy oppresses and persecutes us. Do not give way; but, on the contrary, strengthen yourselves. You should be heroes; and you will become so. Our enemy will meet with a determined resistance in the prosecution of his criminal projects.

"Poles! help us with your valour, with your devotion; let us persevere to the end, and God will give us the victory.

"The Central National Committee proclaims the whole country to be in an exceptional state, and commands all worthy sons of their country to defend themselves to the death, even if alone, from the recruitment, and to deliver those who may find themselves in the hands of the Muscovite, and to give help and protection to all who may be in concealment.

"The Wielopolskis, the father, and his son Sigismund, and all the criminal band who have taken part in the recruitment at Warsaw, together with all those who have up to the present time assisted, or who are about to assist these wicked attempts at usurpation, shall be outlawed; and it is permitted to every one to judge and to execute them without incurring any sort of responsibility, either before God or before his country.

"Warsaw, January, 16th, 1863.—The Central National Committee."

The second proclamation was couched in even still stronger terms. It said—

"The contemptible government of the invaders, rendered furious by the resistance of the victim it tortures, has determined to strike a decisive blow by carrying away many thousands of its bravest and most strenuous defenders, dressing them in the hated Muscovite uniform, and driving them thousands of miles to suffer eternal misery and destruction.

"Poland will not, cannot, submit to this violence and degradation without an attempt at resistance. It would be a disgrace to our posterity were she to submit to it without an energetic effort. Legions of young men, brave and devoted to the cause of their country, have sworn to cast away the abhorred yoke or to die, and they place their reliance in the just assistance of the Almighty. Follow these, Polish nation!

"The Central National Committee, the only legal government of your country, bids you all appear on the last battle-field, the field of glory and victory, where it pledges itself to give you success before God and heaven; for the committee knows that, as you have been heretofore penitents or avengers, so you are ready to become to-morrow heroes and giants of strength. It knows well that you are ready to give all your blood, your lives and your freedom, without regret, hesitation, or weakness, as an offering to your rising country.

"In return, the Central Committee promise to wield the sceptre of authority with an unflinching hand, so that your strength will not be wasted. Your sacrifices will not be in vain. It will know how to overcome all difficulties, to break through all impediments; it will pursue and punish every disinclination, nay, even every case of *want of sufficient* zeal in our holy cause, with the utmost severity required from a tribunal which metes out justice in the name of an offended country.

"This being the first day of open resistance, the commencement of the sacred combat, the committee proclaim all the sons of Poland free and equal, without distinction of creed and condition. It proclaims

further, that the land held heretofore by the agricultural population in fee, for forced labour or for rent, becomes henceforth their freehold property, without any restriction whatsoever. The proprietors will receive compensation from the public treasury. All cottagers and labourers who shall serve the families of those who may die in the service of their country, will receive allotments from the national property in land regained from the enemy.

To arms, therefore, ye Poles, ye Lithuanians and ye Ruthenians! The hour of our common deliverance has struck; the ancient sword is drawn from the scabbard; the sacred flag of our common country is unfurled.

"And now we appeal to you, Muscovite nation, miserable and tormented, sad and afflicted with ourselves. Thy sons have also been dangling on gibbets, or have found a frosty death like our own people in the snows of Siberia; therefore we forgive you the murder of our country, the blood of Praga aud Oszmiana, the violence in the streets of Warsaw, the tortures in the dungeons of the citadel. But woe to ye, if in this solemn hour ye give assistance to the tyrant who crushes you whilst he murders us! If, instead of regret for the past and hopes for the future, you do this, you shall be accursed and condemned to a shameful and perpetual slavery, and then we must fight you to extermination in the last battle of European civilisation with Asiatic barbarity.

"Warsaw, January 22, 1863.—The Central National Committee."

The preparations to which the revolutionary committee alluded in these proclamations, resulted in the outbreaks we have already mentioned in Plock, Siedlce, &c. But attacks were also made in many other places. Thus, in the village of Jedlno, near Radom, a company of sappers was attacked at 2 A.M. The rebels, 140 strong, entered the houses where the soldiers slept, and by surprise and intimidation took possession of their arms and ammunition; whilst, at about the same time, in the small town of Bodzentyn, in the neighbourhood of the ancient convent of St. Croix, the church bell gave the signal for a number of rebels to attack the troops in their sleep; and the soldiers mounting guard, or on duty, and one officer, were either killed or severely wounded.

At Szydlowitz, Major Rüdiger, commanding the troops there, received, about midnight, the intelligence of the approach of armed bands. About 2 A.M. he ordered the assembly; but the rebels having commenced firing, and the night being very dark, and it being difficult to manœuvre in the narrow streets, he was forced back about half a verst on the road to Radom: at 7 A.M. the troops reoccupied the town, the rebels moving away on the high road towards Kielce, in the direction of the forest, after they had secured a considerable quantity of arms and ammunition.

Similar attacks were made in the Lublin district, but no important success was gained by either side. The insurgents were too weak to deal a decided blow, and too scattered over a large expanse of country to be subjected to any decisive stroke on the part of the troops. But though the insurgents were not able to face their enemies in the field, the authorities experienced considerable inconvenience by the facility with which the rebels cut the lines of communication of the government, as well as the telegraphs of the kingdom, the difficulty of maintaining them in working order having been great so long as the rebels were able to keep even a few men together in the vicinity of these lines. The railroad between Warsaw and St. Petersburg was seriously injured, some bridges on the line having been partially destroyed, and other lines rendered useless by the removal of the rails.

So far the movement at present was confined to the working classes of the towns, with a few small proprietors and some lower government officials, as well as many of the country clergy; the larger landed proprietors and peasants, as well as the Jews, keeping aloof from it. The students of the various colleges or schools also kept quiet, generally speaking; but great pressure was applied by the National Committee and its agents, to force both the proprietors and students to join the insurrection.

At the commencement of the movement a large number of proprietors arrived at Warsaw, where they held meetings to determine the course of action to be pursued by them, and it was hoped that the government would avail itself of this opportunity of gaining them to its side by some well-timed concession; but in the meantime the old reactionary party in the government took advantage of the outbreak to prevent

any concession being offered, and pressed the necessity of having none but Russians in the government; and it was owing to their influence that the grand duke ordered the most stringent and bloody measures of repression to be taken against the insurgents, not perceiving that such a course would only strengthen the discontent in the country, as well as excite the indignation of other countries against their cause.

The position of the Marquis Wielopolski in the government became impossible in consequence of the outbreak. The Russian party, who had always been opposed to him, represented him, as we have already said, as the immediate cause of the insurrection, by having insisted on the conscription being carried out; at the same time he received little or no support from the Polish members of the government; and, though countenanced by the grand duke, was clearly at the end of any power he may once have possessed.

Encouraged by the evident incapability of Wielopolski to make head against the storm they had raised, the insurgents and their committees redoubled their efforts, and began to assemble in larger bodies—a strategy which, in case of an insurrection, is always an unpardonable error until the forces are thoroughly organised, and in sufficient numbers to meet the enemy on equal terms. The chief bands were three in number. The first and most important was concentrated near the town of Wachock, in the government of Radom. It numbered some 8,000 men, under the command of an ex-officer in Garibaldi's army, and professor in the Polish military school in Italy, of the name of Langiewicz, who, accompanied by Mademoiselle Pustowojtoff, the daughter of a Russian general, and twenty of his pupils, had entered Poland in disguise from the Austrian frontier.

The country held by this band was more undulating and broken than the other districts of the kingdom, and was thickly wooded; the band was largely reinforced from the mining population of the locality; and having the government forges in their possession, employed them in the preparation of scythes, knives, and other rough arms of this description; whilst the vicinity of the Gallician frontier of Austria enabled them to procure more easily gunpowder and fire-arms than was the case elsewhere, at the same time affording a secure retreat in case of serious defeat.

The second band was concentrated in the district of Siedlce, having its head-quarters at the town of Wengrow, towards the Lithuanian frontier; it consisted of about 2,000 men, amongst whom were many fugitives from Warsaw, and a number of small freeholders, who are very numerous in this locality, and was commanded by Lewandowski.

The third concentration of insurgents was in the forest of Bolimow, near the town of Lovicz; this band, numbering about 2,000, operated against the line of railway from Warsaw to Vienna, and, without doing any serious mischief, constantly interrupted the communications by that line.

Other bands existed in the districts of Augustow and Lublin, and notably in the forests round Zamosk and Janow, near the Gallician frontier, in the neighbourhood of the estates of Prince Lubominski, in Austrian Poland; but the three above-named were the most formidable at first.

The rebellion having thus assumed considerable proportions, the authorities began concentrating their troops in the larger towns, abandoning all outposts to prevent these being surprised, and prepared to enter on a regular campaign against the disaffected districts; and this accounts for the facility with which the insurgents were able to assemble in such force: but the result of such a campaign could hardly be doubtful when the comparative forces of the two parties were considered. The imperial troops in the kingdom were estimated at over 100,000 men, well armed and equipped, with abundant stores of war material of all sorts; whilst the insurgents were only partially armed, unprovided with artillery or any stores of ammunition, and utterly untrained.

On February 3rd, an engagement took place at Wengrow, in which the insurgents were defeated with a loss of 200 men *killed*. There were no wounded and no prisoners—a fact that sufficiently characterises the spirit in which the military had been ordered to crush the rebellion.

On the following day an encounter occurred at Wachock, between the troops and Langiewicz, in which the superiority of the Russian arms, and their possession of artillery, gave the troops the victory after a severe fight, resulting in a loss of sixty men on the side of the insurgents, and from

twenty to thirty Russian dragoons. The town of Wachock was set on fire, and burned to the ground, as well as several of the neighbouring villages, by the victorious troops. Langiewicz himself was slightly wounded, and retreated to the south-eastern portion of the kingdom, where he found a refuge in the forests.

Whilst these and similar engagements occurred in various parts of the country, the civil promoters of the rebellion were not idle. In Warsaw itself, the Central National Committee issued its orders and proclamations under the very cannon of the citadel, signed by the insurgent military chief of Warsaw. One of these proclamations was directed against those landed proprietors who had arrived in Warsaw, and had held meetings to decide on their course of action during the movement. But being unable to arrive at any decision, it was agreed, at their last meeting, that no general determination being possible, each proprietor should act on his own view of the case. Consequently, the pressure of the revolutionary chiefs, which might without difficulty have been resisted by them as a body, became much more difficult; and many of the large proprietors were induced to join the movement, notwithstanding the small prospect of any good to their cause resulting from so doing. But it must be admitted that the position of the Polish nobility was most difficult. Distrusted by a government that could not protect their estates from pillage or their persons from insult, they were also proclaimed traitors to their country by the revolutionary leaders because they would not join the insurrection, and at the same time they were exposed to the vengeance of the peasant class, who had always been taught to consider them as their oppressors, and as standing in the way of any definite settlement of their rights. Thus, when the National Central Committee called upon these proprietors to return to their estates, and there fulfil the duties they might be called upon to exercise, many of them fled to foreign countries, leaving their estates in the care of stewards, who generally managed to make a good thing out of their charges, or abandoning them altogether. But even this did not save them. Those who thus had voluntarily exiled themselves were then called upon by the Russian government to return under pain of having their estates sequestrated. In this way they were taken between two fires, and ruin or death stared them in the face. If they returned and refused to aid the insurgents, death was their fate. If they helped them, then the Russian government seized them, and confiscated their goods. All who could, therefore, left the counntry, after selling their estates and property for what the Jews were prepared to give them on their own speculation, or as *agents for some Russians*. In this way the Russians attained their object, as the sequel proved, and Poland was annihilated. In this sense the rebellion was a godsend to the Russians; and they took good care to exploit it to its fullest extent.

Meantime, the proclamation of the insurgent military chief of Warsaw caused great excitement in the town. It called upon the youths under eighteen years of age to attend diligently to their studies, as the only means of preparing themselves to render good service to the country; warned the workmen not to allow themselves to be enrolled except by persons acting under the orders of, and with a proper commission from, the national authorities; ordered them not to leave town on any pretext except under the orders of the enrolling officer, as otherwise they were liable to become the victims of spies; and concluded with the following paragraph:—

"As the sudden flight of many officials of the conqueror to the citadel, and the continuance of oppressive regulations, might induce the Muscovite agents to avail themselves of the natural disposition of the inhabitants to make demonstrations, especially under the prevailing opinion that their city is likely to be exposed to the same fate that has befallen our towns which have been pillaged, the inhabitants are particularly desired to avoid any kind of demonstration, as it would only serve as an excuse to the oppressors, and to the traitor Wielopolski, for fresh rigours. The inhabitants will be informed by proclamation whenever their services are required; but at present the cause of their country can be best served by the most peaceable demeanour. This must not, however, prevent them from preparing arms and ammunition, which may be necessary alike to defend the independence of their country or their own homes, should they be assailed by the enemy."

To this proclamation the government military commander of Warsaw replied

with a decree prohibiting the possession of any kind of arms or powder by persons not having permission to carry arms; and ordering them to be given up to the proper police authorities within forty-eight hours; after which, persons having any arms, warlike instruments, or powder in their possession, would be punishable by martial law, as guilty of acts of rebellion.

Holders or distributors of seditious placards or printed matter were likewise to be punished by courts-martial as rebels; and all persons were forbidden, without special permission, to be in the streets after 10 o'clock at night, or to appear in the streets without a lantern after 7 P.M.; whilst in cases of alarm in town, all persons were to retire from the streets, the doors and gates of the houses to be properly closed, as all persons remaining in the streets would be exposed to the dangers attending military operations. In cases where a house might be occupied by insurgents, or shots fired from its windows, that house was to be forthwith destroyed by artillery.

These two proclamations were issued by the two parties under a mutual fear; and as it was a fact that many Russian officers had removed their families into the citadel, the report was more readily credited that, in case of disturbance, the town would be pillaged, than might otherwise have been the case; moreover, an outbreak in Warsaw itself had been announced as probable towards the end of February, which tended to keep up a state of anxious expectation amongst all parties.

Fortunately no such demonstration took place in the town. If it had, the strongest measures would have been taken to put it down, and much blood shed.

It is undeniable, that at this period the panic in Warsaw was terrible. To an outsider it appeared ludicrous. It extended to all classes, even to the British consul, Mr. White, subsequently appointed to the consulate in Belgrade in 1876. This gentleman kept in an inner room, access to which led through three or four others, of which the doors were kept zealously bolted and barred, so that getting one's passport *viséd* was quite an alarming undertaking. The only persons who exhibited no fear were the Polish ladies. Proudly they walked along the streets, clad in deep black, in national mourning, and refused all invitations to houses where there was any chance of meeting a Russian. Under these circumstances, as may be imagined, political animosity speedily degenerated into personal animosity and intense hatred. The soldiers began to act in a barbarous fashion, not only in obedience to the orders they received from their immediate superiors, but on their own account. It must, however, be confessed, to the credit of the Grand Duke Constantine, that he did what was in his power to prevent excesses; and on February 16th he issued the following order:—

"I desire all the chiefs of military detachments to preserve the strictest discipline in the ranks, and to be careful of their conduct. Soldiers guilty of pillaging or of committing acts of violence towards peaceable inhabitants who have not participated in the rebellion, shall be punished with the utmost severity of the military criminal laws."

This laudable order of the day had, however, but little effect in the outlying districts; and day by day there arrived reports from all quarters of the excesses committed by the troops, not only under the auspices of their officers, but at their instigation. The estates of Count Zamoyski were ravaged, his mansion gutted, and the family archives burnt, without any provocation whatever, and without there having been any insurgents at the place at the time or previously. The most wanton attack was, however, made upon the house and person of Count Leopold Poletylo, a member of the council of state in the kingdom of Poland, who, after taking his wife back to Nice, where she had gone on account of her health, had returned and established himself at the estate of Woyslawice, in the government of Lublin, with his two infant sons, in the firm intention to await forthcoming events.

The insurrection broke out, and he persisted in the opinion he had always frankly avowed, that this movement could have no other result than to bring repression and calamities upon the country. Not one of his *employés* or servants joined the insurrection, and there was no conflict, nor even assemblage, on his estate.

On the 12th February, his brother-in-law, M. Titus Woyciechowski, with his son, Joseph Woyciechowski, Dunin, formerly colonel of grenadiers of the Polish guard, and Kuhn, formerly major in the Polish army, met together at his house to celebrate

the birthday of his eldest son, aged five years.

These gentlemen, pleased with each other's society, were conversing, while drinking their coffee and smoking cigars, upon the events of the day, when, at half-past three in the afternoon, the bailiff of the Salkowski estate came to announce that a detachment of troops, composed of three companies of infantry, a squadron of Lancers, two cannons, and a number of Cossacks, had paid a domiciliary visit to the house of Rakolupy, belonging to Count Aurèle Poletylo, that they were marching upon Woyslawice, and would arrive in half-an-hour.

These gentlemen consulted as to what steps to take. It would have been easy to avoid the arrival of the troops, the time being more than sufficient; but the two old soldiers decided that they might calmly await them, seeing that they were not a horde of Tartars, but regular troops, commanded by civilised officers and men of honour, who would make the domiciliary visit, and, finding nothing, would quit the place.

They were still discussing the subject, when they heard in the distance the report of fire-arms, and two cannons were fired off in the little town of Woyslawice, killing four inoffensive men, and wounding several others. They then saw, from the windows of the *château*, some Cossacks galloping along the road in the direction of Uhair; and some time afterwards some riflemen came in sight and marched upon the *château*, which the balls already reached, and broke the windows. Then followed the mass of infantry, which surrounded the *château*. The cannon were placed in position at 150 feet, at which distance the officers also remained, while the infantry came near the *château* and broke the windows with the butt-ends of their muskets. Count Poletylo wished three times to go towards the troops to treat with the officer in command of the expedition, and to preserve the inmates of the *château* and his guests from imminent danger; but he was prevented by his brother-in-law, Woyciechowski, who pointed out to him that there was no one for him to address himself to, seeing that no officer, or even subaltern, appeared. Then commenced a frightful carnage, which cannot be described without horror.

The soldiers, having broken the windows, began to fire point-blank, without as yet having wounded any one; but when they entered the hall and began to massacre the servants with their bayonets and the butt-ends of their muskets, Count Poletylo, feeling convinced that his days were numbered, took leave of his brother-in-law, Woyciechowski, and of his guests, saying that his duty was to die with his children. He found his two sons, with Madame Dunin, his aunt, and three women-servants, on their knees. He followed their example, and during the hour and a-half that the carnage lasted he passed the time in prayer, awaiting death.

The count, his children, and the women who surrounded them, were saved almost by a miracle, for the door in the room in which they were was only ajar, and close by the soldiers had fired in every direction and broken all the doors.

Towards six o'clock in the evening the firing ceased, and the count, leaving his retreat, learnt that M. Woyciechowski and his son Joseph had retired to the count's study, and when the attack on the *château* began, the musketeers who crossed before the windows fired upon Joseph Woyciechowski, a promising young man of twenty-four, and wounded his father. Major Kuhn and Colonel Dunin had awaited the assassins in separate rooms. Major Kuhn was assailed by a number of bayonets, which he pushed aside with his hands, when two balls took off two fingers from each hand; he afterwards received several bayonet-wounds in the breast, and numerous strokes of the butt-ends of muskets all over his body. The soldiers carried off this prisoner and brought him before an officer, whom he requested to allow his wounds to be dressed, as he was losing much blood; but the Russian officer replied that there were doctors, surgeons, and bandages, but that they were to dress the wounds of soldiers, and not those of enemies of the Russian nation; and he ended by giving him a sabre-cut in the face.

Colonel Dunin, who was seventy years of age, sat calmly on a drawing-room sofa with his arms crossed, awaiting the attack, when the door opened, and five soldiers fired simultaneously upon him. He had five wounds: one ball grazed his skull and injured it; two balls went through his neck; two slugs lodged themselves in his jaw. The soldiers then rushed upon him, and he was wounded in the hand in pushing away the

bayonets. He tried to arrest the fury of these assassins, and pointed out that they ought to treat him as an old man and an old soldier. They only replied by blows and insults. Then the soldiers, who had to support him, as he was getting weak from the loss of blood, brought him to the major in command of the detachment, who remained passive near the cannon, in the midst of this scene of carnage. Colonel Dunin addressed the major in these terms: "You are a soldier, and yet you are not ashamed to exterminate people who are unarmed. and who cannot defend themselves."

The major answered that 100 shots had been fired from the house, and that he had afterwards caused an attack to be made. Colonel Dunin answered, "It is an infamous falsehood. I am an ancient colonel of the guard of Grenadiers, aide-de-camp of the general of the Ziminski division. I can wear decorations. Well! I swear to you, upon my grey hairs—I give you my honour as a soldier, that since the commencement of the insurrection, there has not been a single insurgent or arm in the house; there is not a gun, revolver, or a sword—in a word, nothing. For the rest, I am in your hands; cause a domiciliary visit to be made, and if you find anything but penknives and table-knives you may shoot me." The major said, "What are you talking of, when I saw a man in the court-yard fire upon me at twenty paces?"

Colonel Dunin answered, "How can you tell such a falsehood! What a commander are you, not to have seized this man in a court-yard filled with soldiers?"

The Russian officer saw that he had made a mistake, and was silent, and, at an order given, the firing ceased; at a second order they formed rank. Now this crime was committed, not by insubordinate soldiers, but at the command of their officers.

The major then had the mayor of the village sent for, and placed the wounded under his charge; after which he told the soldiers that they had behaved very bravely, and like heroes; he then went and dined at a place distant a quarter of a league, and the following day he returned, after this glorious undertaking, to Krasnystaw.

Six persons were killed, four at the village of Woyslawice, and two at the mansion—M. Joseph Woyciechowski, and a servant: in addition to this, there were nine wounded and bruised with the butt-end of muskets, who were eleven hours without having their wounds dressed, as there were no doctors or other assistance for them on the spot.

The sack of the house was complete. On the ground-floor, everything, furniture, china, and mirrors, was broken to pieces. The linen was torn to shreds. The jewels of the countess were carried off; 12,000 florins were taken from the pocket of Colonel Dunin; 3,000 were taken from a maid-servant—all her savings, in "*lettres de gages*;" 12,000, in the same kind of paper, from the steward Gorchowski, his whole property, the result of saving for a long course of years.

The news of this outrage, which we have given in the words of a witness—the steward Gorchowski—and which was corroborated in every particular by Major Kuhn, created universal indignation, especially in England, where the affair was made public by Admiral Napier, the British ambassador at St. Petersburg, and gave a considerable spur to the negotiations between the great powers in reference to Poland.

There were several reasons why these great powers could not afford to treat the Polish rebellion as lying beyond their interests. They were bound, in various degrees, not only by the stipulations of the treaties of 1815, but also by dictates of their own interests, both in regard to Russia and towards each other.

The powers, however, immediately concerned in the state of affairs in Poland, were those on its borders—Prussia and Austria. The interests of the Courts of these two countries were, to a certain extent, identical with those of the Court of St. Petersburg—that is to say, in so far as they were all three the strongholds of aristocracy. But the interests of the people were by no means identical. Added to this, there was the jealousy existing between Prussia and Austria, which prevented them from working together; in consequence of which Prussia preferred relying on Russia. Or rather, Prince Bismarck—then a simple baron—preferred it, because he was aware that his great idea, the unification of Germany, would have to be carried out in the face of Austrian opposition.

Thus, when the troubles in Poland broke out, negotiations were instituted between the two countries, which resulted in the draft of a convention between Russia and

Prussia, which afforded the Russian troops considerable facilities in crushing the rebellion. Information of this convention reached Count Rechberg, the Austrian minister, unofficially, and he communicated its nature to the British ambassador; but at the same time, as he had heard it was intended to ask Austria to join in it, he telegraphed to Count Thun, the Austrian ambassador at St. Petersburg, to discourage any communication on the subject to the Austrian Court, as Gallicia was comparatively quiet, and the Austrian government desired to maintain a strictly neutral and independent attitude.

A few days later, the same information was acquired by the British ambassador at Berlin, where the proportions of the revolt were immensely and intentionally exaggerated. The chief point of the projected convention was the permission to be accorded to the Russian troops to follow the Polish insurgents across the Prussian frontier, and claim the assistance of the Prussian troops.

As soon as the draft of this convention became known, there was considerable indignation throughout Prussia, as it was perfectly well known that there was no disaffection in the Polish provinces of Prussia, and no danger to them from the revolt. Equally great was the displeasure evinced by the British government at this step; but it did not suit Prince Bismarck's policy to modify the measures he had agreed to take at the instance of the Russian government.

This was especially obnoxious to Austria, and Count Rechberg succeeded in inducing Earl Russell to assume a very decided attitude on the question. Sir A. Buchanan, the ambassador of England at Berlin, was instructed to ask for a copy of the convention. Sir Andrew did not succeed at first in his object, but was promised a copy as soon as the Russian government gave its consent. In the interview, however, which Sir A. Buchanan had with Herr von Bismarck, that statesman expressed his views with the careless, inconsiderate bluffness that has since become one of his chief characteristics. Sir Andrew observed that, with a view to the interest of Prussia, the least possible delay should take place in the publication of the convention, if it only contained the provisions which he represented it to do; for it was generally believed that Prussia had entered into arrangements with Russia for mutually assisting each other in repressing all popular movements within their respective territories, and that this suspicion had created a most unfavourable feeling towards Prussia throughout Western Europe. To this Herr von Bismarck replied, that a portion of the English and French press, hostile to Prussia, and the whole press of Denmark and Austria, had seized upon the convention to calumniate Prussia; but whoever would consider the circumstances dispassionately and impartially, would easily satisfy himself that the Prussian government had done no more than was necessary for the maintenance of tranquillity, and the protection of the population on a frontier which was 1,500 miles in length. To this Sir Andrew replied, that if he would look back into the files of the *Times*, he would find that there was no feeling of hostility to Prussia in England, and that if the language of the press had within a late period ceased to be that of sympathy and approval, he must seek some other cause for the change than unfriendly feelings in England towards the Prussian nation.

Herr von Bismarck then went on to explain that the insurrection in Russian Poland had been principally promoted by the smaller gentry, who all had dependents attached to their houses and farms, whom they easily induced to take part in enterprises against the government; and who, when they had thus raised a small band of armed men, forced the peasantry to join them; and it was to prevent the proceedings of these persons being extended into the Polish provinces of Prussia, or a similar course being followed by the small landed proprietors and gentry of these provinces, that the convention had been entered into, while it was hoped, that by energetic action on the part of the authorities, the commerce of Prussia with the interior of Poland might be protected from the depredations of Russian-Polish insurgents hovering on the frontier. In fact, he asserted that the government had, in the first place, entered into the convention as a necessary measure of defence, but that they also saw in it a legitimate means of protecting the interests of Prussian traders with Poland. To this Sir Andrew replied, that those were the commonplace arguments used by all governments intervening in the affairs of other States, and they would have been equally applicable if her majesty's government had interfered in the

American civil war on the pretence that it was necessary to secure Canada against future aggression, and to protect British commerce and industry against the evils to which the war was certain to subject them; but it would be difficult for his excellency to prove that what was unnecessary in Galicia was unavoidable in Prussia.

To this Herr von Bismarck objected, that the massacre of 1,000 of the gentry by the peasantry in Galicia in 1848, had greatly diminished the probability of any insurrectionary movements there, as the dangerous class of the population had been nearly exterminated, and neither the great nobles nor the peasantry were disposed to incur risks and make sacrifices for the restoration of Polish nationality. At the same time he said that the number of troops concentrated on the frontier had been greatly exaggerated; for, though some of the reserves had been called out, none of the corps had been placed on a war footing, either with respect to men, horses, or guns; and, after providing garrisons for the towns and fortresses, the troops at the disposal of General Werder could only enable him to station 12,000 men on the Northern, and 8,000 on the Silesian frontier, for service in the field, which was a very moderate force for the duty to be performed. He said also that the Prussian commanding officers had orders not to act on Russian territory *beyond a day's march from the frontier, and that Russian troops would only cross the frontier while in actual conflict with armed insurgents.*

He explained further, that the principal advantage which Prussia gained from the convention was, that bands could not be collected on the frontier for the invasion of the Prussian territories; or if insurgents in these territories were driven across the frontier, they could not be rallied or reinforced in the kingdom for a renewed attack on the Prussian troops; and in answer to an inquiry which Sir Andrew made of him with respect to Russian insurgents who might be captured in Prussia, he said they would be given up to the Russian authorities, in conformity with the stipulations of conventions of long standing, which had been renewed in 1857. He said these conventions had been suspended in 1853, but that the number of Russian deserters and other persons crossing the frontier illegally, from criminal or other causes, became so great an inconvenience, that it had been found necessary to renew the conventions in the interests of public order in the frontier districts.

Finally, he professed to be greatly annoyed at the reprobation with which the convention had been received in Prussia and in Europe, and with the distrust of the Prussian government to which it had given rise; and though on previous occasions he had always spoken of the probability of the Russian army in Poland proving too weak to suppress the insurrection, he represented the principal forces of the insurgents as having been already defeated and dispersed, and those remaining in arms as consisting merely of small scattered bands of men who were afraid to return to their homes, but who, though unable to offer any serious resistance to regular troops, might keep up for some time a state of brigandage in Poland, similar to that prevailing in the Neapolitan provinces of the kingdom of Italy.

These arguments of Herr von Bismarck, as can be seen, had not much value. His citing the state of affairs in Italy was not in any way applicable to the case. No inconvenience arose from Italian brigandage in the neighbouring States; and these States did not consider it either their duty or their interest to furnish the Italian government with police to do the work of Italian *gendarmes*.

This is the view that was taken of the matter in Prussia; and, on February 18th, the following interpellation was addressed to the government in the Lower House of Parliament:—"Has a convention been concluded between the king's government and the imperial cabinet of Russia for the suppression of the Polish rebellion? And, if so, what are its conditions?"

The president of the chamber having called upon the president of the ministry to answer this question—

Herr von Bismarck rose and said, that the government did not intend to reply to it. Whereupon M. de Unruh observed, that notwithstanding the refusal of the government to answer the interpellation, he would move that a debate be opened on the subject, as it was one of such importance that the opinion of the House in reference to it ought to be placed on record. According to the trustworthy information of the local papers, and to the reports given by members of that House, living contiguous to the districts con-

cerned, it appeared that no movement of any sort of consequence had manifested itself in any portion of the Polish possessions of Prussia; notwithstanding which, two entire army corps had called in their reserves, which, according to the new organisation of the army, was equivalent to being put on a war footing, and it was rumoured that two more would follow their example. This would be equivalent to the mobilisation of half the military forces of Prussia; and he would ask the House what possible purpose such armaments could serve. Was the step taken because of the imminent danger of the Polish provinces of Russia setting up their independence, and taking a threatening attitude towards Prussia? It was clear that, at present at least, there was no probability of such an issue. Or was it an act of political friendship towards Russia? The speaker then went on to review the relations that had existed between Russia and Prussia since the wars of the empire; and enumerated the various unfriendly acts of which the latter had to complain, deducing therefrom that it had never been the policy of Russia to see a strong and great Prussia grow up by her side; and that a subserviency of Prussian interests to those of her imperial neighbour was, from every point of view, the most fatal error that a Prussian statesman could commit. He then adverted to the special dangers attaching to a policy of this kind, in connection with the Polish question, as involving the hostility of France and England; and concluded by saying that he could not bring himself to believe that it was the intention of the government to take their proposed measures on the ground of the so-called "solidarity of Conservative interests," which was nothing but a league of absolute governments against the liberties of their peoples; nor would he believe that the government were looking out for foreign broils to get out of their home difficulties. If, however, an aggressive policy of any of the kinds described were to actuate the government, he had the full confidence that the chamber would not vote one thaler in support of it.

Thereupon Herr von Bismarck replied, saying that he would be delighted to take lessons in Prussian policy from the wider experience and deeper knowledge of the gentleman who had just sat down, but he would be obliged to him to afford him the opportunity of taking them in private, or, at least, in some less public place than in the chamber. It was easy to bandy about strong expressions respecting the foreign policy of the government; but he thought that publicity and the effect produced in foreign countries should prescribe limits to the abuse lavished upon one's own ministers. As regarded the armaments to which allusion had been made, he denied that any portion of the army had been mobilised. Not a single extra horse had been bought for the artillery and cavalry. All that had been done was to call in the reserves of the infantry. It was no business of his to enter into an academic dissertation on the foreign policy of Prussia; and his position as foreign minister prevented him from expressing sympathies or antipathies for any foreign cabinet. He could not, therefore, follow M. de Unruh in his retrospective review of the relations between Russia and Prussia; but he could tell the House that the government were not carrying out a Russian, but a Prussian policy, and that its object was to protect the king's subjects against the danger of insurrection. It had been hinted by the last speaker that threats had been made, or advice offered, to the government in reference to their attitude in regard to the insurrection. The government had received nothing of the sort, and did not intend to receive anything of the sort.

To which M. Waldeck's answer was—"The minister-president has vouchsafed to give us a few particulars about the military preparations actually made; but he has remained silent as to whether a convention has been concluded with Russia. This silence can only mean that such a convention has been concluded, for otherwise he would, if not out of respect for us, at least out of respect to the country and to Europe, have answered our interpellation with the simple 'No,' which alone would be compatible with the honour and dignity of Prussia. A convention to assist such a State as Russia in putting down her disaffected subjects was a something so monstrous, that it was difficult to find a proper category amongst public acts wherein to range it. It could not for one moment be classed with a treaty for assisting an allied State in defending itself against foreign foes. It was nothing more nor less than the sending over of *gendarmes* and armed police to a country whose existence had hitherto depended alone on police and

gendarmes. And this was a part to be undertaken by a State that pretended to be at the head of German civilisation! The man whose face did not flush with shame at such a thought, was not worthy to be a Prussian or a German. The party to which the minister-president belongs, is that which, in opposition to the votes of the chamber in 1854, endeavoured to force the country into active co-operation with Russia during the Crimean war. This, at least, was a policy that could be defended on political grounds: but in what political dictionary could the right term be found for a police intervention in behalf of a foreign State? The character of the present insurrection had been correctly described by the first speaker: it was not an organised revolt for political purposes, but a cry of anguish raised from an oppressed country. Could it for one moment be supposed that the unhappy creatures who fled to the woods and the desert places for refuge against a brutal tyranny, were likely to make an aggressive movement against the Prussian frontier. Our safety against such dangers must be sought in the contrast afforded by our own administration of our Polish provinces as compared with Russian rule, and not in aiding and abetting that system of government."

The speaker then turned to the position assumed by the government in reference to the interpellation. "The government treats us," he said, "in regard to foreign matters, as it did in reference to internal concerns. When we refused certain items of the budget, the ministry told us, 'We will incur the expenditure all the same.' When, in reference to our foreign policy, we ask whether a convention, which may lead forth our children to an unjust war, and take our earnings from our pockets, has been concluded, we are told, 'This is no concern of yours; we will not show you the convention.' Is it, then, so insignificant a thing that our children should be sent forth to do hangman duties to an absolute government? Not in the interest of Prussia, let it be *clearly understood*, is this work to be done, but in the interest of absolutism, as such. The only parallel for it is to be found in the sale, during the last century, by the Elector of Hesse, of his troops to the British government, for putting down the revolted American States. But the day for policy of this kind is passed, and kings can no longer treat the lives of their subjects as private property to be employed no matter on what frivolous and Quixotic adventures. An intervention on our part—let us not disguise the fact from ourselves—would be damned by the whole civilised world. Austria condemns it; England openly condemns it; France rejoices at the opportunity afforded her of making herself popular at our expense. Even in Russia the principles upon which such an intervention would be based have of late come into discredit, and the Emperor Alexander has himself endeavoured to adopt a more liberal policy. It is true that, in so doing, he has incurred the heavy displeasure of those Prussian admirers of Russia to whom the minister-president belongs. Who knows? It is, perhaps, to bribe Russia back to her old faith that the present assistance is offered to her. There was a policy that Prussia might have followed; she might, in a friendly manner, have offered her advice to Russia, and warned her of the dangers she incurred by abandoning the road of legality, and ordering the barbarous conscription which has called forth the present rebellion; and more than any other State, Prussia might have expected that from her such a warning would not have been in vain. But a sound foreign policy of this sort is as little to be expected from the present ministry as a sound internal policy. The minister-president has protested against heaping abuse upon the government in the face of Europe. But I deny that this is what we are doing. To point out the faults committed by the government is not to heap abuse upon it, and the course we are pursuing will strengthen but not weaken the State. What we do, is to show to Europe, that if the Prussian government is on the wrong path, the Prussian people at least will not encourage it along its path. This is our business here this day; and if the minister-president will not lay the convention before us, and if its contents are such as the papers describe them, we shall, at least, by what we have said to-day, have protested by anticipation against it as against the interests of Prussia, as opposed to the principles of international relations, and as unparalleled in the annals of history."

Herr von Bismarck, in reply, said, that the speaker who had just sat down, had declared that a simple "No" was the only reply to the interpellation that would have been compatible with the honour of Prussia. He (Herr von Bismarck) thought he knew

quite as well as M. Waldeck what was due to the honour of Prussia, and would take the opportunity of recalling the opinion of a great English statesman, to the effect, that the worst of all monopolies was the pretended exclusive possession of political insight and virtue. In conclusion, he denied the authenticity of a letter that had appeared in the *Czas* newspaper, purporting to be addressed by a person in the Chancery of the Grand Duke Constantine to the Russian legation here, and in which the offers of Prussian assistance were treated very cavalierly, and described as forced upon the Russian government.

Stung to the quick by the contemptuous tone adopted towards them by Herr von Bismarck, the House determined to return to the charge; and on February 26th, the House declared, that "the interest of Prussia required, that in face of the revolt that had broken out in the kingdom of Poland, the government should not afford assistance or favour either to the Russian government or to the insurgents; and, consequently, that it should allow neither of the contending parties to come upon Prussian soil without at the same time being disarmed."

As an amendment to the above, the following resolution was proposed by M. Bonin in the name of the minority of the committee:—

"The interest of Prussia required that, in face of the insurrection that had broken out in the kingdom of Poland, the government should confine itself to such measures only as were required for the defence of the frontier, and should avoid any interference beyond that point; and, consequently, that it should not allow of any armed persons coming upon Prussian soil without at the same time disarming them."

As sub-amendment to the above, Baron Vincke proposed the following:—

"That the interests of Prussia, in the face of the insurrection which had broken out in the kingdom of Poland, required that the government should not allow Russian troops to come upon Prussian soil in pursuit of Polish insurgents."—Herr von Sybel, in moving the resolution, referred briefly to the circumstances under which Prussia had become possessed of portions of Poland. Her present title was a valid one, *de jure* and *de facto*. She had made it good by the improvement and civilisation of the country, through German industry and German capital. What, therefore, he added, "we desire for our Polish fellow-citizens, is a humane and just government; but, at the same time, we desire that the German inhabitants of what was formerly Poland, should know that, for their protection and for their maintenance, as belonging to the Prussian State, the entire Prussian people is ready to stand good. With consciences so clear, with a position so well defined, and differing so essentially from that occupied by Russia, it is evidently our business to protest against a policy which, without any natural necessity, runs counter to our most important interest—namely, that of preserving peace for our Prussian territory."

The speaker then went on to show how, without any necessity, the government had delivered over a large portion of the fatherland to all the horrors of a barbarous war; had undertaken a joint responsibility for Russian misdeeds, and changed the Polish into an European question. Further, how this policy had been followed up without any prospect of compensation, and at the expense of hundreds of thousands, without the consent of the chamber. In doing so, the government had once more given proofs of that which was the essence of its being—viz., contempt for rights; and had shown that it could neither live nor die without breaking the laws of the country.

M. de Gottberg defended the government; MM. von Röune and Roessel attacked it.

Count Eulenburg, in the absence of M. de Bismarck, defended the government, and said, in reply to one of the former speakers, that it was no unusual thing for the government to show, confidentially to a foreign government, a convention which they had not laid before the House. With reference to the Poles who were arrested at Thorn, he would give the following explanations:—They had not been delivered up in the sense of the extradition treaties; but having been arrested at the station at Thorn on their way from the West, and having been found possessed of no other legitimations than old Russian passports, no longer available, they had been expelled across the Russian frontier, according to existing cartel provisions. "Well, gentlemen," continued Count Eulenburg, "I can only refer you to Article XXIII. of the Cartel Convention, according to which you will see, that every individual belonging to the Russian empire, not provided with proper papers, can be expelled by us, and must be

received by Russia. In virtue of the above paragraph, the four individuals in question have now been expelled."

Dr. Becker argued, in a long speech, that an independent Polish kingdom would be a better neighbour for Germany than Russia, though he would not give up to such a kingdom the ports of Danzig and Elbing, or a single acre that had been fairly reclaimed by Prussian industry. He spoke strongly and indignantly against the former partitions of Poland.

Count Eulenburg, with reference to the supposed entrance of Russian troops into Poland, read a telegram from the Landrath of Strasburg in West Prussia, to the effect that some outposts had been pushed on in the night of the 18th July, upon the bridge of Drewentz, which belongs to Gollub (a Prussian town), and joins that place with Dobrzyn a Russian town, because both towns were threatened with a band of insurgents, which expected reinforcements from Gollub. The town Dobrzyn had never been occupied by Russian troops; the pushing forward of outposts had been rendered necessary by local circumstances which strongly favoured an attack of the town, denuded as it was of Russian military.

Herr von Bismarck then recapitulated the course taken, in the various debates held in the House, respecting the Polish question, from the first interpellation of MM. Hantall, Kantak and Co., to the present resolution, in order to prove a revolutionary tendency to sympathise with the Polish insurrection. The interests of the country had thereby been sacrificed to party interests; and German speakers had expressed themselves in an unheard-of manner. M. Waldeck had compared the calling-in of Prussian reserves to the sale of Hessian troops to the British government. M. de Unruh, amidst the applause of the House, had declared that if, from the present acts of the government, foreign complications arose, the chamber would refuse to the king the means necessary for the defence of the country. Now, was not this equivalent to saying to foreign countries—"Now is your opportunity; come on! for Prussia is defenceless?" This caused great excitement in the House, which evinced strong marks of dissent. Whereupon, M. de Bismarck, quite unmoved, continued—"I am glad to see, gentlemen, that you are still capable of indignation on such a subject." Here greater excitement ensued amidst loud cries of "Order;" but the Vice-President Behrend requested the House to be quiet, saying, "The minister-president has the right to express his pleasure at what the House may think or do. A call for order is here out of place."

Herr von Bismarck then rose and said, "I will not touch upon the question of whether the ministers can be called to order; but if the question is again mooted, I shall reserve to myself to speak upon it. Gentlemen, the threat to make Prussia defenceless was expressed by that same M. de Unruh, whose name is associated with the refusal to pay taxes in 1848." A violent scene here ensued in the House; cries of order were heard from all parts of it; members rose from their seats and groaned.

The president, having rung his bell and restored partial order, said—"I must here observe to the minister-president, that the last statement made by him stands in no sort of relation to the subject under discussion."

M. de Bismarck replying, said—"I cannot admit the right of the president to call me to order. I have not the honour to belong to this assembly. I have had nothing to do with making the rules of this House; I have not assisted in electing the president. The disciplinary power of the president is limited by these boards" [at which words he struck the front of the ministerial tribune]. "My superior is alone his majesty the king; I do not speak in virtue of the rules of *your House*, but in virtue of the authority given to me by his majesty. You have not got the right to interrupt me."

Vice-President Behrend answered—"I had not disputed the minister-president's right to speak, nor, according to the constitution, can I dispute this right. But, according to the rules of the House, the disciplinary power of the president is limited only by the four walls of the House, and this power I shall most undoubtedly use." Here loud cheers arose, but Herr von Bismarck contemptuously replied—"This is a view which, on the part of the ministry, I must repudiate. To resume then. M. de Unruh, whose name is associated with the refusal to pay taxes in 1848" [here M. de Bismarck was interrupted by renewed disturbance and cries of "Adjourn!" and Vice-President Behrend remarked, "If the minister-president repeats observations which I have declared

not to belong to the subject, I shall most certainly use my right to adjourn the House."]

M. de Bismarck answered—"I cannot prevent the president adjourning the House, and as I have twice repeated what I meant to say, I am satisfied!" More disorder ensued here, and the president again rang his bell. Herr von Bismarck continued—"This threat to lay Prussia defenceless is an unfortunate one; all the more so that with this tendency the names connected with 1848 again become prominent. You are asked by your resolution to express your sympathy with the insurrection under Mierolawski. I have nothing to do with the intentions of the persons who have brought forward this resolution; but the practical result of it will undoubtedly be to identify the House with the Polish insurrection. The report of the committee is based upon a set of proofs in reference to the contents of the convention, derived from lies and misstatements taken from the newspapers, and the reporter has conjured up from these an imaginary belt of 500 square miles of Prussian territory given up to Russian occupation. This is simply silly fancy. On the contrary, the convention secures Prussia against a danger of this sort. By it, Russian military are not allowed to cross the Prussian frontier without our sanction. From the exaggerations, the lies, the misrepresentations of the press, has arisen the bad impression made by the convention abroad, and these misrepresentations form the material of the present debate. But this debate, I can tell you, will have no practical result, not even that of causing an embarrassment to the ministry, unless it be the convenience of a waste of their time, which, by the way, is the country's time, of which you have no right to rob it! If the object of the resolution, therefore, has been to shake the position of the government, it will fail in its object, and all that will be obtained will be to prove, before the whole country, that you take part with the Polish insurrection."

With this arrogant speech of Herr von Bismarck's the debate was concluded, and adjourned till the next day, when Herr Bockum-Dolffs moved an amendment, to the effect that the government should not allow any armed persons to touch Prussian soil without disarming them.

This amendment was carried by a large majority—by 246 against 57; but as it was known that Herr von Bismarck would not at all consult the wishes of the majority if they ran counter to his own, foreign governments, especially that of Great Britain, were not inclined to leave the question in the stage to which it had been brought or reduced by the Prussian chamber.

There thus arose a passage of arms between Lord John Russell and Herr von Bismarck, sufficiently interesting in itself, but still more of importance in its after-results, as it inspired Herr von Bismarck with feelings of the greatest animosity towards the earl, and contributed in no small degree towards the intricacy of the alliance between the two northern powers.

Earl Russell addressed a despatch to Sir Andrew Buchanan, in which, after stating that he had been informed by Lord Napier of the permission to be accorded to Russian troops to continue their pursuit of Polish insurgents on Prussian soil, he said that Count Bernstorff had defended the convention, which, he said, did not in any way amount to an interference in the contest between Russians and Poles. Earl Russell then continued:—

"But it is clear that if Russian troops are to be at liberty to follow and attack the Polish insurgents in Prussian territory, the Prussian government makes itself a party to the war now raging in Poland.

"If Great Britain were to allow a federal ship of war to attack a confederate ship in British waters, Great Britain would become a party to the war between the federal government of the United States and the confederates.

"It is obvious that by this convention Prussia engages to become a party in the war against the Poles without any apparent necessity for so doing. For her majesty's government have not heard that any disaffection prevails in the Polish provinces of Prussia.

"It is but too probable that this convention will irritate the Polish subjects of Prussia, tend to excite disaffection where it has not hitherto existed, and thus extend the insurrection.

"Upon viewing this convention in all its aspects, therefore, her majesty's government are forced to arrive at the conclusion that it is an act of intervention which is not justified by necessity; which will tend to alienate the affections of the Polish subjects of the King of Prussia; and which, indirectly, gives support and countenance to the arbitrary conscription of Warsaw.

"You will read this despatch to M. Bismarck, and you will ask for a copy of the convention between Prussia and Russia."

The sting in this communication was twofold. As Herr von Bismarck remarked at the time, the passage relating to the contest in America, not only showed the stand-point of the government sympathies touching the civil war, but was also meant as a hit at the sympathy evinced by Germany for the federal cause. For, as Herr von Bismarck said, had not Earl Russell's sympathies been with the confederates, he would have reversed the comparison and said—"If Great Britain were to allow a *confederate* ship to attack a federal ship in British waters, Great Britain would become a party to the war." The second sting lay in the earl's discourteous mention of Baron Bismarck as plain "M." Bismarck. This was a disregard of etiquette which the French government, addressing itself on the same subject, and in the same sense, to Herr von Bismarck, was not guilty of, and awarded him, in the despatch, his full title, addressing him as His Excellency M. de Bismarck-Schönhausen. Ministers are as human as other people, and quite as tenacious of their dignity—perhaps more so, the higher their station; and Herr von Bismarck never forgave this slight; and when Sir Andrew Buchanan read the despatch to him, he did not fail to pick the noble earl's words to pieces. He said that the earl spoke, in one place, of the events occurring in Poland as a contest between the Russian government and Polish insurgents; and in another, as a war against the Poles, in which he accused Prussia of having engaged to take a part; but that, in his opinion, the measures which the Russian government were employing to suppress the insurrection, could be described as a war in which two nations are engaged; and Prussia could not therefore have been said to have become a party to a war between Russia and Poland, if her troops had been ordered to act in concert with those of Russia on the frontier in the event of an insurrection breaking out in her own territory.

To this Sir Andrew replied by remarking, that whatever name might be given to the conflict, that did not affect the responsibility of Prussia in the matter. Herr von Bismarck then sought to put an end to the discussion by denying that there was any agreement in the convention that Russian troops should be allowed to retain their arms on Prussian soil. But when Sir Andrew pointed out that this was included in the stipulation which the convention did contain—namely, that Russian troops should be permitted to pursue and capture Polish insurgents in Prussian territory—Herr von Bismarck admitted that the interpretation of that stipulation had been under negotiation; and it was to have been restricted and defined by instructions to be given to the military frontier authorities, when it was decided that it would not be necessary for the troops of either government to cross the frontier at all, and that no instructions on the subject should be prepared. The convention might therefore, he said, be looked upon as a dead letter, as the instructions necessary for carrying it into effect had never been drawn up.

To the observation that if Russian troops were to be at liberty to follow and attack Polish insurgents in Prussia, the Prussian government would make itself a party to the war now raging in Poland, Herr von Bismarck opposed a denial that Russian troops had ever been allowed to do so; but he said, nevertheless, considering the reasons which the Prussian government had at one time for fearing that the Prussian territory would be violated by the insurgents, and that Prussian subjects would be incited to revolt, he could not admit that the case of Russian troops acting in the manner contemplated by the convention against insurgents in the Prussian frontier districts, could be looked upon in the same light as a federal ship of war attacking a confederate ship in British waters; for any permission granted to Russian troops to cross the frontier into Prussia, or for Prussian troops to cross into Russia, would have been given solely for the protection of Prussian territory and of Prussian property, and for a purely defensive purpose, in the event of an insurrection existing on both sides of the frontier, as there was every reason to apprehend would have been the case before Prussian troops could have reached the frontier districts in sufficient number to provide for their security. Sir Andrew would not admit the distinction which Herr von Bismarck wished thus to establish, as the motive for permitting an act could not affect the character of its consequences; but Herr von Bismarck

maintained that, considering the position of the Prussian government, it could not fairly be said that they would have given, by carrying out the stipulations of the convention, indirect support and countenance, as alleged by Earl Russell, to the arbitrary conscription of Warsaw, for they could not have neglected to take such measures as they might have considered necessary, under the circumstances, for the safety and protection of their own territory.

As to the request which Sir Andrew had been instructed to make to him for a copy of the convention, Herr von Bismarck observed that he could not understand upon what grounds her majesty's government could consider themselves justified in expecting the Prussian government to communicate to them a copy of an incomplete document, which only formed, as he had already explained, the first step in a negotiation which was then suspended, and which would remain entirely inoperative unless it were rendered effective by instructions which had to be agreed upon, and which would not now be drawn up, as circumstances had rendered them unnecessary. It was, therefore, a convention of which no ratifications had been exchanged, and it was not intended that it should be ratified.

Herr von Bismarck then repeated what he had formerly said—viz., that the convention merely stated, that as the insurrection which had broken out in the kingdom of Poland threatened public and private property, and the peace of the neighbouring provinces of Prussia, it had been agreed between the two governments that assistance might be afforded to each other, and their troops be authorised to cross the frontier on the demand of either government, and in cases of necessity, and that this agreement should only last while both governments should deem it expedient. He also said that the proposal to enter into the convention was forwarded by telegraph from St. Petersburg by General Alvensleben, who received authority in the same manner to sign it. That the king had at first hesitated to authorise its signature, as his majesty considered the agreement of too elastic a nature, until it was suggested to him that the character of the engagement would entirely depend upon the instructions to the frontier and military authorities, which would have to be agreed upon with the Russian government before the convention could be carried into effect, as to the circumstances in which, and the distance to which, the frontier could be crossed by the troops of either party.

But even this restricted authority, Herr von Bismarck said, had never been formally conceded, and no action by Russian troops on Prussian territory, as far as he was aware, had ever taken place, although accidental cases may have occurred; but, if so, this may have happened in Austrian as well as in Prussian Poland; nor had any occupation of Russian territory by Prussian troops ever taken place, although it had been attempted to represent as such the occupation of the bridge belonging to Prussia which connects the Prussian town of Gollub, near Kulm, with a Russian town on the opposite side of the river Drewentz, when it was believed that insurgents in possession of the Russian town were about to make an irruption into Prussia. There had, however, been several cases in which Russian custom-house guards, when assailed by the insurgents, had crossed with the custom-house chest into Prussia, and had been allowed to return without being deprived of their arms, not, however, in virtue of the convention, but as a mere act of courtesy on the part of the king.

With this reply Sir A. Buchanan had to be satisfied for the moment. But the same day, Herr von Bismarck received a similar communication from the French government; and after taking counsel with Baron Brunnow, the Russian ambassador, it was agreed, that in order to avoid further complications, the convention should be communicated verbally to the French and English ambassadors. This was done, and Sir Andrew saw that it contained nothing but what Herr von Bismarck had already told him. But it did not escape his notice that the document contained no clause, as all such documents do, regarding its ratification. Consequently, Sir Andrew saw that it was never intended that it should be ratified, but that it should be left in its present condition, so as to meet any interpellations with the reply that no such convention existed. At the same time, there was no doubt but that both governments intended to act upon it, and dispense, as friends who could trust each other, with the formalities of signatures and ratifications.

And such turned out to be actually the case. The writer of these lines followed the course of the Polish rebellion, as special correspondent, from its commencement to

its end in 1864, and speaks from personal knowledge, in addition to the large amount of information he was able to acquire.

It was perfectly impossible to elude the Prussian outposts on the Prusso-Polish frontier. Not a man, not a musket, not an ounce of lead or powder ever found their way across the frontier. If the insurgents trespassed on Prussian soil, they were at once seized and handed back to the Russian authorities. On the Austrian frontier, as will be seen later, matters were very different. Therein the Austrian government was vigilant only in one sense. They allowed anybody and anything to pass *into* Russian Poland, but they took good care to let nothing and nobody pass out again without arresting them. They, however, did not hand them back to the Russian authorities, but simply interned them till the war was over. By this means they succeeded, not only in getting rid of the dangerous elements in Austrian Poland—especially in Galicia—but they also gained much credit for leniency from their own Polish subjects, and from foreign governments.

That Prince Bismarck did not adopt a similar policy was because it clashed with the intentions he had then—and since 1848—already formed regarding the unification of Germany, and the hegemony of Prussia, to the exclusion of Austria.

He foresaw, as is proved by many of his utterances about this period, that the Slavonic question would soon assume important dimensions; and this, coupled with the religious questions, led to his forming the closest intimacy with Russia, and to weigh with a heavy hand upon the Polish subjects of Prussia, who were pre-eminently identified with ultramontanism. In fact, he foresaw and fully appreciated the importance of the Teutonic question, as against the Slavonic question, for eastern and south-eastern Europe, and was resolved to break up the Slavonic coalition—or the possibilities of such a coalition—by all the means in his power. This was best done by sowing dissensions amongst the Slav families, and by inciting them to such action as would entail and necessitate the employment of violent measures against them by those against whom their attempts were directed. At the same time he was equally resolved to put down any such attempts within the kingdom of Prussia with an iron hand, and, from the commencement, to crush any such movement.

We have already shown what Panslavism is, and what are the forces at its disposal in Russia and kindred countries. But it is also necessary to regard the matter from the German point of view, and take into consideration the Teutonic question in its relations to the Slavonic question; for both act and re-act so much upon each other, that a consideration of the one is not complete without a consideration of the other.

One of our prominent historians, Mr. Freeman, has stated in effect, that the world's history is so extensive, that only its broadest features can be properly grasped by one mind for all practical purposes. In other words, that, like a rare and choice fruit-tree, all encumbering twigs, offshoots, and branches, interesting as they may be in their details, and necessary to the development of the parent stem, must be pruned and cut down if the tree itself is to bear that fruit it is capable of bearing. It is not meant by this that history should be cut down to the collection of competitive examination questions and answers, now so much in vogue. That is simply reducing history to the same level as mankind is reduced in those glass cases at the South Kensington Museum, where so many ounces of lime, phosphorus, fat, water, &c., are made to represent man in all his pride of animal existence. There is only the one thing wanting that Schleiden's lunatic vainly endeavoured to discover. This gentleman's favourite occupation consisted in searching for the proper degree of temperature at which to warm a saucepan full of hog's bristles, bacon, lard, &c.—all the component parts, in short, of a duly constituted pig, which, when stewed to the vivifying degree of heat requisite, he expected to sally forth with a squeak in the full-blown enjoyment of porcine existence. History, regarded in this light, is nothing more than what may be termed laboratory or cabinet history—highly interesting, no doubt; but not the inspiring element, not the principle that vivifies a nation and endows it with existence. The history that constitutes a nation—for there can be no nation where there is no history—is not a history of petty details, dates, and isolated laws, but history such as it exists in the minds of the people, and is represented by their ballads, legends, and traditions. Whether those ballads and traditions are literally true or not is quite immaterial; it is sufficient if they exist in such force as to con-

stitute a conviction. That is the essential condition; and if such conviction exists, no power on earth can stop its development. In this sense the Slav legend of the fair Illyria is as potent a factor in determining the destinies of the Slavs, as the Norman Conquest, Magna Charta, or the Reform Bill have been in shaping the destiny of the British people. This legend strikes the key-note to the dominant idea of the Slav races—an idea, be it remarked, that has never yet been followed out with such perseverance as of late years. It is, in fact, an idea that has never even been conceived, except in an Utopian sense. It runs as follows:—

In the days of Nimrod, there lived a mighty huntress, named Illyria, whose name was as renowned in Asia as that of her rival. One day, when Nimrod was on the chase, he saw a magnificent white stag standing in a gap of the forest. He at once set off in pursuit of it, and after some time succeeded in transfixing it with an arrow. Advancing to secure his prize, he was surprised to see a fair damsel, armed with bow and quiver, appear from the opposite direction with the same intention. "This is my quarry," said Nimrod; "behold my arrow!" "Not so," was the reply; "it is as much mine as yours, for behold my arrow also!" So saying, the damsel pointed to an arrow that had also pierced the animal's heart. Nimrod was vexed, and pointing to an eagle soaring above them, he proposed they should both draw upon it, and the victor be the owner of the stag. Illyriá consented; both let fly, and again both arrows sped equally true, the bird being transfixed from both sides. Nimrod was now furious, and declared that Asia was not large enough to hold the two, and bade his antagonist defend herself. She did; each drew on the other, but both arrows met midway, and glanced off right and left. Unable to contain himself any longer, Nimrod vowed that his enemy should succumb, and blew his horn to summon assistance. But Illyria was too quick for him, and darted away, crying as she went: "Thou art too strong for me now, and hast driven me forth to the setting sun; but with the rising sun I shall come again with hosts like the sands of the sea-shore, and utterly cast thee out." With this threat Illyria disappeared, and after many wanderings, settled down in the forests of the Danubian basin, where her manifold charms attracted an angel from heaven, whom she presented with three sons, Rouss, Czech, and Lech. Rouss, the eldest, founded the empire of Russia; Czech, that of Bohemia; and Lech, that of Poland; whilst her later offspring were the ancestors of the present Serbs, and the founders of the great Servian empire.* Such is the popular tradition; and so deeply rooted is it in its principles, that it is, to all intents and purposes, as good

* This legend is the subject of a song, which is met with throughout the Slavonic countries, where it is generally sung by the gipsy-bards, mostly blind men, and never fails in enthralling the audiences.

"The horns rang through the forest glen
  At break of dewy dawn,
For Nimrod and his merry men
  To chase the snow-white fawn;
The snow-white fawn of nimble foot
  Through thicket, brush, and thorn,
That Nimrod and his hunters put
  Day after day to scorn.

And Nimrod swore upon his head
  Nor arrow should be drawn,
Nor hound be loosed, nor spear be sped
  But on the snow-white fawn.

And off they set, the echoes woke
  The stillness of the glade,
Until the fawn her cover broke
  Like sunlight through the shade.

And speeding on, with many a turn,
  King Nimrod chased the hind
Through tangled brake and feath'ry fern,
  And left his men behind.

At last a break, an open space
  (And one that barred the way);
The snow-white fawn had run her race—
  The hunter gained the day!
Short stopped she with a sudden start,
  The bow was quickly drawn,
On sped the dart straight to her heart,
  And fell the snow-white fawn!

The king a peal of triumph rang
  To see the red blood flow—
When from the other side there sprang
  A maiden with her bow.

And both advanced as each one glanced
  At each across the dell,
And both stood for awhile entranced,
  And neither broke the spell.

as the history authenticated by the documents in the archives of the Public Record Office.

The vitality of the relationship thus embodied in this legend has, with one exception, been continuous. It may have been stronger or weaker at various periods—even dormant; but it always existed. The one exception is even more apparent than real. Of course, that exception is Poland, as distinguished from Russia in its present extent and form. But it must not be forgotten that the Poles claim what is now known specifically as Russia, up to Nijni-Novgorod and Charkow, for their own, so that the exception is reduced to a local dispute as to the limits of Slavdom; and though the Poles, as a nation, are at variance with the Russians as a nation and a government, they are not so with the Russians as far as they are Slavs. The same holds good with the Czechs, or Bohemians. They still adhere to their legends and traditions that link them to the rest of their family, and acknowledge Croat, Serb, Slovene, Slovak, and Montenegrin, Bulgarian, Bosnak, and Herzegovinian, as part and parcel of the same family, of which Russia is the head by right of power, and having the same interests, as far as any of the members of a large family have, in promoting the welfare of the whole community.

The maid was dressed in robes of white,
  Of golden-bordered lawn,
And haughtily she placed her right
  Upon the snow-white fawn.

Then red King Nimrod's regal brow
  Flushed at this haughty sign,
And to the daring maid—'I trow,'
  He said, 'this quarry's mine!
For here the arrow that hath flown
  Right truly to her heart,
And thus I claim her for mine own—
  Do thou in peace depart!'

But proudly smiled the maid as she
  Replied—'I'm truly sorry
That thou should'st disappointed be;
  But mine's this noble quarry!
Thou knowest well, in full career
  She started, stopped, and fell,
For she had felt this arrow *here*,
  Ere thine had crossed the dell!
Had felt this arrow that hath flown,
  Winged by a maiden's craft,
And made the snow-white fawn my own
  Ere thou hadst loosed the shaft.'

Then flashed with wrath King Nimrod's eye:—
  'If it be as you say,
Behold yon eagle in the sky,
  Let him decide the day!'

The maiden bowed, the arrows flew,
  Transfixed the eagle fell,
Pierced through by both the arrows true,
  The king's and maid's as well.

Then cried the king—'The worse for thee,
  For we must try again,
Draw thou on me, I'll draw on thee,
  For one must here remain!'

Again the maiden bowed, again
  The air the arrows cleft;
But meeting in midway the twain,
  Glanced off to right and left!

'Now rue the day, thou unknown maid
  In golden-bordered lawn,
And rue thy deadly shaft that laid
  In death the snow-white fawn!
A hundred men are at my call,
  And thou must captive be;
For all Assyria's too small
  To hold both me and thee!'

Then mockingly the maiden laughed:—
  'O chivalrous Assyria,
Who can'st not better speed a shaft,
  Than can the maid Illyria!
The king who calls a hundred men
  To seize one maid forlorn,
That met him in the forest-glen
  And slew the snow-white fawn!'

Thus spake, and like the white fawn sprang
  Along the leafy chase;
Thus spake—and empty echoes rang
  Around an empty space!

And now the woods and rocks that bound
  The blue Quarnero's tide,
With fair Illyria's horn resound
  Illyria, the bride.
For she who killed the snow-white fawn,
  Who Nimrod oke defied,
From heights celestial has drawn
  Some angel to her side.

And all the men of Slavic tongue
  That bid the world defiance,
And all their mighty kings have sprung
  From Heav'n and Earth's alliance.
Rouss, who killed the Northern Bear,
  Renowned in Slav tradition;
Lech, the knight beyond compare,
  And Czech, the great musician!"

Now, when we consider that this is the dominant national and political idea, the family principle, as it were, of a community numbering in round figures some 100,000,000 souls, it is self-evident that it is an idea that has to be carefully taken into consideration. It may work immense good; it may do the contrary. Pooh-poohing the idea as Utopian is simply foolish. All great ideas are Utopian in their commencements if they involve great changes. The question is, has the idea a real existence and sufficient vitality to ensure its realisation? That it really exists in a powerful form, even threatening from some points of view, is clearly proved by the powerful opposition it meets with from those immediately concerned—from a race that is certainly not given to Quixotic attacks or chimeras. Next to Gallicism—or to make the parellel exact, Latinicism—Panslavism, as headed by Russia, is the Teuton's bugbear. True, the German tries to hide his anxiety and his fears by ridiculing Panslavism, and threatens, in a bantering sort of way, to meet it by Panteutonism. Banter, ridicule, and abuse are his weapons, because he knows that logic is against him. He knows that while Panslavism marshals its hundred millions with a compact front of identity of interests—identical for all practical politics—Panteutonism is an empty phrase, and can never unite such opposed interests as those of Germany, Holland, England, and America, which alone he can regard as in some measure forming a combination similar to Panslavism. Here and there, and now and then, the interests may be identical, and may lead to concerted action by fits and starts; but beyond this, Panteutonism is the merest rag of a scarecrow compared to its lusty antagonist, Panslavism. It might lead to the concerted action of England and America to check the advance of Panslavism eastward, or to common action between Germany and England to stop its westward career; but that is all. It is not, however, the material forces of Panslavism that are so much dreaded by the Germans—or rather by the German States, Austrian or Prussian—as a quality the Germans themselves possess in a very high degree—namely, that of assimilation. Not only do they assimilate themselves easily with more progressive and independent communities, but they also assimilate more backward races to themselves. This is a very valuable quality indeed, having regard to the benefit of humanity in general; but it has its very awkward sides for the governments who regard their subjects as the basis of their existence, and food for crown and sceptre, for church and state For this reason, the German government regards the emigration to America and England, of its subjects, with extreme disfavour. It knows that none of those families or men will ever return. They will become Americans, even as the Anglo-Saxon became an Englishman. The number of Germans employed in Russia become very soon Russians to all intents and purposes, even as the Alsatians and Lothringers became thorough Frenchmen within a very short period. Germans are not like the Swiss with their *mal de pays*. The German *Heimweh* is less practical, and much more sentimental; and if the country that absorbs them affords a fair profit to their industry, they adhere strictly to the motto *ubi bene ibi patria*, whilst still cherishing the memories of their native home, and living in an ideal "Vaterland," bordered with national songs and melodies, and watered, if possible, with eternally rejuvenescent springs of amber-coloured "Lagerbier."

It is this assimilating quality of the Germans, and the absorbing power of other nations, that causes the State to regard Panslavism with such aversion. It has been amply proved that Slav and German are able to work together—a matter that is impossible in the case of German and Gaul, or Italian and Spaniard. Thus the German official world is very apprehensive of an advance of Panslavism westwards. They fear that the immense material forces at the command of the movement will overcome their resistance, and relegate their country to much the same position as a stud, whence neighbouring nations may recruit their strength—in short, as a kind of moral and intellectual reservoir to supply leaven to the dough of other races. However flattering this view may be to the individual, it is highly disagreeable and obnoxious to the statesman who desires to form a model State in every particular, and exhibit it as the acmé of morality, science, and intelligence, and keep it for himself and his sovereign. Fortunately, however, for the nations outside this pale of perfection, a monopoly of perfection is impossible, and its apostles will always be drafted off by all who can afford to pay

a higher price for the commodity than the government which has trained them for its own use. In reality, this has been the position of Germany for ages, and gave rise to the assertion that the Germans were a nation of book-makers, pedants, dreamers, and idealists, whilst, in truth, they are as practical a nation in matters material, as they are philosophical in matters ideal. These are the characteristics of the Germans; and no great Chancellor, no Deutscher Kaiser, would ever be able permanently to alter them. If they did, the distinctive feature of the German would disappear. But of that there is no danger; and, in spite of the vast machine of militarism that is being brought to bear upon them, like an immense hydraulic press, to shape them into a well-rounded State model, the particularism of genius will ever assert its power, and Germany remain, as heretofore, the chief store-house of moral and intellectual progress, though, perhaps, at the expense of her political power. Like that of the ancient Greeks and Romans, the genius of the German races can never be bound down to the clod whence it sprang, though it may always cherish and venerate it.

It is, therefore, not surprising that the continental dynasties should regard Panslavism with aversion, not unmixed with fear. It is feared as an absorbing power, whose forces, once organised, would be irresistible from a politically aggressive point of view, in consequence of the immense military forces at its disposal. The general public also regard the movement with some uneasiness, because they have caught the catch-word that they will be "swamped" if the advance of Panslavism is not duly checked; and, finally, the Jewish communities fear it most unaffectedly, as the Slavs have ever shown themselves most hostile to them, and intolerant of their religion and financial operations.

This digression is necessary in order to show broadly what are the relations of the two races to each other, without entering into the justice, or otherwise, of the accusations and reproaches made by the one against the other, a full description of which would require a pretty extensive collection of new epithets, for which the English language has no equivalents. The question which now suggests itself is, whether there is any ground for the supposition that the causes which have hitherto kept Panslavism in check are no longer existent? Has Panslavism already attained such a pitch of organisation that it can now commence the struggle for the realisation of its dreams? Before this question can be answered, it is necessary to glance at the factors that have, till now, impeded its progress.

One of these factors, perhaps the chief of all, consisted in the antagonism of Poland to Russia. Without entering into the question of the territorial limits of the Polish section of the Slavs, it is sufficient to establish the fact, that the antagonism of this Polish section to the Russian section of the Slavs greatly impeded the progress of Russia as an empire, and, partaking of the character of an internal dissension, effectually checked the advance of Russia westwards. Thus, Austria and Prussia-Germany, in fact, are now paying for the mistake made in the partition of Poland. In dismembering the weaker of the two rival brothers for some territorial gain, and some strategical advantages, they materially strengthened their far more dangerous neighbour, with his millions of Tartars and other Asiatics to fall back upon. Instead of supporting the Polish nation as a bulwark between them and the Russians, they overthrew it, and brought Asia to their very doors. Having nothing to fear from Poland, and everything to fear from Russia, they actually played into the hands of their natural foe. This seems so plain, that it is a marvel how the error could have been made. Yet, with its consequences so plain before them, both these same powers played the same blind game over again, by refusing to allow Servia to become strong enough for a bulwark against Russia. History repeats itself. In a similar way internal dissensions placed Bohemia at the mercy of the Austrians; yet, after centuries of their rule, they have not been able to fuse the Czech and German element, in consequence of the despotic system of government, which is not so much a system of government as a system of police—an obnoxious, meddling, harassing system, that bore its fruit in Lombardy and Venetia, with the deserved loss of these two provinces. Then, again, dissension and rivalry rendered Bulgarian, Serb, and Bosnian, a prey to Hungarian and Turk alternately; whilst the same petty local jealousies threw Croatia into the hands of Haiducs, pirates, Austrians,

and Italians. Everywhere we meet with the same disintegrating element—dissension accentuated in its political aspect by religious and ecclesiastical differences. Catholic Poland against Orthodox Russia; Catholic Croats against Orthodox Serbs; Christian Bosniaks against Moslem renegades. From Warsaw down to Cattaro, dissension made great gaps in the Slav front, into which the enemies of the Slavs—Germans, Hungarians, and Turks—at once thrust themselves in, like so many wedges, to keep them asunder. So far this policy has been successful, but at a considerable cost. Austria and Turkey have succeeded in obtaining a mechanical mixture, presenting a certain degree of cohesion, but have utterly failed to produce, as it were, an homogeneous chemical mixture. Prussia has been far more successful; she has achieved the satisfactory result of having completely assimilated her share of the Polish spoil to herself. With the exception of the small impotently turbulent and ultramontane "Polish Fraction," the Slavs of East Prussia and Silesia are as Prussian as the Brandenburghers. This eminently satisfactory result is due to the circumspect, just, but strict government emanating from Berlin—a government that knows of no half measures where correct principles are involved. We need not consider all that might be urged against the Prussian policy in regard to Poland—to its share of Poland—all the charges of having ousted the great Polish landowners from their estates by indulging their extravagant propensities. But even if these charges are true, which no doubt they are, it does not appear how the Prussian can be held politically responsible for the wasteful habits of the Pole. That is a question of morality that must be left to the conscience of the individual.

Very different has been the case in Bohemia and the other Slav provinces of Austria. The government there has done its best, by its system of administration and policy, to counteract the work of assimilation that has been carried on between Slav and German with a considerable degree of success. Things were progressing very satisfactorily, when, in a moment of weakness, the Austrian government yielded to clamour and threats of rebellion, and let loose a flood of jealousy and discontent by giving Hungary an autonomy. That was the result of the mistaken idea that Count Beust was the diplomatic equal of Prince Bismarck. He failed as a minister; and it is very doubtful whether he was a success as an ambassador. But the greatest mistake of all was the concession made to the turbulence of a race in a marked minority amongst a number of other families, who only require to be united in order to dictate their own terms. It is a great error to look upon Austria as a conglomeration of various races. There are but three—the German, the Slav, and the Hungarian, of whom the Slav is by far in the majority. What would be thought of a policy yielding to the clamour of the Home Rulers, and creating a dualism which should carry on the British government, and placing Scotland and Wales under the administration of an Irish parliament? That is precisely similar to what the Austrian government have partially done. They have placed a large section of the Slav family under Hungarian administration, and created a vast amount of discontent amongst the remaining sections by favouring Hungary to the extent of virtual independence. Naturally both northern and southern Slavs demand equal privileges with the Hungarians. Thus the broad issue in question is whether, there being three distinct races constituting the empire of Austria, there shall also be three distinct parliaments, three distinct administrations, and three distinct budgets, serving three distinct interests having not one single point of common action. Obviously the proposition, under the most favourable conditions, is open to the gravest objections; but in the case of Austria it is simply absurd, for the following reasons. First, because the Hungarians and the Slavs are such bitter enemies, that, if left to their own respective devices, they would never be able to pull together. Either the one or the other would obtain the political supremacy, and oppress and harass the other on every possible occasion. Secondly, it would be next to impossible to draw a line dividing the German from the Slav districts. Bohemia, it is true, forms a compact Slav district—an "abgeschlossenes Ganze"—but where can the lines be drawn for districts of which Cracow, Lemberg, Cernowitz, Gratz, Laibach, and Klagenfurt are the centres? The thing is practically impossible.

There are thus but two alternatives for

Austria as an empire. Either she must revert to unity of government, abolishment of the various "Landtage," or Diets, and institute a central parliament sitting at Vienna, and ignore such infantile pretensions as the right of the various members to hold forth in their special tongues, or she must continue to administer the State by help of the fusion, for working purposes, of two of the conflicting races, and hold the third in subjection by what the Slavs delight in calling "brute majority." If the latter alternative be preferred, it is quite clear that the government will strike either on Charybdis or Scylla. In that case the best to be done is to choose the softer rock of the two. The Austro-Hungarian dualism must be retained to the exclusion of the Slavs, or an Austro-Slav combination be arranged to the exclusion of the Magyars. Which is the most advisable?

Now, to ordinary minds, and in ordinary circumstances, the fact that the Slavs by far outnumber the Hungarians—say by a majority of five to one—supplies the answer completely. The contrary view could only be supported and justified in case the majority were far inferior in intellect and industry to the minority. But of this there is not a shadow of proof. Quite the reverse. Bohemia and the semi-Slav districts between Gratz and Trieste, attained a degree of industry and prosperity far beyond that of Hungary long ago. There may be a certain friction between the Slav and the German still, which, as already said, the government has done its best to promote; but not less marked is the friction between Hungarian and German: if anything, it is greater. There is thus no proof at all of an inferiority of the Slav to the Hungarian in any respect. As for the vaunted progress of Hungary in recent times—since 1866—it is nothing but outward veneer and varnish, and a certain amount of glitter and tinsel in Pesth and Presburg, that have been obtained from the proceeds of various loans in the continental markets, on security that may turn out very illusory and unsatisfactory when evil days come on. But the money thus obtained, as well as from the rich harvests of recent years, does not seem to have produced any corresponding benefit. 'Twas there, 'tis gone—no one knows where, except those speculators and extravagant nobles who are indebted to the State by millions for arrears of taxes. It is by no means intended to disparage the Hungarians; but they are certainly not so superior to the Slavs as to justify the artificial supremacy over them they have been invested with. The result has proved this. Austria is on the verge of anarchy. Austro-Hungarian dualism has not answered. Would an Austro-Slav combination be more successful? It might, after an appeal to arms, and at the expense of the Magyars, which is quite undesirable. There thus remains the first alternative only—a reversion to unity of government. That is the only salvation for Austria as an empire. With Russia to back her own Slav population, with Prussia ready to annex the German provinces, with Italy biding her time till Trieste falls to her share like a ripe apple—like Lombardy and Venetia—the Austro-Hungarian structure would at once utterly collapse. A fourth alternative has been proposed—*i.e.*, that Austria should gracefully resign her German provinces, and enter upon a fresh career as a purely Slavic State. But apart from the difficulty in yielding up her most civilised provinces with the requisite grace, there would still remain Hungary to be dealt with—a trump-card in Russia's hands whenever she chose to play it. To expect such a consummation as a voluntary act on the part of Austria, would be equivalent to expecting a man to smile a graceful smile with a hedgehog sticking in his throat whilst one of his limbs was being amputated.

Such are the dangers with which Panslavism, headed by Russia, threatens the Austro-Hungarian abortion. It is the moral force permeating millions of souls—backed by a powerful empire—protesting against the continued existence of what all men of common sense must pronounce a political monstrosity. The final issue of the struggle is evident. The Magyar must at least admit the Slav to political equality with himself, and the Austro-Hungarian dualism must yield—the sooner the better—to the Slav coalition preparing against it on all sides. How this is to be brought about, whether by peaceful means, or by revolution, invasion, or anarchy, remains to be seen. But it cannot be too plainly, or too impressively stated, that the danger arising from the Eastern question is not to be looked for at Constantinople and Belgrade, but at Vienna and Pesth. It is in those centres that the combustibles are

accumulating that may bring about the conflagration of a European war.

This is the great question—the legacy bequeathed by the fair Illyria. But, though the question is a knotty one, and apparently entangled, it is really easy of solution, and will unravel at once if the proper end of the string be seized. That can be accomplished if Austria places her three races on a footing of perfect political equality, by the very simple expedient of favouring none.

But to return to the events of 1863. After it had become certain that Prussia was adopting all the measures in her power to stifle the insurrection, and that Austria only favoured it as far as her own interests were concerned; and, moreover, that neither France nor Great Britain intended to interfere actively on behalf of Poland, the leaders of the movement should have abandoned any further attempts, and prevented further loss of life and treasure.

But they refused to see what was evident to all clear-minded men, and the struggle continued. In the beginning of March, the government of Radom continued to be the scene of the principal operations; and the insurgents in that district, commanded by Langiewicz, although constantly reported dispersed and destroyed, reappeared in undiminished numbers at a short distance from the scene of their reported destruction, and by their activity and the ability with which they were handled, harassed the troops sent against them most severely; and although unable to make any impression against the troops by acting in mass, the insurgents, nevertheless, by continuing this partisan system of warfare, and by avoiding any general engagement, kept the whole Russian army in the kingdom in a constant state of suspense and preparation, and prevented anything approaching to a settlement of the question.

On March 11th, the Russian government declared that Langiewicz' band had been routed, and himself wounded in an action near the town of Wlozczowa, situated about midway between the Warsaw and Vienna railway and the old post-road to Cracow, and nearly equi-distant from the towns of Kielce and Chenstochow: it also declared that numbers of prisoners had been brought in by the peasants, and that some parties had even surrendered themselves to the troops. But all this was false; for a few days later, Langiewicz still occupied the ground in the neighbourhood of Vycow, lately held by the band under Kurowski, which had been severely handled in the attack on the town of Miechow—a position which, being close to the Austrian frontier, gave him the opportunity of receiving such supplies as could be smuggled across the frontier, as well as allowing him a retreat if pressed. The military authorities appeared at last to be fully alive to the importance of crushing this band, and a force of from 10,000 to 12,000 was sent to operate against Langiewicz. Meantime, the fact that an army, numbering at the lowest estimate about 80,000 men, well armed and equipped, and composed of old and disciplined troops, was unable to put down an outbreak that commenced with such small means at its disposal, was most remarkable, and proved that, however deficient the insurgents were in warlike stores and materials, they were, at all events, imbued with such a spirit of determination, that the best efforts of a large and well-organised force was required to regain the complete mastery of the country.

At this period the chief efforts of the insurgents were devoted to interrupting the railway communications of the kingdom, and at the same time, by forming bands in all parts of the country, to force the Russians to concentrate their scattered detachments under the fear of having them destroyed in detail, and so to leave the resources of a large extent of country available for the support of the various bands. This policy succeeded; and although some severe losses were experienced by them, their numbers became greater than ever, and more men were forthcoming than there were arms to place in their hands.

The pressure applied by the revolutionary committee on the nobles and others from the moderate party became also so great, that the utmost firmness was required by them to resist the movement openly; for it is scarcely too much to say that the government wished to drive this party into active opposition, as no effort was made to gain their support, nor were the slightest overtures made by the government to any prominent member of the party.

It was hoped and believed by many persons, that the anniversary of the accession of the emperor (the 3rd March) would be made the occasion of offering a general amnesty: but no such boon was accorded; and it is a significant fact, that although the Polish

members of the council of state, and among them the Count Poletylo, whose mansion was pillaged by the troops as we have described, attended the *levée* held by the grand duke on that occasion, notwithstanding the most violent opposition of many even of the moderate party, not the slightest notice was taken of these gentlemen by him.

Nor was this all. Instructions were sent at the same time to the military chiefs of the different districts of the kingdom, to form amongst the peasants of the different villages a sort of rural police, with the power of examining any person either residing in, or passing through, the villages, as well as of arresting armed men or others belonging to insurgent bands or marauders.

This ordinance meant much more than was conveyed by the actual wording, and was levelled against the whole of the landowners of the kingdom, as the power placed by it in the hands of the peasants, of arresting all whom they suspected, or denounced, as being insurgents, without demanding that any proof should be required to justify the arrest, was a most dangerous weapon in their hands; for though it is true that the third clause of the ordinance enacted that the communal chiefs, peasants, bailiffs, and elders were to take care that no excesses were committed by the peasants when apprehending insurgents, and that those who infringed this rule were to be severely punished, in many cases it was made the pretext for the gratification of every kind of personal vengeance and spite; and in many parts of the kingdom, where the nobility had long been uncontrolled and had abused the power which feudal institutions placed in their hands, scenes similar to those that occurred in Galicia in 1846, were the result of the measure.

The landowners having been thus crippled, the government had but little or nothing to fear from the moderate party, who, though sorely pressed by the importunities of the insurgent committees, still had sufficient tact to perceive that, at any rate, the moment to throw themselves into the movement had not yet arrived; and that so long as the insurrection was conducted by secret committees, composed of unknown persons in unknown localities, at home or in the capital, or on the continent, and without any regularly organised system or programme, they would be uselessly sacrificing themselves for an undeveloped object, and would lose whatever hold they still possessed over their countrymen, and thereby become incapable of rendering efficient service, in the event of foreign intervention, in favour of their country, or of liberal institutions being granted them by the Emperor of Russia.

In the meantime, however, whilst the progress of the rebellion in its civil aspect was hampered, partly by the action of the government, and partly by internal discussions, the movement in the field continued to grow apparently more serious. In Podolia, several thousand men, armed with what the official despatches call "every species of weapon," but who, in point of fact, could not be said to have been armed at all, assembled at Bar, and continually received fresh reinforcements. This fact, coupled with what occurred in Volhynia, proved that, notwithstanding the great difficulty of communication with Central Poland ("Kongress Polen"), and the interrupted communication between village and village, and district and district, the insurrection was ever gaining renewed strength. The Russian authorities ordered the peasants to arm themselves with scythes and guard the high road. In answer to this, the insurgents, in many places, proclaimed the emancipation of the peasants; but long habit and the influence of the schismatic Greek priests rendered this class but slightly favourable to the insurrection. The Russian garrisons in the towns of Podolia were very weak; not more than two regiments of infantry, here and there a few detachments of Cossacks, and not much artillery. The government had all the moneys transported from the provincial towns to Kamienico, and issued a proclamation, in the sense of the above ordinance, among the rural population, drawn up in the dialect of Little Russia, calling upon them, and especially the chief persons among them, to keep an eye upon the officials, the nobility, and the priests, and to report all they might see or hear to the *gendarmes*.

As may be imagined, all these measures of the government on the one hand, and the acts of the insurgents on the other, greatly contributed to intensify the hatred between the military and the rebels; and it must be borne in mind that the regular soldiery always regard rebels in the light of murderers and assassins—as people, in short, who have not got a licence to kill. Thus, a small division of the Smolenski regiment,

with a troop of Cossacks and dragoons, attacked the village of Giebultow, one German mile distant from Miechow, the property of Ladislaus Bielski. The soldiers took twelve persons from the manor-house ("Edelhof") and massacred them behind the village, under circumstances of great atrocity, because they believed that one of their comrades had been killed by a person belonging to the estate. Three, amongst them Severin Miczkowski, were at once killed; nine were mortally wounded; whilst a certain Wiescolowski, who had received several deep bayonet-wounds, was brought to Cracow without his wounds being attended to

After the massacre the soldiers plundered the bodies, and left the wounded to their fate, supposing them to be dead. In the meanwhile another party plundered the manor-house, the owner of which had taken timely to flight. It was not till late that the colonel appeared and put a stop to the pillage. On the appearance of a Polish column the Russians withdrew, and the wounded were then brought to Cracow under the protection of the insurgents. About the same time another frightful scene occurred not far from Giebultow. Louis Finkenstein, a British subject, provided with a passport of Lord Russell's, issued on the 27th of March, 1862, was travelling across the frontier at Baran, on the 14th instant, in order to make a purchase of corn at Miechow. At the village of Gorka, not far from Giebultow, he was stopped by soldiers and taken before their commander. No arms being found upon him, the major gave him an escort and sent him on to Szachnewskoj. He had to pass the night in his carriage, and a subaltern ("Junker") was ordered to protect him against the men. During the night several wounded Poles were brought in. On it being known that the Poles were approaching, the soldiers demanded that the prisoners should be killed. The officer resisted, pistol in hand, but it was in vain. With the cry of hurrah! the soldiers fell upon the unarmed persons and killed several, whilst Finkenstein was dragged from his carriage by the hair, received twenty-six bayonet-wounds, and was robbed of 5,800 silver roubles and whatever else he had. When the Poles came up, Langiewicz caused Finkenstein, at his own request, to be brought to Cracow, where he was most kindly received, and the particulars of the outrage forwarded to the Foreign Office.

Such acts naturally caused much indignation abroad, and gave rise to remonstrances and diplomatic notes—even from Spain and Portugal—which determined the Russian government to proceed all the more rigorously against the insurgents. The active army was brought up in a very short time to about 95,000 infantry, 12,000 regular cavalry, 10,000 Cossacks, and 8,000 artillery, with about 200 guns.

The whole of the troops composing this imposing force were well armed, the infantry having been well supplied with Enfield rifles, and well equipped, and in a high state of discipline—thus showing that there were no grounds for the belief that the officers had, in general, very little control over the soldiers under their command. There is, on the contrary, ample evidence that the excesses of the men were due to the savageness of the ignorant lower officers. But although such large numbers were available, they were split up here and there into small columns which manifested much, or no energy at all, according to the temperament of the commanders. Some were fired by ambition, or the wish for promotion, and did not care what measures they took to attain their objects. Others, on the other hand, either from age or other reasons, took no pains at all, but remained in garrison, or made a pic-nic out of their marches from one town to another, from village to village, from estate to estate, necessarily eating and drinking at the public expense. Thus there were only about 12,000 men allotted to the government of Radom, the chief seat and stronghold of the insurrection; and out of this force garrisons had to be supplied for the towns of Radom, Petrikau, Chenstochow, Kielce, Opochno, Miechow, and Olkusz, thus reducing the actual force available for the field by about one-half; and to this may, in a great measure, be attributed the successes gained by the insurgents under Langiewicz, who without sufficient arms or ammunition for the men under his command, succeeded in evading the columns sent against him, and continued to maintain himself in the wooded and hilly portions of this district, keeping, at the same time, his communications open with the Austrian frontier of Galicia.

To the failure of the troops in obtaining any important successes in this district, and

to the activity and ability shown by Langiewicz, the importance of the insurrectionary movement was due, so that the whole hope of the outbreak depended on the fate of the force under this chief; for although the insurrection existed, more or less, in all parts of the kingdom, and the troops were constantly harassed by the appearance of small bands where least expected, the force under Langiewicz was the nucleus of the national army, and any serious disaster to this force meant the ultimate failure of the movement.

The largest available force in the field, on the side of the government, was under the command of General Chrustcheff, a septuagenarian, mild, amiable, and addicted to the pleasures of the Court rather than to the delights of the "tented field." He was stationed in Lublin, in the province of Lublin, where large reinforcements had been received from Volhynia, partly with a view to watch the Austrian frontier, but also to increase the force in the government of Radom in sufficient numbers to allow of their taking the field in such force as to render the position of Langiewicz most difficult, unless he could succeed in obtaining a supply of arms and ammunition to enable him to increase the numbers under his command in proportion. But though he had no difficulty in procuring men, arms and ammunition were not so easily procured, and the fatal blow was thus closer at hand than most people imagined. It was decided to carry out a series of combined movements; and the Russian troops having advanced in force, Langiewicz retreated along the line of the Vistula, where it forms the Austrian frontier. The Russians, about 9,000 strong, made an attack, in three columns, on the insurgents, who numbered about 10,000 men.

Fighting continued during the 17th, 18th, and 19th of April, along the bank of the Vistula, between Niepolomice and Tarnow; but the corps commanded by Langiewicz was early defeated. The latter, seeing the uselessness of further bloodshed, escaped into Austrian territory; and on the evening of the 19th, arrived at Uscie-Yesnickie. He there represented himself as being called Waligorski, and asked the imperial commander, Bassler, whether he would be allowed to continue his journey unmolested. On being told that this request could not be granted without express permission from the higher authorities, he finally declared himself, and placed himself under the protection of the Austrian government.

On the morning of the 20th, Langiewicz was brought to Tarnow in a carriage, escorted by four Hussars; and in accordance with telegraphic orders received from Lemberg, he was to have left for that place at 1 P.M. By mid-day he was at the station, and the whole of Tarnow had turned out to see him.

Langiewicz had his female adjutant, who is the daughter of a Russian general, with him; and he took two first-class tickets for Lemberg, paying for them in Napoleons. Just before the departure of the train, however, a telegram arrived from Lemberg to stop his departure. He was then taken to the Hôtel de Cracovie, under a guard, consisting of an officer and fourteen men, which was destined less for the security of his person than for keeping off the immense crowds of towns-people. The only person who visited him was the colonel of the imperial regiment of dragoons, and who was requested by him to have other visitors kept at a distance.

During the day about eighty wounded insurgents, many of them quite boys, were brought in, and placed in the military and civil hospitals. There was no appearance of any uniform, each one being dressed according to fancy. Those insurgents who came over the frontier, unprovided with papers, were sent to Tglau by the mid-day train. Not one brought any arms with him, unless two cuirasses can be reckoned in this category; but Langiewicz and his "adjutant," Mademoiselle Pustowojtoff, were dressed in the Polish national costume. According to Langiewicz, not a third part of his force had arms. The sympathy evinced for him and Mademoiselle Pustowojtoff, who was wounded in the foot, was unbounded. Soon after his arrival, the remains of his army were brought into Cracow to the number of several hundreds, and confined in the riding-school and other public buildings; anywhere, in fact, where space could be found for them. Before the expiration of a week they were almost all free again and across the border. Under pretence of visiting their relatives, the female population of the town, each furnished with some extra article of female costume, easily obtained access to the prisoners, who shortly afterwards passed the sentries in the slightest of all disguises,

some wearing a bonnet, others a shawl, &c., &c.

Langiewicz and the most dangerous of his companions were, of course, better guarded, and afterwards sent to Bohemia; but, at the time, the Austrian authorities hardly knew what to do with the large number of fugitives swarming across the frontier. In consequence, more stringent measures were soon adopted by the authorities. On arriving by rail the traveller was not allowed to leave his carriage until his passport had been examined. Frequent domiciliary visits were made, and a considerable military force echeloned along the frontier. These measures were, however, futile; it was found quite impossible to prevent any one passing into Poland. The bands, formed in Galicia, chose some dark night, or located themselves in a wood till dusk, and as soon as the patrol passed, over they went; or else they passed singly and re-united on the Polish side of the frontier, which was generally unguarded by Russian troops; except when they learned, from the reports of their spies, that a band was to pass at a given point and hour.

The defeat of Langiewicz, and the complete rout of his ill-organised army, might have shown how little chance the movement had of success; and people of calm judgment, who had the opportunities for looking below the surface, no doubt were convinced that any further resistance was futile. But the leaders of the rebellion were either incapable of forming a calm judgment, or were following out their own private ends, and serving their own private interests.

Committees were formed in Cracow, Lemberg, Warsaw, and Vienna, in Paris, London, and Rome, who determined to carry on the struggle as long as possible. These committees were composed partly of Polish nobles, such as Prince Czartoryski and others, partly of professional men, journalists, and other exiles, and partly of members of that floating revolutionary population, which is always ready to join the standard of revolt whenever it may chance to be unfurled, whether in Italy, Spain, or Poland.

The troops, or rather bands of insurgents, after the defeat of Langiewicz, were similarly composed. Of peasantry, there were very few who joined the insurgent ranks. The rank and file were chiefly composed of artizans and labourers; the officers belonged to the middle class; and the only men who had had military experience were those who had served with Garibaldi, or in the Hungarian army, under Kossuth, in 1848. Ninety per cent. of the whole number, rank and file, and officers, were men who had nothing to lose, but everything to win—that is, be it borne in mind, after the defeat of Langiewicz and his internment in Austria. Up till then, there is no doubt but that the majority of the insurgents were respectable men, who revolted from fear of transportation, under the name of military service, and from truly patriotic principles. But this number, comparatively small, was soon killed off, or otherwise disposed of, by sickness, fatigue, despair, and fear.

For a time, however, there was no lack of volunteers from all quarters of the globe. A considerable contingent was supplied by the ultramontane party, and the residue of those choice spirits who had clustered round the ex-king of Naples. The rebellion in Poland was regarded by them and their instigators, the clergy, as a struggle, not only against the Russian government, but also against the Russian church. It must not be forgotten that the Poles are all Catholic, and that as long as they remain Catholic, there must always be a considerable friction between them and the adherents of the Russian church, the orthodox Greeks.

Hence, as might be supposed, what with really patriotic principles, what with religious sympathy, the bulk of the better class of volunteers for the insurgent ranks came from Austria; not only from the Polish provinces, from Cracow and Lemberg, but from other especially Catholic provinces, and notably from Hungary, out of the ranks of those who were implicated in the revolt of 1848. Bohemia and Croatia also furnished a contingent, but not to any very important degree. From Prussian Poland there came very few. Some came from France, some from England—whence, however, considerable assistance was forthcoming in the shape of money; whilst Belgium supplied any amount of arms from the factories at Liège and other places, where a gun and bayonet could be procured for about fifteen francs. These arms, as may be imagined, were worthless against the Russian Enfield rifles. They did not carry more than 600 yards at

the outside, whilst the Russian gun killed its man at 1,000 yards Taking this superiority of the Russian armament, and their possession of artillery into account, it becomes explicable that, in most of their conflicts, the Russians lost no more than two or three men to as many hundreds of Poles. It was only when in close combat that the Poles could at all meet the Russians on a tolerably equal footing. Such occasions were, however, very rare, and limited to a successful ambush or surprise in the dense forests, through which the roads led, followed by the Russian troops.

The following is the personal experience of the author, and gives a faithful account of the state of affairs in Poland, and of the "operations" after the defeat of Langiewicz:—

Partly from sympathy for the Poles, partly from a desire to see for myself what war was like, I determined to go to the seat of war, and attach myself to one of the commanders. Having communicated my desire to a Polish acquaintance, I was introduced by him to a committee located in the neighbourhood of Leicester Square. The members of this committee did not very favourably impress me. Faithful to Heine's picture of the "Pole," their daily refrain seemed to be—

> "A mighty bowl of punch we'll brew,
> Unsweetened, undiluted;
> A flood of liquid thought on true
> Old Polish style computed."

This, it appeared, however, was only one of the recruiting committees; and as I had no desire formally to attach myself to the insurgents as so much food for powder, I resolved to enter into no engagement with them, but to enter into relations with one of the higher committees. Meantime, I ascertained the fact, that, say, John Levitzki, was possessed of an extraordinary number of doubles. John Levitzki was enrolled, and received a certain sum, varying from one to five pounds. A considerable portion of this sum was expended, soon after the ceremony of enrolment, in a neighbouring *café*, for a general supply of "liquid thought," of which, the more muddled the consumers became during the evening, the more was required, as was but natural. A day or two afterwards, John Levitzki's exact counterpart appeared under the name of Simon Dragowski, and was also enrolled and inscribed in the list of volunteers. This sort of thing went on for the fortnight or so, during which I had the equivocal pleasure of these patriots' company. My original mentor, of course, highly disapproved of these proceedings, but excused them as being "necessary for the cause." I could not help feeling a certain doubt as to the value of a cause for which such proceedings were necessary; but resigning myself to the belief that the leaders of the movement knew best what was necessary for their country, I availed myself of an introduction to Prince Czartoryski, who was then in Paris. To Paris I went. Here things appeared very different. In place of low *cafés* I found elegant saloons; in lieu of undiluted punch I found champagne; instead of bibulatory, unwashed, and unkempt Levitzkis and Dragowskis, I found elegant noblemen, patriarchal aristocrats, charming ladies, and eloquent countesses, marchionesses of an age at which a toilette à la Pompadour is the most attractive. In place of the sordid fogs of Leicester Square and Soho I found an inspiring atmosphere of enthusiasm. Fair ladies, with a melancholy cast of countenance, dressed in appropriate black, were busy embroidering flags, picking lint, knitting socks, comforters, and mittens; others went from house to house collecting funds; here and there a stalwart priest superintended the arrangements. Ambitious young poets and musicians flitted from house to house, from Bel Air to the Rue Blanche, from the Elysèe to Montmartre, and enraptured their patrons with marches and war-songs without end. The very organ-grinders had caught the fever, and the strains of Oginski's "Last Polonaise," composed on the walls of his prison-cell the night before his execution, were heard at every corner of the city. All this, if not of war itself, was the romance of preparatory war; and as no romance is complete without love or love-making, which, in Paris at least, are not quite the same thing, there was a most remarkable amount of cooing and wooing going on amongst the young enthusiasts. Mademoiselle Marie was continually in animated converse with M. Jules; and it was quite affecting to note how the masculine mind, which ordinarily so strongly objects to "trying" anything on, submitted to the measurements, by fair hands, for caps, cloaks, jackets, and the thousand-and-one knick-knacks requisite for a campaign. More men, young and old, were engaged

at this period in Paris alone, in holding skeins of wool to be twisted round fair fingers, than at ordinary times throughout the whole civilised world. Mothers, usually so strict as to their daughters' acquaintances, closed their eyes when they saw their *bonnes enfants* engaged in what, at other times, they would have considered highly dangerous and unbecoming flirtations. But, as the result generally was the obtainment of a good sum of money, or some equivalent value by Marie from Jules for the good of the cause, the course of events was not interfered with. In short, it was what the Americans would call, "a fine time for lovers."

Nor was there much difference between the female and the masculine section of patriots. The majority spent their time in meeting here, there, and everywhere, building the most magnificent castles in the air on the basis of choice luncheons, with many oysters and more champagne, and dainty little suppers, at which endless plans of campaigns were conceived, and endless battles fought, and victories won.

Such was the Parisian surface. It was more agreeable than the London surface; but still it did not strike me as exemplifying the spirit requisite for the success of a great national movement. And I did not conceal my opinion of the matter. But, having written an article to that effect for a London paper, which I communicated to Prince Czartoryski, I was gravely informed by him that I was much mistaken. In almost the same words as those used by my London mentor, he informed me that all this was "necessary for the cause."

"But," I remarked, "it would surely be wiser to devote the large sums of money spent to embroider flags, and for similar purposes, to more useful things. Nor can I see what benefit to the cause can accrue from these endless suppers, and the enormous consumption of champagne and oysters."

"*Mon cher ami*," replied the prince. "You must remember that this is only one way of advertising. I know one of your compatriots who spends more than £20,000 in advertising an utterly worthless article. He is making a large fortune. He spends a pound to get a guinea. But we, who are thus advertising a not unworthy object, do not pay anything. We let our friends spend as much as they like, and as they may please, in order to get a little for ourselves. What a man will not give before he has drunk his bottle of champagne, he will give after he has emptied it. But as we do not pay for the champagne, all we get is clear profit. Instead of publishing our advertisements ourselves, and then asking for the cash to pay for them, which comes up to a large sum, and frightens our friends, we let them pay for them unconsciously. It all comes to the same thing."

"All that," I replied, "may be as true as it is sarcastical and cynical; but it does not alter my opinion, nor affect my conclusions. Whatever you may say on the point, I contend that the patriotism which insists upon having fifteen francs worth of champagne before it gives five francs away for the "cause," is a mock patriotism, worth less than nothing, and that there is no hope for a cause based on such principles. It was not by such means that Italy regained her freedom and liberty."

"*Ah, mon ami*," replied the prince, benignly, "you are young; you are enthusiastic; you do not know the world yet. Society is a strangely complex machine."

"Exactly so," I answered; "but that is just what puzzles me. What has 'society' to do with the question? As far as I am aware, and as far as your own manifestoes go, the present movement is a rising of the people—a democratic movement to overthrow the rule of the czar, and reconstitute Poland on constitutional—if, indeed, not on democratic principles."

"Constitutional principles—constitutional liberty—not republican," corrected the prince.

"So be it," I replied. "But then how is it that all your French friends belong to the most pronounced class of absolutism, and conservatism, and ultramontanism? How is it that there is such a glaring difference between the practice and principles in London and Paris? In London I heard nothing but of the republic. Here I hear of nothing but the claims of the aristocracy, and speculations as to the future king of Poland."

"You forget again," observed the prince, "that we are living under an imperial rule; and that, at any rate, the greater part of the exiles living here are of the Polish nobility, who have their privileges also as well as their duties."

"One of those privileges," I curtly remarked, "being that of living in Paris instead of fighting in Poland. In fact,

whilst the *plebs* is fighting, the aristocracy is, let us say, diplomatising."

"Sir," severely interrupted a rather saturnine individual, who had been listening to the conversation—"Sir, you are the most self-sufficient young man I have ever had the pleasure of meeting. You insult his excellency."

"Sir," I replied coolly, "if your idea of self-sufficiency is the conviction that twice two is four, you may be quite right. If so, I cannot say much for the intellectual capabilities of your acquaintances. As far as I understand his excellency, he does not deny that twice two is four, but is simply explaining to me why it is so. His excellency knows perfectly well that I am not referring to such men as himself, but to the *jeunesse dorée*, who would be doing their country more service in the ranks than flirting about in the saloons, or lounging on the Boulevards."

"Monsieur," said my interrupter, sneeringly, "had better express that opinion to one of the *jeunesse* he so much despises."

"That," I replied, "is quite a Corsican method of argument, only adapted for people who have no brains to blow out."

At this remark, which was certainly not complimentary, the saturnine gentleman arose, and took his leave from the prince without deigning to honour me with any further remarks. After he had left, the prince laughed heartily, and told me that my last words had been too severe: the gentleman was no less a personage than M. Pietri, Napoleon's chief of secret police. The prince, however, assured me that he did not at all feel offended by what I had said. On the contrary, he was glad to make the acquaintance of a gentleman who was so singularly outspoken. Still I was much mistaken, as I should find out when I had gained a little more experience; and he, therefore, quite agreed with me that I could not do better than proceed to Poland, and see for myself how matters were progressing. To this I at once agreed; and the prince promising to write the necessary introductions for me, I left him to make my preparation for the journey.

When I had received my credentials in the shape of several letters and a *passe partout*, I left Paris *en route* for Cracow. At Brussels I delivered my first introduction, and made the acquaintance of the committee there. Amongst them was a gentleman, whom I will call M. Bonhomme. It would be scarcely fair to mention his real name, because since then, whenever there was any occasion for his services, he was always ready to offer them, and employ his valuable talents for the benefit of anybody, or anything—kings, socialists, monarchies, or republics. He was a speculator in arms of all sorts, sizes, and qualities. If ever there was a government sale of small arms, M. Bonhomme was sure to be the chief buyer, no matter where they were to be sold. He had had no small share in Garibaldi's expedition, for which he furnished a large portion of the arms and ammunition. Afterwards, in the Carlist war, it was he who supplied the guns and cartridges; and still later, I met him on board the Austrian Lloyd's Danube steamer, *Elizabeth*, plying his old occupation for the benefit of Prince Milan and the oppressed Christians. So it will be with M. Bonhomme till the day of his death. Speaking several languages perfectly, and knowing the geography of all the frontiers of the European States by heart, he is ready at any moment, for the due consideration, to furnish any number of arms, at any place and at any hour, that may be required for any purpose.

In the year of grace, 1863, M. Bonhomme was not so well supplied with discarded arms as usual. The fact was, that the last supplies for the Garibaldian troops had made a considerable hole in his stock; and as the Italian government had not yet disposed of them, he found himself obliged to contract for new ones. For this purpose he had entered into negotiations with some of the small-arm factories in Liège, and had succeeded in obtaining a contract for 10,000 "rifles," at a price of sixteen francs (12*s.* 10*d.*) each. This price he also generously charged the committee; but as he had the task of forwarding them to their destination also, the price, by the time they reached the Russian side of the frontier, mounted up to no less than, on an average, £2 15*s.* each; and it was on this sum, spent by himself, that he charged his commission. The cases, containing the arms and other war material, were forwarded to different agents in Austria "for shipment" to China. Once across the German and Austrian frontier, they were safe till they got towards the Russian frontier.

Having thus seen some earnest of the war, I started for Leipsic, where the next committee had its quarters. It was located

in the Hôtel de Saxe, and consisted chiefly of Poles, usually residing at Dresden, but who had transferred themselves to Leipsic, where, in the busy hum of that active town, their proceedings attracted less attention than they would in Dresden, where the chief amusement of the inhabitants consists in trying to find out what each other's business is; and it must be acknowledged that their endeavours are mostly crowned with success. In Dresden itself, especially in the Court circles, there was considerable sympathy for the Poles, which naturally increased the more the Polish provinces were approached. Here, especially on the Austrian frontier, the sympathy was openly pronounced. In the Prussian provinces, however, all demonstrations were rigorously suppressed, and it was impossible for anybody, not duly provided with passports, to cross the boundary; and even then, only at certain points. In Austrian Poland, however—that is to say, in Galicia—a very different state of affairs obtained. It was described, in a despatch from the British consul at Cracow, as follows:—

"Nor do the people of Cracow attempt to conceal their feelings. They show themselves in various ways—by the hospitality, care, and attention bestowed upon the wounded; by the large crowds which follow to the grave the corpses of those who die of the injuries they have received at the hands of the Russian soldiers; and by the mourning costume worn by the whole population.

"The active spirits of the place go much beyond such demonstrations. From very good authority, I learnt that an insurrectionary committee is permanently established, and holds nightly sittings in the town. It is intrusted, I was told, with the organisation of bands, the appointment of their commanders, &c., and is in constant communication with the Warsaw committee, and those said to be in existence at Lemberg and other Galician towns. Its general proceedings were openly talked of to me, and many people seemed to be aware of its existence. There is, further, no doubt that many Cracovians are to be found in the insurgent ranks. The students at the university supplied a considerable quota; and amongst the wounded lying in the hospitals several natives may be found."

This account was far below the truth. There was not only one insurrectionary committee, but several located in various parts of the town; whilst every second shopkeeper was an "agent" for something or other. The *cafés* naturally were the rendezvous of "patriots" of all descriptions; and, as well as the shops, drove a roaring trade in consequence. I have always found that this class is eminently patriotic, no matter of what character the "cause" may be, and that a considerable portion of the funds goes towards the profits of such establishments. On inquiry, however, in the rural districts, I found, as I had expected from what I had seen in London and Paris, that the peasantry, to a man, were opposed to the movement as far as their fear of their landlord permitted them; and also, it must be acknowledged, as far as the clergy allowed.

Of this feeling I was destined soon to have ample experience. In the beginning of June, 1863, thus some time after Langiewicz had disappeared from the scene, I started with five or six volunteers and others for the frontier. We soon left the railway, and mounted the carriages and carts provided for us. They had been furnished by a M. Brunitzki, an influential landowner, not far from the frontier. Entering into conversation with the driver, who was a Bohemian, and spoke German, I discovered that not a day had passed, since the commencement of the movement, without his having been obliged, in common with many of his comrades, to meet two trains a day, and bring either passengers or goods from the station to the house of M. Brunitzki. In reply to my observation that he must have been making a good deal of money by the *pourboires* he received, he said that the people who came there did not come to spend money, but to make it. He did not suppose he had made ten florins during the whole year; and, meantime, his own fields were running to ruin, as his horses were constantly employed. "But," I remarked, "do not these horses belong to the baron? and are you not in his service?" "God bless your little heart," was the reply, "the baron's horses have other fish to fry. There are Count So-and-so, and Prince So-and-so, and Countess This-and-that, and Princess the Other, who go backwards and forwards day after day. I don't mean to say that the baron—he is a good man so far—is not being ruined too; but the master's ruin is not often the servant's gain. It will take us many years to

regain what we have lost, not only in time and produce, but also in hard cash; for though we cannot earn money, we have to spend it to live." "And when it is all gone?" I inquired. "Why, then we have to go to service to keep body and soul together." "And do any of you go over there?" I asked, pointing in the direction of the Russian frontier. "They say so," was the cautious reply; "but I do not know of any. I have got some friends on the other side, and they tell me that they have not more to pay there than we have here."

Such I found to be the general feeling amongst the peasantry; and when I asked them plainly which they preferred, a Russian or a Polish master, they almost invariably exclaimed, "God deliver us from both." Others preferred the Russians, "because," as they said, "they only come now and then; but the Polish lords are always on our backs."

After an hour and a-half's rapid drive—each waggon had three horses—we arrived at Baron Brunitzki's. Scarcely arrived, my friend, the driver, was ordered to go back to the station for some cases which had arrived in the morning. That made nine hours' work, for nothing, he had had that day; so I was not at all surprised to hear sundry ejaculations the reverse of complimentary.

The baron's mansion was a large one-storied white-washed edifice, situated on a broad terrace, approached by a flight of wide steps. The terrace was crowded with ladies and gentlemen walking about, smoking cigars or cigarettes, or sitting at the little table, on which stood the customary bottles of spirits with which each newcomer was welcomed. The baron, after I had given him my letter of introduction, led me to one of these tables, and pouring out two glasses of liqueur, handed me one. This, in my innocence, I was about to drink, when he stopped me, and making a speech in Polish, which I did not understand, emptied his own glass; then, addressing me in French, told me that the custom in Poland was for the host to drink his guest's health; "and now," he added, "we will drink together." So saying, he poured out another glass, and touching mine with it, tossed it off in company with me. This was a highly ingenious method, it appeared to me, to make the consumption of much spirit a duty of hospitality; and when I saw with what marvellous rapidity the bottles were replenished, I could not avoid thinking of the precept, that practice makes perfect; for in spite of the enormous quantities that were consumed, I did not see one of the company any the worse for it.

In the evening we sat down to dinner: there were, all told, no less than forty-seven persons. For the last six months there had never been less, but frequently many more. At my remark that this must be very expensive, the baron shrugged his shoulders, and said, "*Que voulez vous?*" To my inquiry as to who the guests present were, he replied that some of them were neighbours; others, and the greater part, volunteers "going across."

We stayed four days at the hospitable baron's; we rode, we hunted, we got up amateur concerts, danced, ate and drank, and read the papers, or listened to the recitals of the new-comers, or to the progress the cause was making. All this was very pleasant; still I was glad when, on the fifth day, my companions, the leader of whom was a Major Nyari, told me that we were to continue our journey. In the evening of the same day we arrived at Prince Lubomirski's residence.

Here the aspect of affairs was very similar to that at Baron Brunitzki's, only it was on a much larger scale, and that there was a greater number of gentlemen in uniform. But it was not the Polish uniform; it was the Hungarian. The Austrian government had drawn a cordon along the frontier of Hungarian troops, "in order," as the official despatches said, "that no opportunities to cross the frontier should be afforded by the sympathies of the local troops." But, as a matter of fact, the sympathies of the Hungarians, if not specially in favour of the Poles—which, however, they were—were not at all in favour of the Russians, as might be supposed, when the occurrences of the Hungarian revolution in 1848, and the part played by the Russian government, were taken into account. There was not the least difficulty in passing the Austro-Russian frontier. The volunteers assembled at the mansions of the nobility; drove in carriages and waggons to the frontier; and whilst the sentries were looking one way, the passengers went another, and drove over the boundary by the dozen and more at a time.

One evening I was told that there was a band of insurgents about to approach the

frontier in order to receive volunteers. There was much excitement at the news. Thirty volunteers were drummed together out of the surrounding villages, and assembled in the court-yard of the prince's farm. Here each man received a gun, sixty rounds of cartridge, a sword—the officers a revolver—and five roubles in silver. Four carts were got ready; three for the volunteers, and one for their baggage. In addition, three carriages were also drawn up, into which stepped several of the visitors—dainty young Polish nobles, and three or four ladies, who desired to pay a visit to the insurgent camp. Another waggon was brought up at the last moment, into which a large stock of provisions, wines and spirits, were packed. In fact, any one unacquainted with what was going on, would have imagined that a picnic was being organised for a day, or a moonlight trip into the neighbouring forest.

At about 11 P.M. the procession started. Colonel K——, the commander of the cordon in this part of the country, was of the company; so, as was to be expected, we were not stopped at any point of our progress by too anxious sentries. In fact, we saw none at all; and, indeed, if there had been any, it would have been surprising had they regarded our party in any other than the light of a merry-making. We—that is to say they—sang warlike songs, and songs of love, and songs of wine, and many other sorts of songs varying in expression, quality, and intensity, according to the vehicles in which the singers sat.

Suddenly the first carriage, in which I was seated, was hailed in a stentorian voice, and an individual came forward armed with a gun, bayonet fixed, and accompanied by two other individuals, who might have been peaceful haymakers, had they not had their scythes fixed upright on the shafts instead of at right angles to it. These were the celebrated scythemen, the first insurgent outpost. The word was given, and we passed on, the dense foliage closing ever more densely upon us, till at last we perceived the gleaming of the camp fire through the leaves, and in a few moments more were standing in an open space round an extemporised hut of branches and twigs, at the entrance of which, warming his hands at the fire (for it was chilly), stood the leader of the band, an ex-Garibaldian officer, who had been some years in America, and spoke English quite fluently. We shook hands, we talked, we laughed, the insurgents gathering round us at a respectful distance, when suddenly one of the ladies gave a pretty little shriek, and pointed to a dark object hanging from a neighbouring tree. "What is that?" asked the colonel. "Oh," replied the leader, "only a Jew!—a spy we hanged this morning." "The wretch!" exclaimed the fair lady; "but had you not better bury him before we have our supper?" "Certainly! if madame desires it," was the gallant reply; and thus, at a sign from the leader, the unfortunate Hebrew was cut down and dragged away by the heels out of sight; but I very much doubted whether he was buried or not, for the man who removed him appeared again on the scene within a few minutes. The work of the night then began. The waggon-load of provision was unpacked, seats, sofas, and arm-chairs of moss improvised for the ladies, and soon the corks flew out of the bottles with a pop-pop-pop, that was the most martial feature about the whole performance. It is unnecessary to say more about the repast, except that the three most prominent dispensers of the hospitalities were the three sons of the historian and poet Miezkiewicz, who were faultlessly attired, and wore kid gloves. At about 3 A.M. the ladies and the Hungarian colonel left the camp, and, the moon having risen, no doubt highly enjoyed their ride home. Half-a-dozen of the other guests, including myself, remained to inspect the arrangements of the camp by daylight, and soon afterwards turned in for a couple of hours' sleep. But by or about 4 A.M. there was a great stir in the camp. Horsemen galloping backwards and forwards, sentinels rousing the sleepers; and before we well knew what it all meant, the sudden boom of a cannon rendered further explanation unnecessary. The Russians were advancing. My companions, taking no notice of myself, hurried off to their waggons and carriages, and in less than ten minutes were galloping as hard as they could make the horses go towards the frontier. Another boom followed, then another, accompanied by a short rattle of musketry. This increased the confusion still more; and seeing that everybody seemed concerned only for his own safety, and a general flight was the order of the day, I elected to look after myself also. A few moments' consideration, however, showed me that

if I ran away I should just as likely as not run right into the arms of the enemy. So quietly sitting down by one of the fires, with a couple of bottles of wine and some cold turkey, I waited for what was to come. Presently the branches of a cluster of small pines were parted, and a posse of Russian soldiers made their appearance. As soon as they saw me, one or two lifted their guns to take aim; but, lifting up one of the bottles, I exclaimed, "Wodka, dobra, niet Polski," which was the total amount of Russian at my command, meaning that the brandy was good, and that I was no Pole. Hereat they cautiously advanced, one of them pointing to the hut, and inquiring if any *Polskis* were there. I shook my head, and, pointing to all the points of the compass, gave them to understand that they were "there." I could not help laughing; and, though rather puzzled, the man himself broke out into a grim smile as I handed him the bottle, and, taking a deep draught, passed it on to his comrades. Meantime, the others had been poking about, and found the dead body of the Jew, which they lugged along the ground towards me, and asked me what that meant. I replied with a gesture of passing a rope round my neck, and said "Polski." This seemed to satisfy them, and they continued their search, appropriating the remains of the provisions and sundry articles that had been left behind.

Gradually the firing ceased, and in about ten minutes the main body came up, headed by their captain. He at once spotted me, and inquired of his men what they knew about me. The reply was given in a good-humoured, laughing manner, and the captain, advancing, asked if I spoke French or German, and who and what I was. I told him that I was staying at Prince Lubomirski's, and had come, with some of his guests, to see the insurgent camp, and how they managed matters. Thus I gave him a full account of the expedition. He laughed heartily, and congratulated me on my escape, saying, that if I had been caught running away I should undoubtedly have been shot. As it had happened, I should now be able to see a Russian camp also. He then asked me several questions as to the number of men there had been, &c.; to which I replied that I absolutely knew nothing at all about it beyond what I had already told him. He then asked me if I had any papers about me. I told him I had my passport, and a letter of introduction to a Polish nobleman in Galicia, from Prince Czartoryski. "Ah! you must let me see that; they are both two of our chief enemies." Seeing I did not much like the idea of giving up a letter which might compromise the two individuals in question, he at once said, "Don't I tell you they are both two of our chief enemies! If I could catch either of them, I should hang them at once. So your letter cannot compromise them much more. It might compromise yourself though!" "In that case," I replied, "the sooner I get rid of it the better." And so saying, I handed it to him. When he had read, he burst out laughing. "Here," he said, "take your letter. I suppose you don't know what is in it?" "No," I replied; "not the vestige of an idea." "I thought not," said the captain; "however, I will read it to you." He did so, and the following were the contents of it:—"My dear Z.,—The bearer, Mr. X., is a correspondent of some English and German papers. He does not at all seem inclined to take anything for granted, and insists on seeing things for himself. I do not think it would be wise to allow him too much latitude. You had better detain him as long as possible at your house, and induce others to do the same.—Yours, Czartoryski."

This was—I will not say, surprising—but confirmatory of my first impressions of the revolt. And the more I saw, the more was I convinced that there were two movements all through the disturbances. Both the democratic and the aristocratic parties sought to turn the dissatisfaction caused by the Russian measures to their own account. The democrats did the fighting, and hoped to obtain their objects by main force; but the nobility, whilst assisting the combatants with money and arms, &c., endeavoured to secure a successful result for themselves by intriguing and working upon diplomacy to take up their cause. Such too was, in other words, the opinion of my new acquaintance. When, however, he told me I was at liberty to return whence I came, but to be very careful, I doubted his being a Russian; and found, in point of fact, that he was a German from the Baltic provinces, and disliked the Russians almost as much as he disliked the *Polacken*, who, he assured me, were "swamped in vice." He also insisted that, badly off as the Polish peasantry were under Russian rule,

they would be no better, if as well off, under Polish rule. With this assurance he bade me farewell, giving me an escort of six men to take me to the frontier. From these men I learned that the number of men, in Captain J.'s detachment, only amounted to eighty, with two 4½-pounders; and, as I afterwards ascertained that the Poles in camp had amounted to nearly 300, there was not much to be said for their tactics, strategy, or courage.

I arrived at Prince Lubomirski's at about 8 A.M., and found the whole household in intense excitement. There I heard that a desperate action had been fought; that seventy Russians had been killed; that three cannons had been taken, and that the Poles had lost only one man! The people who told me this did not know, however, that I had just come from the scene of action; and, as a consequence thereof, I could not discover a single one of my informants after it had become known what an adventure, what a miraculous escape I had had.

The views I expressed regarding the whole affair, did not at all enhance the pleasure of my visit. In fact, I could not help seeing that my presence was a constraint upon my hosts. They could not imagine what business a correspondent had in their circle, unless he was heart and soul in their enterprise. I, therefore, begged the prince to allow me to proceed on my journey. He agreed after I had explained to him my reasons; but, at the same time, had the honesty and honour to tell me that, though I should find the fullest hospitality wherever I went, I should not be welcome. This was unfortunate; in other countries, and under other circumstances, a correspondent is able to be independent of hospitality, and can pay his way; but in war-time that is very difficult, if not impossible, except at a very great expense.

Whilst we were thus talking on the terrace, I noticed a circumstance which threw a strong light on the relations existing between the peasantry and the landowners. It was fully 200 yards from the terrace to the high road; yet every time a peasant passed, he took off his hat, and bending his body almost double, thus passed before the presence of the prince. Still more, whenever a peasant or one of the prince's labourers came to ask him a question, he not only approached him in this humiliating position, but also either kissed the prince's foot, or the hem of his coat. This was not the sort of thing to be looked for in a people fighting for "liberty and freedom;" but such was the character of the whole movement, as far as my experience went; and trivial as all this may seem, still, were I to write volumes, I could not characterise it any better than I have done. Believing in the good old proverb, "Like master, like man," I entertained no hopes for Poland after the first three weeks. And, as events proved, my impression was correct.

There can be no doubt that the reasons above given were sufficient to prevent even a military success on the part of the Poles. There were two distinct parties—the democrats and the nobility. The democrats might have succeeded had they had the means; but they had not. They were dependent on the nobility; and amongst the nobility there was none of that nobility of motive and character that could carry the struggle through to a successful termination. They did not take the field themselves to lead the men, but appointed adventurers, who took care of themselves, and did not care about sacrificing their lives—which was all they possessed—for a cause they regarded as no more than a profession to earn their bread by. The only leaders of any merit, after Langiewicz' defeat, were Gregorovicz and Lelewel, the latter a pump-maker of Warsaw, who assumed the name of the great historian—his own name being Martinovicz—to enhance his importance. But throughout the summer and autumn of 1863, till the autumn of 1864, the insurrection, though ever alive, never accomplished any decided success. Here and there a detachment of troops was surprised and massacred; but, as a rule, the troops steadily diminished the numbers of their opponents in daily skirmishes, till in August, 1868, the only two leaders of any importance were those of Gregorovicz and Lelewel, numbering between them some 3,000 men.

This body of insurgents, even then only partially, and throughout, badly armed, without any artillery, but with a large train of baggage and ammunition waggons, manœuvred about in the province of Lublin, in the forests between that town and the fortresses of Janow and Zamosc. Knowing the country by heart, Lelewel succeeded for several weeks in eluding the troops sent in

his pursuit; but at last three columns were sent against him, each numbering 3,000 men, with eighteen pieces of artillery, and ordered to close round him, and give him battle at any risk.

Still, thanks to the dense forests, and the severity with which Lelewel treated all spies and peasants who gave any information as to his movements, he managed to keep the Russians ignorant of his whereabouts. Thus, on August 27th, he arrived at Panisoufka, an isolated estate, consisting of the mansion, a few out-houses, some barns, and a few scattered houses around. The mansion lay in the midst of an undulating country, and was dominated to the north by a long barren series of low hills; to the east and west were orchards and fields; to the south a dense forest at the foot of the rising ground, on which stood the mansion.

The mansion was inhabited by the lady of the house and her two daughters, the steward, the domestics, and farm labourers. The husband was absent. As soon as Lelewel's corps arrived, a halt was called, the men drawn up along and just within the edge of the forest, and ordered to get their dinners. Lelewel and his staff, in the meanwhile, took possession of the mansion, the occupants of which at once set about procuring the dinner for the staff. It was a very merry meeting. The viands and the wines were good; and after dessert was over, Lelewel invited the ladies to visit the camp, which was a quarter of an hour's walk away. The ladies were delighted, and everybody started. The men were just sitting down to their meal, for which a couple of oxen and several sheep had been provided by the mistress of the estate, when Lelewel, in order to show the discipline of his men, ordered the alarm to be sounded. In an instant the men ran to their arms, and each was soon in his appointed place. Lelewel was much pleased with their alacrity; the men, however, mostly failed to appreciate the joke after having marched for eighteen hours, and throwing down their guns anyhow, as well as their cartridge-belts, resumed their interrupted meal. But scarcely had Lelewel and the ladies gone to another and more distant part of the camp, when the boom of a cannon was heard, rapidly followed by two or three more. Hurrying back to the edge of the forest, Lelewel saw that not only were the Russians upon him, but were actually surrounding him. Six thousand strong, they advanced from the north; their left advanced, and almost within gunshot of the mansion. The ladies who were with him were in despair; a body of men was told off to accompany them to the rear, and a squadron of cavalry ordered to throw themselves into the mansion. Almost at the same moment a body of Cossacks dashed forward with the same object; but owing to the lesser distance, the Poles succeeded in gaining it first. Then the action began. Two guns were brought to bear upon the mansion, whilst twelve played upon the forest as the Russian infantry slowly advanced. The grape whistled through the trees; the branches were splintered right and left; but the only damage done was that done by the noise. The moral effect of the artillery was far greater than its physical effect. After the first twenty minutes, however, the Poles recovered themselves, and crept up the rising ground towards the advancing army. They lay down behind the ridge, and let the Russian bullets fly over their heads. Still the Russians advanced, when Lelewel gave the order to the cavalry to charge. They were led by Major Nyari, the Hungarian, to whom reference has already been made. With a few fiery words to his men, he rode off, seeking cover, as far as he could, till within 800 yards or so of the enemy. Then full gallop he went at them. He broke through the first, second, and third lines; but here he was brought up by the artillery. The lines closed up, and the brave little handful, 120 in all, had to cut their way out hand-to-hand. Not half of them returned. Nyari himself was shot through the stomach, but brought back to the rear by his trusty men, and died a couple of hours afterwards. After this ineffectual, but dashing charge, the Russians redoubled their fire, and, having at last got the proper range, with considerable effect. After half-an-hour's practice, the movements of the Russians made it apparent that they were preparing for a charge with the bayonet. Lelewel, however, with considerable acumen, saw that their chief exertions would be directed against the mansion—which by this time was in flames—in order to turn his right flank, his left and rear being protected by the forest. Despatching a body of men to reinforce the detachment still holding the blazing posi-

tion, he still further withdrew a body of 800 from his centre, and posted them in a gully on his left stretching towards the Russian position.

On came the troops; the first contact took place at the mansion. Here, after a furious combat, the troops fell back. Meanwhile, the Polish centre gradually fell back till their left overlapped the Russian line. At this moment Lelewel gave the word, and the men, starting up from the gully, fell upon the Russian flank, whilst the centre took them in front. The struggle, hand-to-hand, lasted fully twenty minutes, and resulted in the Russians retreating beyond their original position. With a loud shout the Polish cavalry again advanced, and, after a desperate charge, actually succeeded in capturing one of the Russian guns. Almost simultaneously, a couple of the Russian ammunition waggons exploded, and caused considerable confusion, which resulted in their falling still further back. By this time it was beginning to get dark, and the Poles, not strong enough to exploit their success so far, contented themselves with holding the ground they had acquired. By seven o'clock, the action having lasted nearly five hours, the last shot was fired, the moon rose, and the blazing barns and the glowing mansion both lent their light to the men, who then went out to bring in the dead and wounded. Of the former, there were seventy-five; of the latter, 240. Of Russians, thirteen dead, and forty-seven wounded, were brought in—a proportion altered before morning into sixty dead! Of the Polish wounded, over fifty were also dead before daylight, in consequence of their wounds not having been attended to. For, as soon as the dead had been buried, and the wounded laid in the waggons, the retreat was announced, and continued all that night, and the whole of the next day, until late in the afternoon.

During his retreat on the following day, Lelewel was joined by Gregorovicz with about 800 men. He had been in action with the third Russian column, on the same day, and at about the same time as the action Lelewel had just sustained, at about a distance of fifteen miles from Panisoufka. His losses had been, comparatively, still more serious, as he had lost over 200 men out of 1,000, whilst Lelewel had only lost 315 out of 2,000. This was a terrible blow to the Poles, especially as they had lost many officers. It was, therefore, not surprising that, during the next few days, the number of desertions and sick amounted to about 300, whilst the rest were worn out and disheartened at their ineffectual struggle, and by the knowledge that the enemy was closing in upon them on all sides.

Thus dawned the 23rd of September on the remnants of the "Polish army," encamped—if a hurried meal can be called a camp—on the heights of Batorsch. It was a sultry morning. The sun glared upon the dispirited band as they toiled up-hill and down along the dusty roads, out of all order, on their way to the dense forests beyond Zamosc. They knew that the column was not more than ten or twelve miles in their rear, and that two more were somewhere on either flank—where, exactly, no one could say. Dispirited, they therefore dragged one weary foot before the other; and when they suddenly heard the boom of a gun a mile or two off, most of them seemed as though they were glad the end was coming. Victory was out of the question. A defeat would mean the end of the struggle; for beyond the couple of thousand men here toiling along, there were none to take up the gauntlet.

Still, with a certain despair, they took up the positions assigned to them on the top of a sparsely-wooded plateau, at the head of a narrow valley, which led to the forest some five miles beyond. The action began with an attack by the enemy's cavalry. They were in force; and on all sides the Cossacks, on their wiry little steeds, swept down upon the Poles, and drove their outposts in. In half-a-hour the action was in full swing all along the line, and in another quarter of an hour the Poles were retreating and pouring down the slopes into the valley where the baggage-waggons were drawn up. They were rapidly followed by the Russians, who, besides, occupied the heights on either side of the valley, and poured a storm of shell and bullets upon the fugitives, who were now in the wildest flight, and dropped down by the score. The carnage lasted fully an hour. Lelewel was killed at the commencement; and by the time the last shot was fired, over 800 strewed the sod of the valley alone. Nearly 200 were taken prisoners; the rest escaped for the moment, but were, most of them, captured in the next two days by a fourth column which had advanced from Lublin, and had occupied the very forest which had appeared

the only chance of escape for the unhappy band. With this action the insurrection may be said to have terminated. For the Poles it was disastrous. They may not have been worthy of national independence, but, at the same time, they were worthy of a better fate than was destined for them by the Russians. Now they have not only lost all chance of national independence, but they are in a fair way to lose their nationality itself—even their very language is being stamped out, their religion taken away from them, and the Orthodox faith substituted for it. The words Kosciusko denied ever having uttered, *Finis Poloniæ*, may now be pronounced without much chance of contradiction by events. Whatever the fate at a future day of the Russian provinces of Poland, a kingdom of Poland must, for the future, remain a dream, and cannot even be made a "question" of by foreign governments, as was done for various reasons by Lord John Russell, Napoleon III., and Count Rechberg. For it is scarcely necessary to say, that beyond encouraging the unfortunate victims to continue their hopeless resistance, no assistance whatever was rendered them either by France or England. On the contrary, they were all the more severely treated, and the rebellion utterly crushed by the end of 1864.

We need say no more on the subject, except, perhaps, that though the judgment above formed of the character of the rebellion is not favourable to the Poles, yet the manner in which the insurrection was brought about, and ultimately stamped out, is, and will remain, a lasting disgrace to a government which pretends to civilisation.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

ROME AND RUSSIA.

THE relations between Russia and Rome, which have been of such importance, are still of such a character, that a short sketch of the question will be useful, especially if, by their moderation in other parts of Europe, the papal authorities should succeed in regaining the influence they have recently lost, and be able to present a bolder and more determined front against the aggression of the Orthodox Church in Russia and other Slav countries.

Theoretically, the principle of religious toleration was, and is still supposed to exist in the government traditions, as well as in the social customs of Russia. The exercise of all religions was legally admitted in the empire under the reign of Peter the Great, subject to certain measures more defensive than prohibitive, and analogous with those adopted by most of the Catholic States themselves. Since that time those measures were comprehended in the fundamental laws of the empire, and did not impede in any way the principle of the greatest toleration, as far as principle went, though in practice the case was very different. The government, according to its statesmen, intended solely to place the dominant church out of reach of the propaganda, and to guarantee the sovereign authority against the encroachments of the Court of Rome, by forbidding Russian subjects professing the Roman Catholic religion to entertain direct relations with a pontiff who was at the same time a foreign sovereign.

These propaganda had been developed rapidly in the provinces of the empire which had been, during more than two centuries, subjected to the domination of the Polish republic. Hundreds of thousands of orthodox people were converted to the Latin Church. Compelled frequently by violent means, it must be confessed, to recognise the supremacy of the pope, they had to give in their adhesion to the combination, rather political than religious, known under the name of the Union. When those provinces were subjected by Russia, the Empress Catherine, who brought about this conquest, established Catholic dioceses suitable to local wants, by defraying the expenses of the worship, founding seminaries, and entrusting the chief administration of the interests of the Roman Catholic Church to an ecclesiastical college, presided

over by a prelate chosen by herself. But, meanwhile, the Empress Catherine expressed her determination to Pius VI. not to allow any temporal interference in her dominions.

"If, following the example of my ancestors," she wrote, "I choose to tolerate in my vast domains all religions without exception, and among their number the Roman Catholic religion, still I will never allow the followers of that faith to depend at all on any foreign power. This is why all the bulls and edicts of the Court of Rome can only be published in Russia with the sovereign's consent."

Catherine's successors did not depart from these principles; and Alexander I., as well as the Emperor Nicholas, acted towards the Roman Church with still greater severity than ever, and left the Romish clergy scarcely any of the privileges, lands, and influence which they had acquired. It was, therefore, not surprising that the clergy should have taken a prominent part in the insurrection of 1830—a participation which was admitted and justified to a great extent by the Holy See in the encyclical letter of August, 1832—nor that the Russian government should seek to limit the influence which the clergy had exercised.

The Emperor Nicholas determined, in consequence, to place a check upon the material means of action at the disposal of the Latin clergy in Russia and Poland; and to attain that end the greater part of the very large estates accumulated by them were secularised and appropriated to the State; the convents which were not inhabited by the canonical number of monks or nuns were suppressed; and direct relations with the Holy See and all Latin propaganda were stringently prohibited. The Court of Rome naturally protested against these measures, and refused its concurrence or adherence to any laws touching the administration or property of the church; and when, in 1845, the Emperor Nicholas happened to be at Rome, Gregory XVI. embodied the grievances of the Holy See in a memorandum which he handed himself to the emperor.

Two days after the emperor answered that note, and his letter concludes thus:—

"The emperor begs the sovereign pontiff to be firmly convinced that no one desires more than his majesty to maintain in Russia, as in Poland, the Roman Church on a footing at once dignified and respectable. The prayers of the emperor embrace with an equal solicitude, and without any distinction of worship, the spiritual interests of all the peoples whose destinies have been entrusted to him by Providence. All that can be done to realise the intentions of the holy father, without materially clashing with the organic laws of the empire, or injuring the rights and canons of the dominant church, shall be done. The emperor's word guarantees it to his holiness. But, as has been observed above, there are circumstances and necessities from which it does not depend upon the will of the emperor to free himself."

The emperor's word was ostensibly fulfilled by the conclusion of the concordat of 1847; it granted to the Roman Church many of the privileges claimed; but, in point of fact, it remained a dead letter; and in 1858, a score of priests of the diocese of Plock were found guilty of having preached disobedience to the authorities, and of having provoked religious agitation under the pretext of establishing temperance societies, whilst others belonging to the government of Witebsk, were convicted of having, in violation of the organic laws, administered the holy sacraments to persons of the Orthodox faith. For this grievous conduct, the Russian government decided upon abrogating the concordat of 1847, which was done with a great flourish about the high sentiments of the Emperor Alexander in a letter by Prince Gortschakoff to Pius IX. as follows:—

"The principle of the liberty of conscience is deeply engraved in the convictions of my august master; but he understands it in all its purity, and not in the sense which the Court of Rome has given to it in all times, in claiming for the Catholic faith a freedom without limit, to the detriment of the other religions. By its essence the Orthodox Church is neither militant nor propagandist, but it claims the right not to be handed over defenceless to a church which is both militant and propagandist. We do not and shall not try to carry off the flock of another pastor; but it is our right and our duty to see that our co-religionists should not be diverted from their own faith. In a word, our church is not oppressive. It would be strange to contend that, in a country where the immense majority professes the Orthodox faith, the national church should be placed in an inferior situation."

This decision to abrogate the concordat was based upon the participation of the Polish clergy in the rebellion of 1863-'64. There is no doubt that the movement was largely due to the clergy, and was supported by them in every way; but the substitution of the tyranny of the Orthodox Church, together with its gross ignorance, is a measure against the interests of civilisation; for in any case the Roman Church is more civilising than the Orthodox. The reasons for abrogating the concordat were published in an official document, in which we find the following justification for the measure:—

"The first demonstration of importance," according to this document, "took place on the 11th of June, 1860, on the occasion of a funeral. The Franciscan monk, Spleszynski, preached an extremely violent revolutionary sermon. Immediately afterwards seditious exhortations resounded from the pulpits; first at Warsaw, then in the provinces. Printed collections of revolutionary songs, and portraits of the coryphei of the revolution, were openly sold in almost every church. In the capital, and in several other towns, the monks placed statues of the Virgin and the saints, with lamps and lighted candles, in front of the monasteries, and exhorted the idle crowd to sing seditious hymns.

"This agitation often provoked deplorable scenes—as, for instance, at the door of the church of the Sainte Croix, near Radom, after a sermon by the monk, Bernardin Casimir, one of the principal promoters of religious assemblies, when the mob nearly tore to pieces a man and woman, whom for some reason they suspected.

"In 1861 began a series of processions, which were confessedly political demonstrations. At the same time, as if with the intention of proving that these were not the acts of individuals, but a systematic organised insurrection among the clergy, numerous meetings of the secular priests and monks took place throughout the kingdom. At one of them, convoked on the 14th of November, at Lysa Gora, more than 300 PRIESTS and MONKS assembled to give seditious lectures, and make public prayers for the success of the revolution.

"The most numerous and important of these assemblies was that of the clergy of Podlachie, in November, 1862. There a resolution was unanimously adopted, ratifying 'the intimate and solid unison established between the clergy and the revolutionary party.'

"The deputies of other dioceses adhered to a programme of strictly revolutionary action, which only made reservations in favour of the rights of the Roman Catholic Church, and which imposed, among others, this obligation on members of the clergy:—'They must put upon their oath all persons charged with any operations by the central committee.'

"It is unknown that most of these operations had assassination in view; and it is grievous to record that several priests not only administrated the oath to the operators, but also were themselves their associates or substitutes.

"Suffice it to say, in summing up these data, that more than 500 Roman Catholic priests were legally convicted of direct and active participation in the bloody acts of the Polish insurrection."

Now, as a matter of fact, for which there is ample testimony, the greater part by far of these convictions were procured by interrogating the prisoners made as to who their confessor was. These prisoners were forced to acknowledge that they had confessed to their priests; that they were engaged in the insurrection; and ignoring the fact that confession is, by the law of the Roman Church, inviolate, the authorities at once made use of their knowledge by arresting the priests on the charge of complicity. It would be just the same as if, in England, a solicitor were to be imprisoned for concealing the fact, that his client had privately confessed his guilt to him.

All this did not tend to improve the relations between the Vatican and the Russian government; the result being that Pius IX. despatched to the Emperor of Russia a letter actuated by "the lively interest manifested on all sides, both by nations and governments, in favour of Poland;" in which letter, after having enumerated at length the impediments placed in the way of the exercise of the Roman Catholic religion, his holiness not only claimed for the Romish clergy the prerogatives accorded by the concordat, but also the right of "directing the people, and exercising their influence on public instruction" ("*che il clero ricuperi la sua influenza nel insegnamento è direzione religiosa del popolo*"). This elicited no reply; and in a secret consistory, held at

Rome on 29th October, 1866, Pius IX. then stated:—

"Neither the demands addressed to the Russian government by our Cardinal Secretary of State, nor the letters addressed by us to the emperor, have had any result. Our letter of the 22nd April, 1863, remains unanswered." ("*Nihil autem valuerunt nostræ expostulationes per nostrum Cardinalem a publicis negotiis factæ apud illum Gubernium, nihil nostræ litteræ ad ipsum serenissum Principem scriptæ* (22*nd April*, 1863) *quibus nullum fuit datum responsum.*")

This was not strictly true. The emperor did reply to the pope's letter of April, 1863; but, at the same time, it was nothing but a refusal to accede to the demands made by the Vatican, and, in that sense, certainly had no result, and might be construed as "no answer" to the requests Pius IX. had made. The quarrel, however, culminated when Baron Meyendorf, the Russian ambassador to the Vatican, roundly denied that the Polish clergy had any cause for complaint, and made use of such strong language, that the pope demanded his recall; and, in a note to the foreign governments, stated that Baron Meyendorf, after "some allusions, unseemly in the presence of his holiness, had presumed to say that nothing of this sort would have happened if the Catholics had behaved like the Protestants; for the latter having supported the government during the insurrection, had received many favours refused to Catholics on account of their hostile attitude; and that he pushed his audacity to the conclusion, that there was nothing surprising in the way the Catholics had acted, as Catholicism is identical with revolution." On this reply, the pope, inflamed with indignation, and considering that the cause of the faithful was generally insulted, dismissed him, answering, "I esteem and respect his majesty the emperor; but I cannot say as much for his *chargé d'affaires*, who, contrary to his sovereign's orders, I am sure, has come and insulted me in my cabinet."

With this step the rupture between the Vatican and the Russian government became final, and the abrogation of the concordat was officially notified to the foreign powers on the 19th January, 1867, by a despatch from Prince Gortschakoff.

Now, in whatever light the Roman Catholic Church may be regarded from a religious, or even a political point of view, we have had proofs enough that, in intolerance, at least, it is surpassed by the Orthodox Church of Russia. The Catholic Church has acquired some political wisdom, and so shapes its policy as not to clash too readily with the institutions in such free countries as, for instance, Great Britain and America. But the Orthodox Church oppresses other religions, at the present moment, far more than the Catholic Church does, and quite as much as the Inquisition did in former days. The official revelations concerning the Uniates, form a chapter of history that would apply better to the middle ages than to the 19th century. Nor is it only the Protestants, the Moslems, and the Dissenters, who have to suffer from the oppression of the "White Czar"—the "White Pope," as the head of the Orthodox Church may fitly be called. The Jews are equally oppressed; and this fact alone proves incontestably that the oppression exercised by the Orthodox Church is a political more than a religious question; for, in the case of the Jews, not their bitterest enemies can pretend that they are given to proselytising or interference with the creed of the Gentile. But throughout Slavdom, Roumania, in Servia, in Croatia, in Russia, the Jew is regarded as a species of vermin that must be religiously destroyed—a vermin like the Colorado potato-beetle, against which the State must set all its machinery in motion to prevent its importation. Since Pharaoh ground them down, since John of Gaunt pulled out their teeth, since the Inquisition drove them out of Spain, Israel has been a thing to be stamped out, or, at any rate, driven into its noisome Ghettos, to breed out of sight like silkworms, on account of the dross they spin. Not until society had attained that alarming point of impecuniosity, which financial jargon calls "credit," did Israel emerge from its dens, and assume a place amongst the Gentile; not till then did the seed of Joseph multiply, and striking root in Frankfort, Vienna, Paris, London, and Berlin, blossom forth into such full-blown flowers and roses of Sharon, as the Rothschilds, the Goldschmidts, the Oppenheims, and a host of other minor planets, each with its system of satellite impecunious states. Though the corn in Egypt was plentiful as the sands on the sea-shore, and Joseph "could count no more"—a terrible condition for a Hebrew to be in—

still it was as nothing compared to the harvests of shekels and monies that Joseph's descendants are now gathering from their judiciously sown crops of bonds, *obligations*, and *sonstiger Papiere* all over the world. When one thinks of the important part played by "paper" and the Jews in modern times, one feels inclined to ask whether the story of the finding of Moses amidst the papyri of the Nile, by Pharaoh's daughter, is not an allegorical legend, of which we are now witnessing the practical execution.

Anyhow, the Slavs think so, and strongly object to the stranger in the land thriving on the products of their industry. Hence, "kill the Jew," is a favourite "cry" in the lands east of the Carpathians and the Dinaric Alps. In Roumania, where the Wallachs have caught the habit from their neighbours, baiting the Jews is a favourite pastime; whilst in Servia they are not allowed to settle in the interior of the country, as was also the case in the Slav districts of Croatia, and the military frontier, until Count Molinari procured the abolishment of the clause. But even now a Jew is occasionally beaten to death by his debtors, just to keep up the customs, as a sort of periodical Guy Fawkes' day.

"Senator" Christich, of Belgrade, a banker, following in a successful manner the eminently Jewish profession of finance, admitted that the Servian government did prohibit Jews to settle in the interior, not on account of their religion, but for other reasons. What these reasons were he did not say. We will state them. Owing to the backward condition of the people, and their crass ignorance and native simplicity; owing also to their want of enterprise and laziness, corn, wheat, barley, maize, vary in price, in one season, in different parts of the principality, to the extent of 100 per cent. Thus, whilst the price for wheat or flour has been sixty piastres in Ushitze, it has been 120 in Semendria or Alexinatz. When maize could be bought for fifty piastres in Kragujevatz, it cost 100 in Belgrade. It was sold cheap in the first instances, owing to the absence of competition amongst the buyers, and dear in the second instances—*i. e.*, on the borders of civilisation, and owing to the presence of competitors, the Jews there keeping up the price to within the lowest margin of profit. The same used to be the case in Croatia and the military frontier. The same is the case in the remotest portions of Russia. No wonder, therefore, that M. Philip Christich and the Slavs generally do not desire that so happy a state of affairs for themselves should be put an end to by allowing the presence of Jews at the producing centres, and thus enable them to buy at first hand. This is the real reason; but Russian, Serb, and Wallach will give another. They say that the government is only anxious to protect their subjects from usury and its consequences. The poor things are not able to take care of themselves, and must be taken care of; and, for this care, the producer receives 100 per cent. less for his goods than he would were he not taken care of. But to be just to the Slavs in general, and Serbs in particular, it must be confessed, that the social economy of the Slav peasantry, in one of its features, offers peculiar temptations to the sons of Levi—to wit, in the Communia. The Communia is a congregation of the members of one family, who all reside together under one roof, and work the family estates in common, the eldest being the head of the community, the patriarch of the tribe. Thus, when a man marries, instead of establishing an independent home, he brings his wife home to his father's house. The other sons do likewise: if the house is not large enough, a fresh wing is added; and when the father dies, his eldest son succeeds him as *Stareshina*, or Elder. There are some of these Communias numbering over 100 members, and many forty and sixty.

Now, in the abstract, this arrangement is very touching; it is a social Utopia, and theoretically deserving of all approbation. But there are some very practical drawbacks which are making sad havoc in the system. For instance, when the house is so small that five or six married couples sleep in one room, with a few children round about. Even in houses where there are several sleeping-rooms, it has frequently happened that some of the occupants have forgotten the number of their particular chamber, and not found out their mistake till dawn. Generally speaking, there is a considerable amount of perplexity as to who is who, and whom he belongs to. Then it is awkward if the Stareshina happen to be a drunkard, or if some of the wives consider the others ill-tempered, and indulge in a free fight after exhausting the dictionary of Slav vituperation—in itself no mean achievement. There are also matters concerning

female attire and male propensities, in the shape of liquors and laziness, that open a rich field for speculative talents; and it is here that the Jew steps in to pursue that course of exploitation the native speculators wish to keep for themselves. For, generally speaking, the trade in the interior is simply barter. If a man wants a pair of boots, he gives so much corn, so many bundles of flax, or what not. Thus the Jew opens an attractive shop, where he sells anything and everything. If Nikita requires a new ploughshare, Moses sells him one for so much of the raw produce he happens to have a market for. If Olga wants a new ribbon to cut out her sister-in-law Katinka, it is Moses who satisfies her. But suppose Nikita and Olga clandestinely and surreptitiously extract the corn, flax, or hemp from the common store, or lets them run into debt, and keeps them there, what becomes of the Communia? Moses knows! Then there is always a certain per-centage of drones in these human hives; and in a dozen other ways these Communia are not only injurious to their members, but also to the community at large.

It is, however, the barter-system prevalent in the outlying districts of Russia, in Servia, and the Slav districts on and south of the Danube, that chiefly leads to the evils which the natives wish to debar the Jews from profiting by. Money is so scarce as a currency in these parts, that in some of the out-of-the-way districts, a rouble or florin in silver is regarded with great suspicion, and the spender as a person of a very doubtful character. Consequently, all articles of foreign extraction are paid for in native produce, the value of this produce varying with the accessibility of the district, and the number of tradesmen in the place, as much as between 200 to 300 per cent., whilst the foreign wares always remain at the same figure.

The clergy, who receive their stipends chiefly in kind, especially suffer from this system.

If maize is plentiful and flax scarce, Moses will not touch maize, but takes all the flax, and the *curé* finds himself over-stocked with maize that he cannot sell, and with no flax at all to speak of. What with his profit on the original cost of his foreign goods, and the native produce he sells them for, the trader's gain frequently amounts from 500 to 800 per cent., whilst the profit realised on transactions when he pays cash, exceeds 1,000 per cent. Several instances are known of Jew traders who, starting with £50 worth of stock, have amassed a considerable fortune, and retired from business ten years after they commenced it. The worst of it is that cash is required by the peasant to pay his taxes with; and in bad years he gets so irretrievably into debt, that his arrears of taxes frequently exceed the value of his whole property. When things arrive at such a pitch, execution is levied upon him, not for the capital of his arrears, but for the interest thereon; and there are even whole villages in Russia, and the military frontier of Slavonia, whose total value is less than that of the sum they owe for arrears. This may seem incredible, but it is quite true. Bad roads, and consequent difficulty of inter-communication, corrupt officials, party divisions, and differences of race and creed, have all contributed to this sad state of affairs. Frequently there is direct collusion between the trader and the revenue officers. The trader refuses to give cash, beats down the price of produce, but pays the collector well for what *he* brings. Consequently, the peasant, unable to procure cash, pays a visit to the collector, bewails his lot, and makes him a present of so many sacks of wheat, potatoes, maize, or of a pig or two, and persuades the officer to "put down" the sum he owes into his book, and becomes thus more and more indebted to the State year after year.

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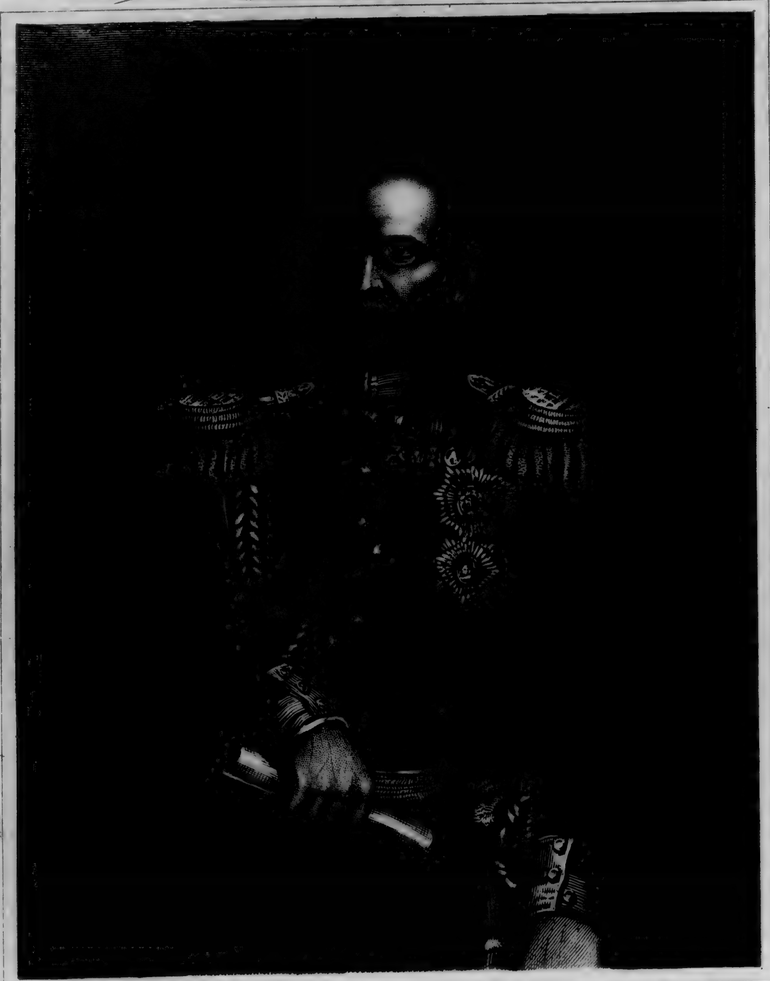
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THE

HISTORY OF RUSSIA

FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE EMPIRE

TO THE

WAR WITH TURKEY IN 1877-'78.

BY

H. TYRRELL,

AND

HENRY A. HAUKEIL,

Late Press Correspondent in the East.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS.

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SCALE

BALTIC SEA

ST PETERSBURG

KRONSTADT

REVEL

ABO

HISTORY OF THE

RUSSIAN EMPIRE.

CHAPTER I.

THE IMPERIAL ALLIANCE AND THE FOREIGN POLICY OF RUSSIA.

THE Imperial Alliance—as the peculiar relationship between Germany and Russia is called—has received such an amount of scathing criticism on the one hand, and hyperbolical praise on the other, that there is a very wide expanse, indeed, between the two extremes to find the golden middle in. Without going so far as to characterise it as an "unholy alliance" in the Pentateuchal signification of the word, still, taking into consideration the character of the two nations, it cannot but be regarded as artificial in the extreme. The only point of moral contact to be found in it, lies in the relationship and friendship of the two emperors—in the personal affection of uncle and nephew. Both are firmly convinced of the honour, virtue, and honesty of the other, and make the fullest use of whatever power is left them by their ministers to promote each other's projects and principles. But all this, however laudable, would be of small value were there not political considerations which rendered it advisable for the two countries to go hand-in-hand. Such considerations existed; and thus the personal relations of the two monarchs were cleverly made use of, by Prince Bismarck and Prince Gortschakoff, to further what they considered the interests of their respective countries.

Thus it was not difficult to promote still further the intimacy between the two countries which had been so cemented by the line of conduct pursued by Prussia during the Crimean war, and the Polish rebellion of 1863-'64. Gratifying to Russia as this conduct was in itself, it was still more gratifying when contrasted with the action of Austria during both these periods of trial which Russia had had to undergo. Whilst the King of Prussia consistently repelled all propositions to join the action of the western powers in the Crimean war and the Polish rebellion, Austria interfered in a double-dealing fashion, which was considered in Russia as peculiarly ungrateful after the assistance the Emperor Nicholas had rendered against the leaders of the Hungarian revolution. There was thus a distinct coolness between the Austrian and Russian governments and nations which Prince Bismarck took care not to allay, whilst so shaping his policy as to identify Austria with the policy of the Vatican, against which the Russian government took such strong measures as the abrogation of the concordat On this ground—the opposition of the State to the Roman Catholic Church as a foreign and independent power—both Prussia and Russia acted cordially together to obtain the same end, though for different objects, and with the understanding, tacit or expressed, that each should assist and support each other, especially in the cardinal point of preserving the mastery of the government and the army over the nation at large.

Up to 1866, the balance of services rendered was largely in favour of Prussia; but then the time arrived for Prince Bismarck to call upon Russia to return those services. It is not quite clear how they were returned; but there is much reason to believe that, when it became evident that war between Prussia and Austria would ensue, the Russian ambassadors, both in Paris and London, led the cabinets there to believe that Austria would come off victorious, and that such was the firm conviction of the Petersburg government. This view tallied with the impressions which Napoleon III. had gained on the

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subject; and it was in this belief that he abstained at the time from renewing his alliance with Italy, in the conviction that, at an opportune moment, he would be able to intervene and make demands, at the cost of Austria and Italy, which would materially strengthen his position. But the Prussian government succeeded in showing Victor Emmanuel that Germany was a far more disinterested ally than France could ever be; whilst, at the same time, Prince Bismarck opened up negotiations with the Hungarians, and caused the Austrian government the most lively apprehensions in this quarter also.

Thus the war broke out, with Italy and Germany united against Austria. In seven days the question was decided. In seven days, before a messenger could get from Paris to Rome and back, Austria was convinced of the futility of further resistance; for though there are no official documents as yet to prove the statement, it is believed that a pretty clear intimation was conveyed from St. Petersburg to Vienna, that in case France should come to her assistance, Austria would find herself opposed by Russia, as well as Prussia and Italy.

Peace was thus concluded, and the unification of Germany virtually accomplished. This was a fatal blow to Napoleon III. He foresaw that, unless he could undo the work, and wipe out the remembrance of the Mexican expedition, there would be but small hope of his dynasty preserving its place. There was, it is true, another alternative which he might have adopted, and which Lord Clarendon earnestly advised him to adopt—that was the establishment of a constitutional, instead of a personal government. But to a man of Napoleon's temperament and character, nothing short of a miracle would have rendered this possible. He preferred scheming and intriguing, and imagined that, after all, there was not much lost, as he would always be sure of Austria as an ally, together with the rest of the German States which had been annexed by, or brought into military dependence on, Prussia. If he could, besides this, induce Russia to join him in destroying German unity, he could not fail to be successful in a war against the hereditary enemy of his nation.

He therefore determined to seize the first opportunity to raise a *casus belli*. This opportunity was offered by the occupation of Luxembourg by the Prussians. Against this he protested; but Prince Bismarck replied, that as Prussia had been authorised, in 1815, to hold Luxembourg as part of the German Bund, so in 1867 it was for Europe to determine whether she should continue to occupy it as the successor to the defunct Bund, and not for Louis Napoleon to decide.

With this view Napoleon III. professed to agree. He thought his influence, combined with the antagonism of Austria and the South German States against Prussia, the jealousy of England at the progress of her commercial rival, and the national antipathy between Germany and Russia, would suffice to enable him to carry his point. Thus a conference was held in London, at which the question was settled by the decision that, as everybody wanted Luxembourg, nobody should have it; that the fortress should be razed, and the little State be declared neutral. Still this was not accomplished without a threat from Prince Bismarck, that unless France discontinued her military preparations forthwith, Prussia would present an *ultimatum*, and march 900,000 men across the frontier.

For this Napoleon was not prepared; and on the advice of the other powers, notably of Russia, which bade him "bide his time," he yielded with a good grace, especially as he desired the Exhibition to pass off satisfactorily, with the chief potentates visiting Paris, and thus pour some balm into the wounds which French vanity had received, by Germany achieving her unity without French leave or assistance.

But it was not such an easy matter to induce the continental potentates to play the part of ornaments and decorations for his theatrical *coup-d'etât*. The Emperor of Russia, especially, disliked the idea. The part played by France during the Polish rebellion, and the haughty language then addressed to Russia by the French ministers, still rankled in his heart. But at last he allowed himself to be persuaded, and declared that he would visit Paris with his uncle, the King of Prussia. This, however, did not at all suit Louis Napoleon. First of all, the intimacy between the two northern powers had long been excessively distasteful to France, and the appearance of the two monarchs, side by side, on the Boulevards, was not at all calculated to please the people, or enhance his reputation

as a statesman. He therefore caused it to be notified to the Prussian ambassador that he would prefer, or rather suggest, that the King of Prussia should defer his visit until the Czar had paid his and left Paris, as he desired to pay especial honour to his majesty, which he would be prevented from doing if both the monarchs were present at the same time, inasmuch as the Czar would naturally be entitled to the precedence on all public occasions, in virtue of his higher rank. This extravagant piece of strained politeness and etiquette displeased the Czar more even than it annoyed the King of Prussia. The Emperor Alexander declared curtly, that "if he could not choose his own time, and his own company, he would not go to Paris at all." To this Napoleon replied, that of course he should not dream of dictating to their majesties; he himself only desired to do them both the greatest honour possible, and would only be too happy if they would but consult their own inclinations and convenience. Finally, the matter was settled by the arrangement that the King of Prussia should arrive in Paris a day or two after his imperial relative, so that both should pass some time in each other's company in Paris.

Thus the Czar arrived, with his two sons, in Paris on June 1. But immediately on his entry into the city, and subsequently, he was greeted with shouts of "*Vive la Pologne!*" ("Long live Poland!") These cries were repeated on almost every occasion when he appeared in public, no doubt much to the annoyance of the emperor, who, however, tried to soften the evil impressions produced upon his guest by expressing his willingness to assent to a revision of the treaty of Paris, especially in those points touching the navigation of the Black Sea and the presence of a Russian fleet in those waters. These provisions of the treaty of Paris, though they had been evaded by Russia, were still, theoretically and formally, in force; and that they should be abrogated quite met the views of the French emperor. At the same time the condition of the Christian subjects of the Porte was mooted, not only in the Danubian provinces, but also in Candia, where the rebellion was then in its last stadium. The gist of Napoleon's proposals was, that the Czar should intervene in the matter, and support Greece and Candia in their struggle against the Porte, and should unite with him in handing over Thessaly, Epirus, and Candia to Greece. In return for the consent of France to this operation, Napoleon gave it to be understood that Russia should close her alliance with Prussia, and observe neutrality in case of any conflict between Germany and France.

These proposals came to nothing. It might have been foreseen that such would be the case. In the first place, the Czar could not but regard such conduct as downright treachery to his uncle; for whatever may be thought of the character of Russian statesmen and Russian officials, there appears to be no reason to doubt the assertion that the Czar is, personally, a man of the highest integrity and of noble ambitions, as far as his powers of discernment go.

But besides this personal impediment, Louis Napoleon's project was based on an entire misapprehension of the relations existing between the Greeks and the Russians. He failed to see that the characters of the two are entirely opposed; that there is not one single point of contact between them; and that the jealousy of the Greek Church to the Orthodox Church in Russia, was only equalled by the hatred of the Greeks for the Slavs, and their alarm at the growing influence of Servia and Montenegro, and the dimensions which the Slavonic question generally was assuming. In short, Louis Napoleon entirely failed to see that Russian and Greek interests, far from being identical, were, in reality, bitterly opposed, and that Greece, which regarded herself as the legitimate heiress of Constantinople, would sacrifice her last drachma and her best soldiers to prevent Russia from acquiring the Turkish capital, or placing any of the Slav races in possession of the coveted prize, which, under such circumstances, would practically become a Russian possession.

There was thus a multiplicity of reasons for the Czar's rejection of Louis Napoleon's overtures; who at last discovered that his attempts to make use of the Czar's presence apart from his uncle were a failure. On June 5, the King of Prussia, accompanied by Count Bismarck and General Moltke, arrived in Paris, and on the following day a grand review was held in the Bois de Boulogne. Everything passed off satisfactorily; but as the imperial *cortège* passed the grand cascade, and was turning down the avenue of Longchamps, several cries of "*Vive la Pologne!*" were raised, and immediately followed by the report of a pistol. The uniforms of the Emperor Napoleon and

the Grand Duke Vladimir were splashed with blood, and for a moment or two it was thought that the shot had taken fatal effect. But the two bullets which had been intended for the Czar had lodged in the nose of the horse which one of the imperial grooms had spurred between the emperor and the assassin—a Volhynian Pole, a youth twenty-two years old, who had taken part in the Polish rebellion of 1863-'64. He was with difficulty saved from the hands of the infuriated populace, who were naturally enraged at this breach of national hospitality, and wished to inflict summary justice on the would-be assassin.

Naturally this incident did not improve the situation, nor conduce to the success of Napoleon's plan; and on June 11, the Czar left Paris, further than ever from agreeing to any solidarity between France and Russia. After he had departed, another incident occurred which, if not of so tragic a nature, was probably far more irritating to the King of Prussia. Paul Granier—who subsequently assumed the name and title of "De Cassagnac," the townlet in which he was born—published an article in *Le Pays*, of which he was the editor and proprietor, in which he endeavoured to prove that the Rhine was the proper frontier between France and Germany, and that no Germans ought to be tolerated on the left bank, except such as considered it an honour to be French subjects. This article was regarded throughout Germany as a direct insult to the king; and the Emperor Napoleon, probably with justice, was held to be responsible at least for this attack, if not for the attempt of the Pole, Berezowski. However, on June 14, the King of Prussia also left Paris for Berlin, where, two days later, he had another meeting with the Czar. The two monarchs exchanged the views and impressions which their visit to Paris had produced, with the result that they became more determined than ever to continue their alliance. With this determination the Czar returned to St. Petersburg, there quietly to await the course of events.

But whilst kings and emperors were concocting plans, and scheming for the extension of their lands, or the welfare of their subjects, the people also were taking their affairs into their own hands in a manner which caused grave anxiety in more quarters than one, and began to initiate movements, the end of which it was difficult to foresee.

In the first place the Hungarians had claimed their reward for their conduct during the Seven Days' War; and on February 7, Count von Beust was named president of the Austrian ministry, whilst Count Julius Andrassy was called upon to form an Hungarian ministry. Count Andrassy—upon whose head a reward had been placed in 1848—consented, and formed a cabinet from the Deak party on March 15, 1867. On June 8, whilst the Czar and the King of Prussia were visiting Louis Napoleon, Francis Joseph, Emperor of Austria, was crowned King of Hungary, amidst the wildest enthusiasm and a display of almost Asiatic magnificence. The ceremony took place at Pressburg; and the new king, armed with the sword of St. Stephen, performed the ancient ceremony of waving it towards the four points of the compass on the celebrated Coronation Hill—an artificial mound, constructed with the earth from various places of historic fame. The whole of Hungary was in gala on the occasion; even the victims of the revolution, the widows and orphans of those who had fallen in 1848 and 1849, and the crippled Honveds, joined in the general delight; for the 100,000 ducats which the Hungarian Diet had presented to the king on his coronation, were divided amongst them, whilst, at the same time, the fullest amnesty was proclaimed for all exiles, and their estates restored to them on condition of their rendering homage to the new king.

Thus Hungary gained, through a united Germany, what she had failed to obtain by force of arms. She had become practically independent, and held the administration of the country in her own hands. In fact, she had obtained home rule.

But a harsh discord was heard amidst the universal joy. Siebenbürgen and Croatia—the former inhabited, to a large extent, by Germans and Wallachs; the latter by Croats; both sections enjoying certain privileges under the Austrian emperor—were by no means satisfied at being transferred from the government at Vienna to that at Pesth. Equally disappointed was the Serb section in the south of Hungary. They, too, objected to being handed over to the Hungarian administration. They had had certain privileges accorded to them by the Austrian government. They had learned the German tongue, the language used in the administration and the law courts, and

now found that they were obliged to learn Hungarian, the tongue of their new masters, who had ever been their enemies, and whose enemies they themselves had ever been since the old days of the Turkish wars.

The consequence was, that Croatia, Slavonia, and Dalmatia sent a protest to the emperor, and pointing out that they also formed a triune kingdom, insisted on securing the same privileges as those just accorded to Hungary. They pointed out that they had never wavered in their loyalty to the House of Hapsburg; that they had cheerfully sacrificed blood and gold to crush the Hungarian rebellion in 1848; and that surely it would be but the commonest justice to accord the loyal provinces the same privileges, at least, as those granted to the traitor kingdom, which besides had, so to say, wrung these privileges from Austria at the point of the sword and a fresh act of treachery, by taking advantage of the difficulties of the government in 1866 with Prussia. But it was all of no avail. The Croatian Diet was dissolved, and the same answer given, by the Vienna government, to a petition by the Czechs for the independence of the kingdom of Bohemia on the same basis as that of Hungary.

This peremptory refusal to consider what the Slavonic sections of the empire considered their just claims, created intense dissatisfaction amongst the middle and professional classes. The peasantry and smaller land proprietors remained more or less indifferent; and in the few cases in which the desire for independence took root within them, it was due rather to the instigation of short-sighted priests and professional agitators. Of course, had their claims been acknowledged, then the Germans would also have demanded their independence; the Italian section would have followed suit; and even then the Wallachs and gipsies would have considered themselves very badly treated. This is, of course, reducing the question *ad absurdum*; but it would have been the logical sequence of Count Beust's new institution. As it was, there were no less than three distinct ministries. There was the Hungarian ministry, entrusted with the administration of Hungary, sitting at Pesth; there was the Slavo-German ministry, entrusted with the government of the Cisleithanian provinces, and sitting at Vienna; and, finally, there was the Imperial ministry, the Reichsministerium, composed of three members, which sat nowhere, but passed its time between Pesth and Vienna. Yet, with all these complicated arrangements, the result of weak concessions to rivalries and national jealousies, no one was satisfied. The Germans complained of the obstinacy of the Hungarians; the Germans complained of the pretensions of the Slavs; and Slav and Hungarian, whilst complaining of each other, joined in complaining of the Germans. A cartoon in *Kikeriki*, the Vienna "Punch," aptly illustrated the relations between Austria and Hungary. A burly Hungarian magnate is seen approaching the cashiers of the Hungarian Treasury and the Austrian Treasury with a bank-note for 1,000 florins. He presents it to the Hungarian cashier; but this gentleman points to the inscription over his desk—"paying-in cashier," and bids him go over the way to his Austrian colleague, who has charge of the "paying-out department."

This state of affairs was speedily made use of by the old Russian party in Russia, who, under the innocent name of an "Ethnographical Exhibition," called together the Slavonic congress in Moscow, at which were assembled a number of deputies from Bohemia, Croatia, Slavonia, Servia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Montenegro. They were cordially received by the Czar and the Empress, by Prince Gortschakoff, and all the leading statesmen in Russia.* At the opening ceremony, Herr Rieger, of Prague, the leader of the Czech nationalists, exclaimed—"The Slavs are members of one body; but, dispersed as they are, have to wage war against their inveterate enemies, against Germans, Magyars, Italians, and Tartars. But the sun of Slavonic unity has at last arisen: the Slavs, if they will only combine, will be great, not only in numbers, but also in deeds."

The result of all this encouragement and official recognition, by the Court and government circles, of the ambitions thus fermentated by the congress, was the determination to enter upon a course of general agitation in all the Slavonic countries and provinces, whether of Austria or Turkey. The government adopted this policy with a double object. First of all, by accepting the principles enunciated at the congress, they cut the ground away from the feet of

* See p. 297, *et seq.*, vol. ii.

the Poles, who regarded themselves as the only true and genuine Slavs; and, secondly, they prepared the way towards that dismemberment of the Turkish empire, which dictated the whole policy of Russia in its relations to Europe. Poland and Turkey had always been the two fields furnishing the point of political contact with the rest of Europe; the Polish question had been settled at last in favour of Russia; the Turkish question was now to be tackled, and the wounds struck by the Crimean war to be gloriously effaced.

The initiative in this revival of the old policy, re-invigorated by the new dogma of Panslavism, was accorded to Servia and Montenegro, whilst Bulgaria was worked upon and agitated by "Russian agents," as has been generally stated, but not quite correctly, in so far as the term "Russian agent" means a Russian by race. These agents were chiefly Bulgarians who had been educated in Russia, and there imbued with Russian principles, policy, and traditions. Practically and morally, therefore, they were Russians, though not so formally or legally.

The spirit in which the question was taken up by the Serbs is exemplified in a speech made by one of its members on the meeting of the Servian Skuptchina. He said—"The liberation of Eastern Europe is the great undertaking which Russia imposes upon herself. An end must at last be put to the domination of one nationality over the other, whether this domination be a Turkish, Hungarian, or Austro-German. The battle of Sadowa has decided the fate of Eastern Europe. The German world has separated itself from the Slavonic world. The fate of the Slavs now lies in our own hands, and must be settled by Slavs alone; and it is but just, natural, and politic, that Russia should take the lead in the undertaking. Russia is not merely a Russian power, she is a Slavonic power; still more, she is a Panslavonic power. The fraternisation of all the Slavonic races is rapidly approaching; but the first step towards this consummation is the solution of the Eastern question."

This was very plain speaking indeed, and it generally found a hearty echo throughout the Slavonic world. The challenge, however, was speedily taken up on the same basis by the Germans and Hungarians. These races quite agreed with the provisions laid down by the Serb patriots, and duly expressed their determination to carry them out likewise, by refusing to allow the Slavs to dominate over them.

Thus Professor Wilhelm Müller stated, in his "Political Review for 1867," an annual publication of considerable influence, that this Serb *enfant terrible* could not have pronounced a clearer or less ambiguous discourse, or have given a more definite programme of the Russian policy. "But," he continues, "much water will flow down the Danube—he might have added, 'and much blood likewise'—before one-half of these extravagant wishes are realised. Still, the Austrian government ought to have seen that, after settling the Hungarian question, she would also have to face the Slavonic question. Her course of action is clearly defined. She must place herself on the side of Germany, in face of the agitation in Bohemia, and address the Czechs in the same words Prince Bismarck used—'You will meet with an energy beyond your strength.'"

Similar language was held all over Germany, outside of the official circles, which still held to Russia, as indeed they were bound to do; but none the less the voice of the people spoke out with no uncertain sound. The whole of the press took up the challenge. The two most able correspondents of the *Times*, Mr. Abel at Berlin, and Mr. Eber of Pesth, demonstrated that, if there was to be a Panslavonic question, there would also be a Panteutonic question, not in the sense to which we have already alluded,* but in a practical form, which would take the shape of a Teuto-Scandinavian action, in favour of one of the "dominated nationalities;" that is, the German race in the Baltic provinces. For, it was alleged, if we are to go back to the origin of all things, and deduce the rights of the present races from the rights of former generations in ancient times, it would be found that the Slavs had usurped the power and possessions of the Teuto-Scandinavian races, and that their present descendants had every moral right to regain their lost privileges, and re-assert their nationality, if they have the power to do so. These views were also propounded by the professors in the universities, not only of Germany, but also of Scandinavia, and even of Denmark. Dr. Vilhelm Thomsen, of Copenhagen, one of the first

* Page 339, *et seq.*, vol. ii.

Slavonic scholars, delivered a course of lectures, of which the main object was to prove that the race which was first dominant in Russia—the tribe of which Rurik and his brothers were the chiefs—was certainly of Scandinavian, and most probably of Swedish origin. That it was Scandinavian (said the *Times*), none but Slavs are likely to doubt. There may be some, indeed, who will think that his learned labours have been devoted to a slaying of the slain. It is well, however, to possess a thoroughly well-conducted examination of the questions at issue between the Scandinavian and Anti-Scandinavian sections of Russian archæologists from the point of view of a learned native of Scandinavia itself.

Beginning with the first references in history to the Slavs, it is explained why their tribes, occupying the lands in the neighbourhood of the Vistula, and known to their German neighbours as Wends, were so little heard of at a distance, until they migrated from the districts which had grown too small to hold them, and were converted to Christianity after they had occupied the lands bordering upon the Southern Danube. At this time, the country which we now call Russia, was occupied in its southern portion by semi-nomadic hordes of Tartar or Turkish origin; whilst the centre, the north, and the east were inhabited by Finnish races, only the west and north-west being tenanted by Slavonic tribes and by their distant relatives, the Lithuanians and Letts. It is to this period to which the legend refers, of how the allied Slavs and Finns of the north-west, feeling the want of such a strong government as they themselves could not create, called in Rurik and his brethren, and the rest of those Varangians who were known as the Russ, or members of the tribe of Russ. To this story no great weight can be attached when we consider the fact, that the words in which Nestor's Chronicle expresses the invitation sent by the Slavs to the Russ, are almost identical with those attributed by Wittekind's Saxon Chronicle to the Britons, who are credited with having called in the semi-mythical Hengist and Horsa. Rurik's descendants, for more than three centuries, ruled rather as the semi-independent chiefs of a widespread confederacy; then, for more than two centuries longer, held office by the grace of their Tartar lords, gradually consolidating their power the while; and afterwards, for another century and a-half, ruled supreme at Moscow as Czars of a united Russia, till the last descendant of Rurik's royal line was murdered, and the "Period of Trouble" arose, to which an end was not put till the election to the throne, in 1613, of the first of the Romanoffs. The Anti-Scandinavianists, however, deny the Scandinavian origin of Rurik and the Russ tribe, and try to prove that Greek documents recognise the existence of the Russ long before A.D. 839, the year in which their Greek name Rhos is for the first time put upon record. Thus a Greek writer, who died in 817, in describing how Constantine Copronymus made war on the Bulgarians in 773, says that the emperor sailed in galleys called τὰ ῥούσια χελάνδια. These vessels have been claimed as "Russian galleys." But *ta rousia chelandia rhosikos*, and not *rusios*, was the Greek equivalent for "Russian" prior to the middle of the 10th century; and, in reality, *rusios* meant red, the Greek emperors being in the habit of sailing in ships which were painted of that colour. In another of the philological lights thrown on the question at issue the result is equally clear. One of the most familiar of the passages of Byzantine literature which have been employed as evidence in the controversy as to the language spoken by the followers of Rurik, is that in which the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus, writing towards the middle of the 10th century, gives a list of the names of the various rapids of the Dnieper both in Slavonic (Σκλαβινισί) (*Sklabinisti*), and in Russ (*Rhosisti*). The Slavonic names are almost identical with the modern Russian designations of the rapids. But what the emperor calls the Russ names are quite different. For example, the name of the fourth rapid is given as *Aeifar* in Russ, and in Slavonic as *Neasit*, by the emperor, who explains that it was so called because pelicans haunted the spot, *neyesyt'* meaning "a pelican" in Old Slavonic. But this etymology is probably incorrect. The pelican derived its name from the fact of its being insatiable, a defect expressed in the Slavonic languages by words derived from an adjective *syt*, our "sated," the German *satt*. And so it is known in Russian by the name of *neyasyt'* (for *nenasyt'*), with which may be compared the German name of *Nimmersatt*. The modern Russian name of the rapid in question is *Nenasytets*, which seems to signify "the insatiable," *nenasytny* meaning "insatiable"—a good

designation for the most violent of all the rapids. At the same time there appears to be no doubt that the word *aeifar* is the same in the old Norse *aefar*, "never-ceasing." So that the Slavonic word is simply a translation of the Norse. It is, however, not quite so easy to show from what part of Scandinavia Rurik and his companions came; and the Slavs make great capital out of the fact that there is no trace or legend of any Scandinavian people calling themselves Russ.

But then, as the old inhabitants of Wales never called themselves Welsh, neither do those of Wallachia know themselves under the term of Wallachs, any more than the Hollanders call themselves Dutch, so that the ancient Russ may have received their designation only from foreigners. Now the Ugrian tribes around the Gulf of Bothnia and the Baltic have long known Sweden under some name similar to the Finnish *Ruotsi*. From those Ugrian appellations may have sprung the name of Russ, applied by the Slavs to their Scandinavian leaders. Therefore, Sweden may have been the original home of Rurik. Again, if the Scandinavian names which occur in Russian history are tested—such as Olga (Helga), Rogvolod (Rögnvaldr), Igor (Ingvarr), and many others—it will be found that many of them belong exclusively to Sweden, and even point to certain parts of it, such as Upland, Södermanland, and East Gotland, districts which are situated along the Swedish shore just opposite the Gulf of Finland. And therefore those provinces may well be credited with the merit of having been the original homestead of the so-called Russian tribe, the Varangians, who imposed the name they were known by on the people among whom they became absorbed, just as the Franks gave their name to the France whose language they accepted. As to the Varangians themselves, they figure in the Old Norse Sagas as the *Væringjar*, and in Constantinople as the Scandinavian *Baraggoi*, who long formed the imperial guard, one of whose number probably carved on the lion which has for nearly two centuries adorned the entrance to the arsenal at Venice, but which previously gave to the Piræus its Italian name of "Porto Leone," the long Runic inscription which has never been completely deciphered, though an eminent Runologist is supposed to have proved, not very long ago, that it must have been cut by a man from Sweden proper (Svealand), probably from the province of Upland. Towards the end of the 11th century, however, the Varangian body seems to have begun to change its character, being recruited, not from Scandinavia, but from England; Byzantine authors of the end of the 12th century stating that the Varangians were Britons or Englishmen (*Igglinoi*), who spoke English (*Iglinisti*). Finally, the defence of the monarch, who ruled at Constantinople, was entirely intrusted to Englishmen—a fact which seems not to be entirely out of keeping with the ideas of the present day, and which, according to the Slav principles, is, in itself, reason enough for asserting our right to follow up the privileges of our ancestors.

Nor must it be forgotten that the number of Rurik's companions does not seem to have been large: their marriages with native women must have led to their children being linked with Slav as well as with Scandinavian associations. And so the descendants of the original settlers can scarcely have preserved their foreign nationality for more than three or four generations. Rurik's grandson, Sviatoslaf, bore a purely Slavonic name; and when Vladimir the Great officially introduced Christianity into Russia in 988, and made Slavonic the language of the church, he doubtless considered himself as much a Slav as any of his subjects, or as Richard Lion-heart considered himself an Englishman. But though, about the year 1000, "the reigning house in Kief may be considered essentially Slavonicised," it does not follow that therefore the Scandinavian element had been eliminated from Russia. Up to the beginning of the 11th century, a constant immigration of Northmen went on. So numerous were they, that Dietmar declared that the population of Kief, in 1018, consisted "chiefly of Danes;" that name being a general expression for the men of the north. But, after that time, the stream of settlers ceased to pour in from Scandinavia. Novgorod, however, long continued to keep up its character of "a Varangian town," the Gothlanders having a guildhall there, and a Varangian church being kept up. But even there, after the 13th or 14th century, the Scandinavians had to give way to the Germans, whose Hanse towns carried off the lucrative Novgorod trade.

But their influence still remained a

powerful factor in determining the destiny of the country; and the *Russkaya Pravola*, or Russian Right, the collection of laws which Yaroslav gave his subjects, are as thoroughly in keeping with the ideas of the old Norsemen and Anglo-Saxons, as they are opposed to the principles which now animate the rulers of Russia.

But however much the Germans might deride Panslavonic aspirations, the Russians, countenanced by their government, rapidly put their theories into execution, and inaugurated a feverish agitation throughout all the Slav provinces of the neighbouring States. Russian grammars, Russian histories, Russian songs, and Russian vademecums, of all sorts, poured rapidly from the press, and were sent by waggon-loads into Bulgaria and Servia. The preparations for the coming struggle were scarcely concealed. Servia spoke openly of her intention to annex Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Old Servia, and form a powerful independent State under Russian protection. For this purpose she began to arm; Turkey followed her example; and when the foreign consuls inquired of the Servian ministers what was the meaning of these military preparations, they were answered by complaints of the Turkish preparations, and the concentration of Turkish troops at the strategical points of the Servian frontier. The real object of the preparations, however, soon became apparent. The fortress of Belgrade was still garrisoned by the Turks, and thus held perpetually as a threat over the Serbs, who were resolved to put an end to the occupation. It was for this reason that the military were called out, ostensibly for the usual manœuvres—a proceeding which caused the Turks also to concentrate their men on the frontier. Things went on like this for a little while; the consuls, as usual, disagreeing amongst themselves, until encounters took place in the streets between the Moslems and the Serbs, the former threatening to bombard the town. The matter was, however, settled diplomatically by the Sultan agreeing to the withdrawal of the garrison by a firman, dated March 2nd, 1867, the only stipulation being, on the suggestion of Consul Longworth, that the Turkish flag should be hoisted on Friday, the Turkish Sabbath, and other Turkish festivals, side by side with the Servian standard, and that the mosques should be respected and kept in good condition at the expense of the State. The only place in Servia still occupied by the Turks, was the little fortress of Mali Zwornik, on the Drina; but as, owing to the changes in the course of this river, the exact frontier was undetermined, the Serbs insisted that Mali Zwornik was in Servia, the Turks asseverating that it was in Bosnia.

Thus matters went on; the political atmosphere became heavy throughout Europe. In the East there was the Slavonic question; in the West the Franco-German dispute, which, though stifled for a time, was still smouldering, ready to break out into flames; and to crown all, the Russian ambassadors in Constantinople and Paris were called to St. Petersburg, towards the end of the year, for a diplomatic conference with their colleagues, and to receive instructions as to the course they were to pursue.

At the same time an attempt was made by the Russian government to strengthen its position and influence at Greece. An occasion to improve the relations between the two countries was afforded by the marriage of King George with the Grand Duchess Olga, a niece of the Czar; but without much effect. The Greeks were perfectly convinced that they had nothing to hope for from Russia, especially since the Bulgarians had emancipated themselves from the rule and administration of the Greek patriarch of Constantinople, and were throwing themselves, day by day, more and more into the arms of the Russians.

In fact, the different parties which constitute the Eastern question were gradually resolving themselves into distinct groups, and acquiring separate shape. As the Slavonic question arose on the Danube, the Hungarian question rose to the same height on the Theiss; on the Pruth arose the Roumanian question; and on the Ægean arose the Greek question. True, each group was divided in itself by parochial questions, as they may be called. It was a matter of interest to those concerned whether Prince Milan should be king of the future kingdom, or whether Prince Nikita should play the part of the Servian Victor Emmanuel. It was also interesting to the Roumanians whether they should acquire any territory south of the Danube, whether they should be satisfied with their independence under Prince Charles, or strive to obtain the

neutralisation of their country under a native prince—Prince Stourdza, or Prince Ghika; and it was also a matter of interest to the Greeks whether they should be satisfied with some extension of their frontier and the cession of Candia and the other islands, leaving Constantinople still in the hands of the Turks; or whether they should rise to a man, and claim Constantinople for their just inheritance. All these were questions of local importance; for the rest of the world it was only important to know that the day was approaching when the rival claims of Greek, Magyar, and Slav would have to be settled. In Greece matters were somewhat peculiar. More sensible, but less patriotic than that of the Slavs, was the policy they adopted. The Greeks of the empire, *i.e.*, the Greek subjects of the Porte, would have preferred that the Turks should retain Constantinople; for though nominally their masters, they were practically their slaves and tools. There would naturally be an end to all this if the Slavs were to obtain possession of the capital; and there would also be an end to very much of it if the kingdom of Greece were to obtain it. Still, of two evils they naturally chose the latter; and whilst energetically combating the Slavs, and supporting the Turks, they at the same time continued their relations, intrigues, and negotiations with the Greeks of the kingdom. What they secretly desired was, that in case of a dismemberment of the Turkish empire in Europe, there should be established a Greek confederation—an extended Greece, with Athens for its capital, and another Greece with Constantinople for its metropolis. It was clear to them that both Athens and Constantinople must be capitals of something; and this was the ideal they vaguely conceived.

It soon became evident that Russia had nothing to hope for from the Greeks, but everything to fear, as far as their power went. That power, however, chiefly consists in whatever sympathy and assistance they may be able to secure from other countries. Their power consists, in short, of the force the idea of a restored Greece still retains in Greece itself and outside of it; for when we find that the *employés* and their families form no less than one-twelfth of the population of Greece, we can easily understand that the financial and economic condition of the country must be highly unsatisfactory. Still more serious does the matter appear when we remember that the country was burdened, at the outset of its career, by a debt it could not pay, by a legacy of passions which formerly found a vent against the Turks, but since then have caused the formation of numberless factions; and, finally, by being saddled with a king of foreign extraction, whose only chance of founding a dynasty depends upon the force of arms, or the consolidation of a constitutional monarchy. Besides all this, there exists the fact, which it is useless to ignore, that the people are over-educated for their means, or possess too much mobility of intellect to be willing to devote themselves to manual labour. The mode of life, the climate, permit them to disregard those conditions of existence which the inhabitants of less favoured countries cannot afford to disregard. The consequence is, that though the population has increased from 710,000 in 1832, to 1,600,000 in 1876, the resources of the country have not been developed in proportion to the powers of this increase. Thus the same cry arose in Greece which arose in Dalmatia—more territory and a greater working population. At the same time the evil was aggravated by the fact of a number of the Hellenic provinces and islands being under the dominion of the Turks. No man would be satisfied with a little bit of a garden and a lodge at the gates of a large estate to which he considers himself the rightful heir, or devote himself properly to the development of his little property; and when to all this we have to add a glowing patriotism, it cannot be supposed that Hellas would quietly sit by and see her inheritance in danger of passing to a fresh master, or let the opportunity go by of acquiring it from the present owner.

Under such circumstances, Hellas would appear to have offered a peculiarly fruitful field for the development of secret societies; but, as a matter of fact, none such existed beyond such organisations as correspond to the *contrabandistas* of the Pyrenees and the south of Spain. Associations of this stamp exist in many parts of Greece, especially in Chios, Samos, Crete, and the Greek provinces of Turkey. Still, even these societies do not possess such an organisation as to justify their being called secret societies in the common sense of the word. They combine commerce, smuggling, and patriotism in just

the same way as the Carlists of the Pyrenees. We find a merchant, or group of merchants, at each end of a chain of contrabandists, the patriotism of whom is beyond a doubt, and who would, when the moment arises, devote all the machinery they have organised for their personal benefit to the common welfare, and the common object of liberating their country. There are members of these associations everywhere. In Constantinople, in Marseilles, Salonica, Vienna, Trieste, London, Paris, they entertain relations with each other, and even with such fully organised societies as the Mafia. Many a cargo to Smyrna, Constantinople, Palermo, Messina, is landed without ever figuring in the custom-house returns, and there is a community of interests between them and the *contrabandistas* of Italy and Spain which practically amounts to a secret society. Without them, for instance, the Carlist rebellion would never have succeeded in dragging its weary length along as it did; and in no slight measure did they contribute to the success of the Italian revolution. Knowing the different countries intimately, every nook and corner of the coasts, and having their ramifications everywhere, these *contrabandistas* have a powerful machinery to place at the disposal of any committee or association which is formed for political purposes, and has the money to engage them. That is a point which must not be forgotten; for *contrabandistas* must live as well as other people.

Now this was, and is, the sort of organisation which was at the service of any committees or societies as soon as they were prepared to provide the money; and it is but natural, in a country like Greece, where a number of political societies exist, that these societies should, at the given moment, avail themselves of the advantages thus at their disposal. Patriotism has, therefore, but to form its societies in the most innocent fashion for the pursuit of scientific objects, the cultivation of art and literature, or, avowedly, for the development of the national life. They will collect funds, they will increase the numbers of their members generally, extend the sphere of their exertions, and enter into relations with the heads of different parties as may best serve the common cause; and all this without the government being able to interfere, even if it wished to do so, without incurring the charge of tyranny and oppression, although it knows quite well that these societies could direct all their forces against it at any given moment by the means we have pointed out.

An instance of this was afforded in 1864 and 1865. The presence and influence of Count Sponneck, the Russian adviser of King George, was highly distasteful to the Hellenes, and the societies and leaders of most parties were unceasing in their attacks upon him. The *Ethnophylax* printed every day, in large prominent type, without any further comment, the words:—Ὁ Σπόννεκ πρέπει να φύγῃ—"Sponneck must go;" and the agitation became so great that everything was thrown into anarchy, and the minister, Koumoundouros, forced to resign. Bulgaris was then called upon to form a new cabinet, but would only do so on condition of Count Sponneck being immediately sent out of the country. To this the king refused to accede, and Deligiorgis consented to form a ministry on condition that Sponneck should quit Greece in the spring. To this the king consented; but the popular discontent ran so high at this compromise, that a great demonstration took place on November 12th, 1865, in the streets of Athens, which led to a conflict between the troops and the populace, and several persons were killed and wounded. The disturbances were renewed on the following days, and ultimately the king was forced to yield, and Count Sponneck to relieve the Athenians of his presence. All this agitation was increased by the action of the brigands, banditti, &c., and *soi-disant* smugglers—the elements to which we have alluded as being at the service of the societies.

These societies, or rather, clubs—Σύλλογοι—had different objects in view. The Cretan clubs, of which there are still two or three in Athens, naturally strove for the liberation of Crete, and to obtain the practical assistance of the mother country; for if that were once obtained, the great majority of the population in Crete would at once rise in arms. Every Cretan is armed; in the country not a man stirs from his house without all the guns, pistols, and poniards he can conveniently carry about his person. The signal has but to be given, and he calmly walks from his cottage to the rendezvous in the mountains pre-determined upon. So far, the matter is simple; but it is when the question arises as to the transmission of sup-

plies that the difficulties commence, and the assistance of the mother country—the societies—in the shape of money and the active help of the *contrabandista* element becomes necessary. At the commencement of the last rebellion, the Cretan clubs divided in opinion. One section advocated an immediate rising, whilst the other advocated waiting till Greece declared war to Turkey; but both were unanimous in threatening the monarchy with revolution unless it entered into action immediately. This latter was also the programme of the Μακεδονικὸς σύλλογος—the Macedonian Club—whose members were recruited from the natives of Macedonia, and organised periodical raids across the frontier. Equally intent upon action of some kind was the Ἀδελφωτίς, or Brotherhood—which, with the clubs of Chios and Syra, was the most revolutionary. All these clubs were more or less in favour of action simultaneously with Russia—not under Russian control; whilst the most powerful club—the Σύλλογος ἐφνικῆς ἀμύνης—the National Defence Club—whose members comprised a number of the wealthiest bankers and merchants throughout Hellas, contented itself with the collection of funds, in order, at the given moment, to support, through thick and thin, whichever party had the best chance of success.

These and other facts, coupled with the conviction that, in any portion of the Turkish empire, Greece would be generally supported by Europe in her demands for a share of the spoil, convinced the Russians that the old cry of community of religion had lost its force; and as England and the Western powers generally were disinclined to open the Eastern question, Russia gave no support to Greece nor Candia, and the rebellion was finally crushed by Omar Pasha. But, at the same time, the last faint thread that still bound Greece to Russia was irretrievably snapped. Henceforth, Russia considered only the Slavonic population in her plans, and classed the Greeks rather with the Turks than with their enemies.

Now, though the Russian cabinet were perfectly aware of the views entertained by the Prussian ministers regarding Greece, and also that Germany had certain interests on the Danube which she would stand up for if necessary, they were forced to remain satisfied with the Prussian alliance only. A Franco-Russian alliance was an impossibility, and must always remain an impossibility; or, at least, would be disastrous in the result for both—because, firstly, of the antagonism between the Roman and the Greek Church; secondly, because of the antagonism of their interests in the East; thirdly, on account of the opposition France would meet with from Germany, Austria, and Italy; and, fourthly, from England also, were she to ally herself with Russia in any reconstruction of the East, which, if satisfactory to Russia, cannot but be inimical to British interests. Austria, as an ally, after the events of 1848 and 1849, was out of the question. Equally averse from any solidarity with Russia were the Baltic States; so that absolutely there was no help to be expected from any other quarter than Berlin.

That the Russian ministers had fully accepted these facts, and determined to rely upon Prussia for good or for evil, was proved by the meeting of the Czar and the King of Prussia in the autumn of 1868. This meeting was intended as a reply to the endeavours of Louis Napoleon to detach Italy from the Prussian alliance, and to incite Austria, if not to open action, at any rate to secure her neutrality in case of a war between France and Germany. Indeed, for a time there was reason to believe that Austria would side with France; or, to speak more correctly, there was, no doubt, a party in Austria which assured Napoleon that he might rely upon her for an ally.

The leader and soul of this party was Count Beust. He was animated by the bitterest feelings against the man whom he regarded as his rival—against Count Bismarck, though Bismarck himself always smiled at the idea of Count Beust imagining that he could, under any circumstances, be a rival of his. Indeed, the very appearance of the two men was enough to preclude any comparison between them. The stalwart figure of Count Bismarck, and his scrupulous attention to dress, presented the strongest contrast to the puny appearance of the Austrian minister, whose slipshod, tatterdemalion costume, patched here and darned there, his collar and necktie always awry, afforded a sufficient index to the dilapidated state of his intellect. Still, as the representative of a great power, Count Beust's intrigues could not be ignored; and thus the German press was instructed to state, during the meeting of the Czar and the King of Prussia at

Schwalbach and Berlin, that there was no doubt, that if the Prusso-Russian alliance was not yet an absolute fact, still the first cannon-shot fired in Europe would conclude it. Nor was it only the German press which held this language. The official Russian paper, the *Journal de St. Petersburg*, said on October 28th:—"It cannot be doubted, if France should assemble an army on the Rhine, that the Germans would at once accept the challenge. War would, of course, ensue, and entail many complications. The excitement in Posen, the Polish province of Prussia, would at once extend to the kingdom of Poland, to the Russian province of Poland. The Russian army would, in consequence, be obliged to take active measures to preserve peace. It must not be imagined that we in Russia are animated by any great feelings of love for the Germans; and it is quite possible that there is much more sympathy between two other nations (Austria and France). But should the day arrive when the French Eagle shall advance victoriously into Germany, the memory of the First Empire would awake to a still further degree, and would efface all other considerations."

This article of the *Journal de St. Petersburg* was inspired by Prince Gortschakoff himself, and sufficiently proves that, at that early period, the probabilities and eventualities of a Franco-German war had been fully considered by Germany and Russia, and a common plan of action decided on. At the same time, however, it was apparent that the understanding between the two countries was of a tacit, personal nature, and not a formal documentary alliance, which would probably have been objected to by the Russians as well as the Germans. In point of fact, it amounted to an agreement between Count Bismarck and Prince Gortschakoff, that documentary treaties and engagements required, in Prussia at least, the sanction of the parliament; and that as any debate on the subject would force the ministers to show too much of their hands, and generally destroy that secrecy with which it was necessary to proceed, each would rely on the word and honour of the other.

This arrangement, as a temporary one, was well enough as far as it went; and if the interests of North Germany had only been such as were included within the limits of the empire, Germany would have had nothing to fear from Russia. But this was not the case. Germany had interests in Austria which she would not allow to be endangered; and it was just those interests which were threatened by the traditional policy of Russia, and by the Panslavonic movement. Hence it was all-important for Germany to be on good terms with Austria. Whatever might be the ultimate plans of Count Bismarck, whether he contemplated an annexation of the Austro-German provinces, and thus accomplish the complete unification of Germany, or whether he intended simply a close alliance, the fact always remained, that Austro-Hungary, whether allied with, or incorporated with Germany, there were certain interests threatened by Russia which Germany would have to defend.

In any case, therefore, Count Bismarck desired the existence of a strong anti-Russian and anti-Slav party in Austria—a party strong enough to defend German interests if Germany herself were prevented doing so, and strong enough to be an ally for Germany, should circumstances lead to a disruption of the Austrian empire. *Per contra*, the desires of Russia ran in exactly the opposite direction. Hence, whilst Russia applied herself to the Slavs, Germany devoted her attention to the Germans, the Italians, and the Hungarians of the empire.

For this reason Count Bismarck continued the friendly relations he had entered into with Hungary during the Seven Days' War, and strongly supported Count Andrassy. Indeed, he went so far as to say, on a subsequent occasion, that "formerly he had had to transact business with Austrian ministers, not a word of whose statements he believed, and to whom he had said, 'Whether you talk or not is all the same to me, and creates no further impression than the wind howling down the chimney. I don't believe a single word you say.' But between myself and Count Andrassy matters are very different indeed. He believes all that I tell him, and I believe all that he tells me; so it is perfectly useless for any one to try to make mischief between us."

With this programme, virtually a Prusso-Hungarian understanding—a ministerial alliance against the imperial alliance—the delegations of Austro-Hungary met in 1868. The delegations may be regarded

as committees, one appointed by the Hungarian parliament, the other by the Austrian parliament, to discuss the proposals of the imperial ministry touching the common administration of the empire, such as the budget and the army. Both delegations passed a bill, raising the effective of the army to 800,000 men for ten years; but it was not accomplished without some very severe remarks regarding Count Beust, who was believed to be, and in fact known to be, endeavouring to arrange a Franco-Austrian alliance against Prussia. It was thought that the more troops Austria could place in the field, the greater would be the temptation to enter into such an alliance; but just for this very reason the Poles and the Slavs generally supported the bill, and carried it through in spite of German opposition—that is to say, of the Germans in Austria, who had not the same faith in Count Andrassy as the Prussian minister. The Hungarians supported it in return for fresh concessions, much to the disgust of Prince Gortschakoff and the Slavs. These concessions were the incorporation of Croatia, Slavonia, and the military frontier; so that Hungary had at last re-united, under the Hungarian sceptre, all the former possessions of the Hungarian crown, and re-established to its fullest limits the ancient triune kingdom of Hungary, composed of Hungary, Slavonia, and Croatia, and forming a State with a population of 14,830,154 inhabitants. Of these inhabitants, 4,851,564 were Hungarians; 1,504,948 Germans; 2,416,824 Roumanians, and 4,382,881 Slavs, Croats, Slavonians, Czechs and Serbs: a total, therefore, of 13,156,217 souls. The balance was made up of gipsies, Jews, and other races.

There were elements enough here for complications, the first of which seemed about to come from Servia. This small principality, with its 1,160,000 inhabitants, had, ever since gaining its independence, been the sport of conflicting interests. Above all, the Serbs desired absolute independence; but not being strong enough to wrest its liberty from the Porte alone and unaided, was obliged to seek a support—now in Austria, now in Russia, now from the Western powers combined, according to the views of the statesmen who were at the head of the government. The more, however, the ambition to acquire Bulgaria, Old Servia, Bosnia, &c., and to restore the "glories" of the ancient empire of Dushan the Great, took root—not exactly amongst the people, but amongst the leading classes—the more repugnance was felt by Prince Michael to enter upon an adventurous policy. He had succeeded in procuring the withdrawal of the Turkish garrison in Belgrade, and felt fully satisfied with himself and the state of practical independence the country enjoyed. He preferred leaving affairs to the gradual but certain development of events, feeling convinced that, by biding his time, he would acquire all that could be expected. These sentiments, however, and the idea that he was in favour of ceding Servia to Hungary, displeased a certain section of Serb politicians, who were so worked on by Alexander Karageorgevitch, that it was decided to assassinate Prince Michael, and place Karageorgevitch on the throne, although the bulk of the nation was quite satisfied with his rule, and, generally speaking, approved of his policy of trusting to Austria rather than to Russia.

Alexander Georgevitch was the son of the celebrated Karageorge, who achieved the independence of Servia in 1804 and 1805. Karageorge, however, was murdered by Milosch Obrenovitch, who was forced to abdicate in 1839, and gave up the throne to his eldest son, Milan. Milan died a few weeks afterwards, and was succeeded by his brother Michael. The son of Karageorge, Alexander Karageorgevitch, succeeded, however, in deposing Michael in 1842, but was in turn deposed by the Skuptchina, which recalled old Milosch, who then retained the crown till his death in 1858. He was followed by his son Michael, who thus ascended the throne for the second time. Michael, though married to Countess Julia Hunyady, was childless, and was obliged to adopt an heir. His choice fell upon young Milan, his nearest male relative, and a grand-nephew of Prince Milosch, whose brother Ephraim had had a son named Milosch, who had married a certain Maria Kartatschi, a Moldavian lady. Milan was the only child of this union, and after his father's death, was brought up by relatives of his mother. This lady, Maria Obrenovitch, played a very unequivocal part in connection with Prince Couza, of Roumania; and was actually found in bed with him when the revolution broke out in Bucharest, and his palace was burned. Milan, however, as the undisputed son of Milosch Obrenovitch, was declared by the Skuptchina to be the

next in succession, and sent by Prince Michael to Paris, to be educated there, under the guidance of M. Ristics, a wily, most ambitious Serb, who subsequently became his pupil's prime minister.

All this was naturally highly disagreeable to Karageorgevitch, who, living in exile at Vienna, had hoped that on the death of Prince Michael he would have been recalled by the Skuptchina. When, however, it became evident that the dynasty of the Obrenovitch was being consolidated, he, or his party, resolved to strike a blow before Milan was of age to assume the government.

Thus, on June 10th, 1868, as Prince Michael, accompanied by his cousin, Anka Constantinovitch, his adjutant Garaschanin, and one of his servants, was taking his daily walk in the park of Topschider, near Belgrade, he was attacked by three men, who suddenly sprang out from the bushes, and repeatedly firing upon him with their revolvers, killed him and his cousin, and wounded the others. Two of the assassins, of the family of Radanovitch, were at once arrested, and several more within the course of the next few days—amongst them two brothers-in-law, and other relations of Karageorgevitch, upon whom the suspicion of being the head of the conspiracy naturally at once fell.

The ministers soon took their precautions. The army was called out, the country declared in a state of siege, the Skuptchina convoked for July 2nd, and young Milan brought secretly from Paris to Belgrade. The indignation throughout the country at this dastardly and utterly groundless murder was universal. The whole family of Karageorgevitch, and even his most distant relations, were banished, and their property confiscated. Those more immediately concerned were imprisoned and put upon their trial, after Prince Milan had been proclaimed under the title of Obrenovitch IV., and a regency instituted, of which M. Marinovitch, a *persona grata* to the Russian government, was the head.

In the trial which followed, it was proved that Karageorgevitch and his secretary had been in communication for over a year with the conspirators, fourteen of whom were sentenced to death on July 27th, and shot on the following day. At the same time the Servian government demanded of the Hungarian government the extradition of Karageorgevitch, and called upon him to appear before the court. The Hungarian government ordered his arrest, and sent him to Semlin, opposite Belgrade, on the Austrian bank of the river, for identification by some of the prisoners. The confrontation took place on a steamer, after which Karageorgevitch was taken back to Pesth, to await the examination by the Hungarian authorities before they delivered him up to the Servian government, which subsequently condemned him, *in absentia*, to twenty years' hard labour. The result of the examination in Pesth was his acquittal on a verdict of "not proven;" though, in the public mind, both in Servia and Hungary, there was not the least doubt as to his guilt.

The immediate result of these events was an increased distrust of Austria on the part of Servia. The whole nature of the incident went to prove, that if the Austrian government had not actually had a hand in the business, it was, at any rate, prepared to support Karageorgevitch; and, generally, the whole was regarded as an outcome, if, indeed, not a consequence, of Count Beust's policy, which was thoroughly opposed to the formation of independent States on the Danube. He was especially active in his attempt to frustrate the development of Roumania, and to raise the jealousy of Hungary by pretending that Roumania was striving to prepare the way for the annexation of the Roumanian frontier of Transylvania; and, at the same time, he endeavoured to show that Roumania was being supported in these projects by the Prussian ministers. He called Prince Charles "the Prussian corporal on the Danube;" caused his organs to proclaim that 5,000 Prussian non-commissioned officers and sergeants had been incorporated with the Roumanian army, and that Prussia, having one string to her bow in the shape of Hungary, wished for another in the shape of Roumania by the time she might find it expedient to cast the first away.

But all these endeavours were fruitless, except in so far that Bratiano, the Roumanian minister, who was acting with Marinovitch in the matter, was obliged to resign in consequence of the pressure brought to bear upon Roumania by the Western powers. They accused Bratiano of agitation in Bulgaria; but though he repelled the charge, it was too well known that he had the chief hand in the expedition of armed men and agents across the

Danube; whilst Marinovitch was following the same policy in the west of Bulgaria and the Bosnian and Herzegovinian districts. Matters, in fact, assumed a very serious aspect; and it looked as if there was some danger of a triple alliance between Austria, France, and England, which, at any rate, was determined to obtain a diplomatic victory over Russia and Germany. But both Russia and Germany declared that they quite agreed with the views of the Western powers in the question; the consequence being that Bratiano was succeeded by Cogalnitscheano as prime minister. Bratiano, however, did not lose much by this transfer. He was at once elected into the Chamber of Deputies by a majority of sixty-six to eighteen; and, freed from the trammels of office, was more able to follow out his policy of agitating the Turkish provinces than before.

Meanwhile, the Russian ministers determined to make as much use of the cordial relations existing between the Czar and the King of Prussia as they possibly could. On February 29th, an imperial ukase abolished the special commissions which had been established to pacify Poland, and to satisfy the demands of the Western powers. There was no further question of a kingdom of Poland. Most of the Polish officials were dismissed; the Roman Catholic Church was placed under the administration of the Holy Synod; and when one of the bishops (Bishop Popiel, of Plock) refused to send a delegate, or acknowledge the Synod, he was arrested, and exiled into the interior of the empire. The Russian language was proclaimed as the official and educational language, and also introduced into the churches. All prayer-books and educational books, used in the public schools, were translated into Russian, and submitted to a strict examination by the censors. In Lithuania, the Cossack General, Potapow, issued a proclamation to the following effect:—

"It is strictly forbidden to make use of the Polish language in any public place. It must not be used in churches, hotels, taverns, comptoirs, confectioners' *cafés*, wine-shops, public-houses, public promenades, gardens, parks, nor any shops, printing-offices, photographer's studios, or in any place to which the general public have access. Nor is it allowed for a meeting of more than two persons in a private house to speak Polish. It can only be allowed in the intimacy of the family—that is, between man and wife, and children and parents; and then only within the precincts of their own houses. This order will be strictly enforced; and all contraventions be followed by a pecuniary fine of such an amount as to be a sensible punishment for the culprits."

Similar measures, but in a minor degree, were adopted in the Baltic provinces. The German civil governors in Livonia, Esthonia, and Courland, were dismissed; the official German newspapers were changed into Russian papers; the official language, in all instances, was ordered to be the Russian; the rector of the university at Dorpat had an assistant assigned to him who was to introduce the Russian language into all the schools; and the superintendent over the elementary schools, which had hitherto been in the hands of the Lutheran clergy, was transferred to the Russian ministry of public instruction. It was endeavoured, by certain parties, especially by Count Beust and the French government, to rouse German feeling against the Russian government on account of these measures. But the attempt was unsuccessful, for the simple reason that neither Prussia nor Russia could yet afford to quarrel with each other. But though the Prussian government was silent on the subject, public opinion in Germany condemned these measures very severely. Not only was the daily press loud in its denunciation of the Russian policy, but writers of position, and journals and reviews of great influence, expressed the same views.

But important as this open expression of opinion was, the silence of the government was far more important and impressive. It would have been easy for Prince Bismarck to have advised the Russian government, in a friendly manner, to abstain from measures which were directed solely against the Germans; and there is no doubt but that the Russian government would have followed his advice. But not one word of remonstrance did Bismarck utter; and that proves incontestably that he regards the Baltic provinces as a question it may be necessary one day to raise into the importance of a *casus belli*.

As to the opinions on the subject held by the Germans, the following passage in Professor Wilhelm Müller's *Political Review* generally represents them:—

"The Russianising mania of the govern-



COUNT ORLOFF

RUSSIAN DIPLOMATIST

ment knows no limits, acknowledges no treaties, and oppresses everything that is foreign, no matter whether it be of German or Polish origin. The conduct of the government in the Baltic provinces is barbarous and brutal. By the capitulations of 1710, liberty of conscience, German administration, language, and law were secured to these provinces. Yet even after the ukase of 1868, a fresh decree was issued in 1869, to the effect that persons of all denominations, especially the corporations and nobility, must attend divine service in the Orthodox Churches, on all State festivals and feasts of the Orthodox Church, to join in the prayers for the Czar. But as long as the Russian government uses canting phrases about the liberty of conscience, whilst ruthlessly stifling it by such decrees—as long as it calls itself liberal, but acts with unheard-of despotism, and as long as it clamours for the rights of nationalities abroad, whilst trampling upon them at home, we must be pardoned if we recall to memory what Napoleon said must be done if we want to find the Tartar in the Russian."

These views not only represent very fairly what is the general opinion throughout Germany, but the fact is very well known in Russia likewise, and is openly discussed. Thus so eminent an authority as General Fadaieff stated:—"As long as the quarrel between France and Prussia continues, Russia will retain her liberty of action in some degree; but when this quarrel has been settled by diplomacy or force of arms, as the case may be, then *Russia must take the least difficulty by assault before there is time for an Anglo-Austro-Prussian alliance to develop itself, an alliance far more dangerous for us than any Anglo-French alliance.*" How accurately General Fadaieff gauged the question subsequent events have amply shown.

The same policy adopted in Poland and the Baltic provinces was also adopted in Finland, but also more cautiously than in Poland, or even in the Baltic provinces, for it was remembered that the whole of the population—except about 40,000 out of 1,800,000 souls—is staunchly Lutheran, and would certainly seize the first opportunity to rise against Russia if any attempt to crush their religion or their nationality were to be made, and would place themselves on the side of the Baltic provinces, with their population of 1,500,000. Thus when Germany chooses to raise the question, she will have the suffrages of over 3,000,000 people, who would be but too happy to exchange the Russian for the German government.

CHAPTER II.

THE ABROGATION OF THE ARTICLES OF THE TREATY OF PARIS RELATING TO THE BLACK SEA, THE DARDANELLES, AND THE DANUBE.

A MORE contemptible diplomatic campaign than that of 1870-'71, or more degrading to all parties alike, was never undertaken by any statesman worthy of the name. Its history reads more like that of a squabble in a young ladies' boarding-school, or the wordy quarrel of a coterie of old maids, than of the political relations between the great powers of the civilised world. But this is not all. It is equally characterised by a lack of morality entirely out of keeping, not only with the tenets of Christianity, but also equally out of accordance with the heathen code of morality, as it existed even long before the Christian era. And, worse than all, the precedent for this cynical immorality was furnished by an English statesman; an English statesman first enunciated the principles which were used a few years later to justify the utter disregard of any international treaty. That statesman was the present Lord Derby, then Lord Stanley. Referring to the duties undertaken by England in regard to the neutrality of Luxembourg, he stated in the House of Commons, on July 14th, 1867, "that his idea of a collective guarantee was, that in case of an infringement of the neutrality, all the signataries might be called upon to take collective

action, without any one of the contracting powers being obliged to interfere alone. That, in short, each individual power has the *right*, but not the *duty*, to insist upon the observance of the stipulations agreed to." And, reversing the old proverb, like father like son, the Earl of Derby endorsed these views, and declared roundly in the House of Lords, that "if France, in defiance of the treaty, should take possession of Luxembourg, England, although called upon by Prussia to assist in enforcing the observance of the treaty, would not be bound to comply with the call." In making this statement the Earl of Derby referred to his son, Lord Stanley, as his "noble relative." This circuitous mode of referring to his son may have been due to some innate sense of shame and humiliation on the part of the old earl. If so, it modifies in some small degree, as regards himself, the epithet which posterity will apply to his "noble relative," in exactly the reverse sense.

For, regarded by the light of ordinary sense, Lord Derby's statement amounts to the legalisation of political kleptomania, and the repudiation of the duties of any treaty if it is not convenient to enforce their observance. It either means this, or else it is one of the most childish propositions ever uttered by a man beyond his teens. For, though treaties are signed by the parties who have wished, and probably still wish, to infringe what that treaty is laid down for, yet if those parties choose to ignore their obligations, the rest of the powers are not bound to enforce these obligations because, forsooth, one or more parties having broken the treaty, the collective guarantee no longer exists! That is to say, to take an illustration from common life, if, of three trustees, one refuses to observe the stipulations of the will, the other two are not bound to enforce them because they are not all agreed.

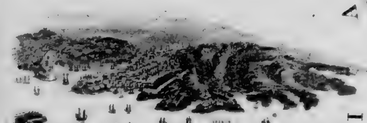
Now, such propositions as these—characterised by all international lawyers abroad, and many at home, as unique in the history of international law—could not fail to be taken advantage of by the powers lowest in the scale of political morality, when endorsed by the powers claiming to be the highest in that scale. Thus whilst Europe was being shaken to its foundations by the Franco-German war, and all men throughout the civilised world were intent upon the issue of the tremendous struggle, rumours of complications raised by Russia began to be whispered about, and contributed, in no small degree, to the genera consternation. It had long been foreseen by politicians of average intellect and average means of information, that Russia would take the first opportunity to avenge herself for her disasters in 1854-'56. This conviction had grown in intensity since the utterances of Lord Stanley in 1867. Still, Lord Stanley had acquired a certain reputation for cautiousness, for prudence, for moderation, and a number of negative virtues, which, summed up together, amounted, in two words, to moral cowardice. The son of a self-willed, determined, and passionate man, the present Lord Derby seems to be the outcome of an exhausted nature, of a will exhausted by its own passion; a spent cannon-ball, whose only power lies in its inertness; a man who mumbles his words with the same indistinctness with which he conceives them, and eats them again in spite of their insipidity. To parody Schleiermacher's words, he is a "partial negation of the absolute," a rent, a shred, a tatter in the reputation of the old earl, whose shade is more material even now, for good or for evil, than his son's substance.

At last the blow fell on November 7th, 1870. Information was communicated to Sir Andrew Buchanan, the British ambassador at St. Petersburg, from a source on which he did not place much reliance at first, that despatches had either been forwarded, or would be immediately forwarded, to the great Courts of Europe, communicating to them that Russia would not acknowledge hereafter the obligations she had contracted under the treaty of 1856, and that a declaration to that effect would be published in St. Petersburg a day previously to the delivery of the despatches in question. Sir A. Buchanan immediately sent one of his secretaries to the person from whom he had received this communication. The result of the inquiries he made tended to increase his doubts of its truth, and he therefore decided that it would be inexpedient to report a sensational rumour, to which he would have been obliged to add an expression of his own belief that it was incorrect.

But the next day he went to Czarskoe-Seloe to see Prince Gortschakoff; and as he had deemed it expedient, for some time past, not to give him an opportunity to enter into any discussion respecting the

BLACK SEA.















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treaty of 1856, he did not mention the matter to him; but at the same time he acquainted several persons with the nature of the communication, and found them disposed to treat the subject as a stock-jobbing story, connected with the presence of General Ignatieff at St. Petersburg.

Sir Andrew Buchanan's informant, however, insisted on the accuracy of his information; and in consequence of this, and subsequent information, Sir Andrew addressed to Prince Gortschakoff a confidential letter, acquainting his excellency with the character of the information which he had received, and stating that he had not communicated it to the British government by telegraph, or spoken of it to his excellency, because he could not believe a report that measures were about to be taken which he considered so offensive to the Queen and the dignity of Great Britain, that if it were true, he should expect an order to ask for his passports, and to leave St. Petersburg immediately; but as he had unfortunately received confirmation of it, he felt it his duty to express to his excellency his belief that, if the course is followed with respect to the treaty of 1856, which had been reported to him, he had the most serious apprehensions as to the light in which it would be considered by the government of the Queen. To this letter Prince Gortschakoff informed the bearer there was no reply, whereupon Sir Andrew at once telegraphed his information to the British government. But in the morning of the same day on which this telegram reached its destination, Baron Brunnow, the Russian ambassador, had already communicated to Earl Granville the substance of Prince Gortschakoff's circular, and had handed him a copy of it. The following is the text of this remarkable historical document:—

"Tzarskoé Sélo, October $\frac{19}{31}$, 1871.

"The successive alterations which the transactions considered as the foundation of the European balance of power have undergone during late years, have rendered it necessary for the imperial cabinet to inquire how far their results affect the political position of Russia.

"Among these transactions, that which interests Russia most directly is the treaty of March $\frac{18}{30}$, 1856.

"The special convention between the two States bordering on the Black Sea, which forms an appendix to this treaty, contains an engagement on the part of Russia to limit her naval forces to a minimum.

"In return this treaty established the principle of the neutralisation of that sea.

"By laying down this principle, the signatory powers intended to remove any possibility of a conflict between the powers bordering on the Black Sea, or between them and the maritime powers. It was intended to increase the number of the territories which have been accorded the benefit of neutrality by the unanimous consent of Europe, and thus protect Russia herself from all danger of attack.

"A fifteen years' experience has proved that this principle, on which the safety of the whole extent of the Russian frontiers in this direction exclusively depends, is no more than a theory.

"In reality, while Russia was disarming in the Black Sea, and, by a declaration contained in the protocols of the conference, likewise loyally deprived herself of the possibility of taking measures for an effectual maritime defence in the adjoining seas and ports, Turkey preserved her privilege of maintaining unlimited naval forces in the Archipelago and the Straits; France and England preserved the power of concentrating their squadrons in the Mediterranean.

"Again, under the treaty in question, the entry of the Black Sea is formally, and in perpetuity, interdicted to the flag of war of either of the powers possessing its coasts or of any other power; but the so-called Straits treaty closes the Straits only in the time of peace to men-of-war. Owing to this contradiction, the shores of the Russian empire are exposed to attack even from less powerful States whenever they have naval forces at their disposal; while all that Russia could oppose to them would be some ships of small size.

"The treaty of March $\frac{18}{30}$, 1856, has, moreover, not escaped the modifications to which most European transactions have been exposed, and in the face of which it would be difficult to maintain that the written law, founded upon the respect for treaties as the basis of public right, and regulating the relations between States, retains the moral validity which it may have possessed at other times.

"We have witnessed the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, whose position

had, under the guarantee of the great powers, been defined in the treaty of peace and the subsequent protocols, accomplish a series of revolutions which are equally at variance with the letter and spirit of these transactions, and which first led to the union, and subsequently to the election of a foreign prince. These facts have obtained the sanction of the Porte, and the consent of the great powers—or, at any rate, the latter have not thought it necessary to enforce their decisions.

"*The representative of Russia was the only one who raised his voice to remind the cabinets that by this tolerance they would be departing from the distinct stipulations of the treaty.*

"No doubt, if these concessions to one of the Christian nationalities of the East had proceeded from a general agreement between the cabinets and the Porte, and if they had been based upon a principle alike applicable to all the Christian populations of Turkey, they would have been applauded by the imperial cabinet; but they were exclusive.

"The imperial cabinet, therefore, could not but be surprised at seeing the treaty of March $\frac{18}{30}$, 1856, violated with impunity in one of its most essential clauses but a few years after its conclusion, and this in face of the great powers assembled in conference at Paris, and representing together the high collective authority on which rested the peace of the East.

"But this infraction was not the only one. *Repeatedly, and under various pretexts, foreign men-of-war have been suffered to enter the Straits; and whole squadrons, whose presence was an infraction of the character of absolute neutrality attributed to those waters, admitted to the Black Sea.*

"While the pledges offered by the treaty, and more especially the guarantees for the effective neutralisation of the Black Sea, were thus being weakened, the introduction of iron-clad vessels, unknown and unforeseen at the conclusion of the treaty of 1856, increased the danger for Russia in the event of war, by adding considerably to the already patent inequality of the respective naval forces.

"Under these circumstances his majesty could not but ask himself, what are the rights and duties accruing to Russia from these modifications of the general situation, and the departures from the engagements, which, although conceived in a spirit of distrust towards herself, she has invariably and scrupulously observed.

"After maturely considering this question, his imperial majesty has arrived at the following conclusion, which you are instructed to bring to the knowledge of the government to which you are accredited:—

"Our illustrious master cannot admit, *de jure*, that treaties, violated in several of their essential and general clauses, should remain binding in other clauses directly affecting the interests of his empire.

"His imperial majesty cannot admit, *de facto*, that the security of Russia should depend on a fiction which has not stood the test of time, and should be imperilled by her respect for engagements which have not been observed in their integrity.

"Confiding in the feelings of justice of the powers who have signed the treaty of 1856, as well as in their consciousness of their own dignity, the emperor commands you to declare that his imperial majesty cannot any longer hold himself bound by the stipulations of the treaty of March $\frac{18}{30}$, 1856, as far as they restrict his sovereign rights in the Black Sea:

"That his imperial majesty deems himself both entitled and obliged to denounce to his majesty the Sultan the special and additional convention appended to the said treaty, which fixes the number and size of the vessels of war which the two powers bordering on the Black Sea shall keep in that sea:

"That his majesty loyally informs of this the powers who have signed and guaranteed the general treaty, of which the convention in question forms an integral part:

"That his majesty restores to the Sultan the full exercise of his rights in this respect, reserving the same for himself.

"In acquitting yourself of this duty, you will take care to point out that our illustrious master has only the safety and dignity of his empire in view. His imperial majesty has no wish to revive the Eastern Question. On this point, as on all others, he has no wish but the preservation and consolidation of peace. *He fully adheres to his consent to the general principles of the treaty of* 1856, *which have fixed the position of Turkey in the European system.* He is ready to enter into an understanding with the powers who have signed that transaction, for the purpose either of confirming its general stipulations, or of renewing them, or of replacing them by some other equitable arrangement, which may be considered as calculated to secure the tranquillity of the East, and the balance of power in Europe.

"His imperial majesty is convinced that that peace, and that balance of power, will receive a fresh guarantee, if they are based upon a more just and solid foundation than one resulting from a state of things which no great power can accept as a normal condition of its existence.

"You are requested to read this despatch to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and leave him a copy.

"I avail, &c.,

(Signed) "GORTSCHAKOFF."

Now if we analyse the objections taken by Prince Gortschakoff to the articles in the treaty of Paris, of which he complains, we find they are the old objections to a state of things, to establish which, the Crimean war was chiefly undertaken. The Dardanelles were closed only in time of peace just because it was requisite, in case of necessity, that Russia should be attacked in the Black Sea; otherwise she would be invulnerable to attack, except under very improbable circumstances. Secondly, Turkey was allowed to develop her fleet in the Mediterranean, because there was no fear of Turkey entering upon an aggressive war with Russia, or any other nation, and required that fleet, not to protect her Black Sea coasts, but to defend her Mediterranean coasts. The powers decided upon this stipulation, not from any distrust of Turkey, but from a distrust of Russia—a distrust so great that they went to war to secure the interests which this distrust taught them to defend. An abrogation of the article referred to would, therefore, only be justified on proof that no cause for this distrust any longer existed. That this proof was not forthcoming; that, on the contrary, there was every reason for increasing the distrust, ought to have been a sufficient answer.

As to Prince Gortschakoff's second objection, that the treaty of Paris had been infringed by the powers sanctioning certain measures for the amelioration of the Danubian provinces, with the consent of the Porte, be it remembered, such an objection sounds most strange in the mouth of a power which professes to be animated solely by the desire to ameliorate the condition of the Christian subjects of the Porte. That such measures had not been extended to the other provinces might have been a cause of complaint for Russia, and might have justified her in calling upon the powers to take into consideration the amelioration of the rest of the Christian provinces. But to base her claim to increased power in the Black Sea upon the fact that the treaty of Paris had been infringed by a concession which had formerly been refused to her, and to obtain which was one of the reasons why Russia declared war against Turkey in 1854, was a piece of hypocrisy as audacious as it was insulting, as illogical as it was despicable, and as impertinent as it was untrue. In good old Saxon language, it was a lie. For, in point of fact, as Count Visconti-Venosta pointed out, the following words are contained in the despatch of Prince Gortschakoff to General Ignatieff, dated November $\frac{8}{20}$, 1866, in which Prince Charles of Hohenzollern is recognised as Prince of the United Principalities:—

"The imperial cabinet can only applaud a result as fully in harmony with the traditional sympathy which binds Russia to these people—her co-religionists—as with her desire to see the Ottoman empire consolidated, by the satisfaction of the legitimate wishes, and the wants of the Christian races which inhabit it."

Still more ridiculous were Prince Gortschakoff's objections to the "infractions" of the treaty by the passage of vessels of war through the Straits during the fourteen years which had elapsed since the signature of the treaty of Paris.

Let us see in what these "infractions" consisted:—

In September, 1866, an American corvette, the *Ticonderoga*, eight guns, but capable of heavier armament, paid a complimentary visit to the Sultan: in February, 1868, the Austrian frigate, *Donau*, passed the Straits on a firman granted as an act of courtesy to Prince Adalbert, of Bavaria, but under British protest: in February, 1868, the Austrian corvette, *Archduke Frederick*, in company with the *Donau*, also passed the Straits, but under Russian protest—it was, however, explained that the permission had been granted under the impression that she was a sloop for the service of the Austrian mission: in April, 1868, the French ship of war, *Christophe Colombe*, passed the Dardanelles for the conveyance of the Persian ambassador back

to his country—this was thus only a diplomatic mission allowed by international courtesy: in August, 1868, the American flag-ship, *Franklin*, went to Constantinople on occasion of the complimentary visit of Admiral Farragut: in October, 1868, the American frigate, *Wabash*, also passed the Straits under the protests of the ambassadors: in October, 1868, the British ship of war, *Gannet*, 579 tons, was sent for the visit of Sir Henry Bulwer, British ambassador, to Kustendje—this act also evoked a Russian protest: in November, 1869, the Prussian ship of war, *Hertha*, passed in consequence of a misunderstanding arising from the supposition that she was the King of Prussia's yacht.

Thus, in fourteen years, the only "infractions" of the treaty were in the above eight cases, all of which consisted in simple acts of international courtesy. No doubt it would have been better, as things turned out, to have adhered strictly to the letter of the treaties, as, indeed, was done in the following cases:—

In January, 1862, three Turkish ships, to complete Black Sea fleet, passed the Bosphorus. The Russian complaint in consequence was, however, afterwards admitted to be unfounded: in July, 1865, the British ship, *Racoon*, was to have passed under a firman granted for Prince Alfred—the contemplated visit was, however, postponed: in August, 1867, the French ship, *Brandon*, remained a few days within the outer castles of the Dardanelles: in September, 1867, six Russian corvettes passed the Straits, which were said to be for the Black Sea fleet: in August, 1868, Lord Stratford was conveyed in the British steam-frigate, *Curaçoa*, to the Dardanelles; but was there transferred to the small despatch gun-boat, *Caradoc:* in January, 1869, the British steam-frigate, *Ariadne*, with the Prince and Princess of Wales on board, passed the Dardanelles, but not before the armament was removed so as to form a yacht: in November, 1869, the Italian iron-clad, *Roma*, had a firman for Prince Amadeus—at first refused, but ultimately granted. The prince, however, did not avail himself of the permission, but went up in his yacht.

As to the vessels which escorted the Emperor Francis Joseph in October, 1869, from Varna to Constantinople, none of them could be called armed vessels of war. The screw corvette, *Heligoland*, the *Ariadne*, which had left her guns at Malta when the Prince and Princess of Wales paid their visit to the Sultan, had been especially disarmed before entering the Dardanelles, in order that no question might be raised as to her not coming under the category of permitted vessels; and though when the *Heligoland* arrived at Constantinople, General Ignatieff remarked to Baron Prokesch as to her size, still on learning that she had but two guns, he made no further observation, and the question was completely dropped. The vessels in question were the corvette *Heligoland*, with two guns, and 240 crew; aviso *Elizabeth*, with two guns, and 164 crew; transport, *Gargnano*, seventy-two crew; and the paddle-wheel steamer *Fiume*, with two guns, and fifty-four crew, which was on station at the mouth of the Danube.

It was on such trivial incidents as these that Prince Gortschakoff based his assertion that the Black Sea treaties had been constantly infringed. Sir Henry Elliot, however, saw from the first what use the Russian ministers would make of these incidents, and always deprecated the exceptional permission which the Turkish government had, as an act of courtesy, occasionally given for the passage of the Straits by ships of war conveying royal or distinguished visitors; and when he was directed to apply for permission for the entrance of her majesty's ship, *Ariadne*, which was fitted as a yacht for the Prince and Princess of Wales, government scrupulously instructed him, at the same time, to inform the Porte that, in order to prevent there being any infraction of the rule, the whole of the ship's guns had been left at Malta. Still it is to be regretted that this example was not universally followed, and that other governments, by being less scrupulous, and causing armed ships of war to accompany their sovereigns and princes, should have afforded grounds for the pretensions of Russia. But, although an undesirable irregularity, such proceedings could not with any propriety be cited as a serious derogation of the principle upon which the rule for the closing of the Straits was based, especially as a heavy Russian frigate, the *Alexander Nevsky*, had, upon two different occasions, been permitted to enter the Black Sea, on the plea of the Grand Duke Alexis being desirous of embarking at Odessa. And as application for the permission was made by the Russian ambassador, it is clear that he

deliberately put the Porte in the dilemma of having either to appear discourteous by refusing, or of violating the treaty by acceding to his request.

Still, in spite of the shallowness of Prince Gortschakoff's arguments, he stated, in his letter to Baron Brunnow, accompanying his circular, "that, though the treaty of Paris had undergone serious modifications, still that which most impressed Russia in respect of these modifications, was not the appearance of factitious hostility towards her by which they are characterised, nor the consequences which might ensue to a great country from the creation upon its frontiers of a small *quasi* independent State—that is, Roumania; but," he continued, "it is chiefly the facility with which, scarcely ten years after its conclusion, a solemn arrangement, clothed with a European guarantee, has been infringed both in letter and in spirit, under the very eyes of the powers who should have been its guardians.

"With such a precedent before us," he added, "what value can Russia attach to the efficacy of that arrangement, and to the pledge of security which she believed she had obtained in the principle of the neutralisation of the Black Sea? The balance of power, established in the East by the treaty of 1856, has, therefore, been disturbed to the detriment of Russia. The resolution adopted by our august master has no other object than to restore it. The government of her Britannic Majesty would never consent to leave the security of their shores to the mercy of an arrangement which is no longer respected. They are too equitable not to allow to us the same duties and the same rights.

"But what we especially desire to establish is, *that this decision implies no change in the policy which his majesty the emperor has pursued in the East.*"

This was most true. The policy pursued by Russia in the East was always one of aggression. Finally, Prince Gortschakoff wrote to Baron Brunnow:—

"You have already had, on many occasions, opportunities of discussing with the cabinet of London the general views which the two governments hold upon this important question. You have been able to establish a conformity of principles and interests, which we have learnt with great satisfaction.

"We have drawn from it the conclusion that, at present, it is neither from England nor Russia that can arise the dangers which may menace the Ottoman empire; that the two cabinets have an equal desire to maintain its existence as long as possible, by allaying and by conciliating the differences between the Porte and the Christian subjects of the Sultan; and that, in the event of a decisive crisis presenting itself, despite these efforts, both are equally resolved to seek for its solution in a general agreement of the great European powers.

"We have not ceased to hold these views. We believe that their perfect analogy renders possible a thorough understanding between the government of her Britannic Majesty and ourselves; we attach the greatest value to it, as the best guarantee for the preservation of peace, and the balance of power in Europe from dangers which may result from complications in the East.

"By the order of his majesty the emperor, your excellency is authorised to repeat this assurance to Lord Granville. We shall sincerely congratulate ourselves if the frankness of these explanations may contribute to that end, by removing every possibility of misunderstanding between the government of her Britannic Majesty and ourselves.

"Receive, &c.,

(Signed) "GORTSCHAKOFF."

To this despatch of Prince Gortschakoff's, Lord Granville replied by saying, that the assumption of a right to repudiate certain clauses of a treaty, included the assumption of a right to repudiate the whole treaty. This statement of Lord Granville's was wholly independent of the reasonableness or unreasonableness, on its own merits, of the desire of Russia to be released from the observation of the stipulations of the treaty of 1856 respecting the Black Sea. For the question was, in whose hand lies the power of releasing one or more of the parties from all or any of these stipulations?—whilst it has always been held that that right belongs only to the governments who have been parties to the original instrument. He then went on to say, that the despatches of Prince Gortschakoff appeared to assume, that any one of the powers who signed the engagement might allege that occurrences had taken place which, in its opinion, were at variance with the provisions of the treaty; and although this view was not shared nor admitted by the co-signatory powers, might

found upon that allegation, not a request to those governments for the consideration of the case, but an announcement to them that it has emancipated itself, or holds itself emancipated, from any stipulations of the treaty which it thinks fit to disapprove. Yet it is quite evident that the effect of such doctrine, and of any proceeding which, with or without avowal, is founded upon it, would be to bring the entire authority and efficacy of treaties under the discretionary control of each one of the powers who might have signed them; the result of which would be the entire destruction of treaties in their essence. For whereas their whole object is to bind powers to one another, and for this purpose each one of the parties surrenders a portion of its free agency, yet, according to Prince Gortschakoff, one of the parties, in its separate and individual capacity, might bring back the entire subject into its own control, and remain bound only to itself. This is what Prince Gortschakoff did. He, it is true, announced in his despatches the intention of Russia to continue to observe certain of the provisions of the treaty; but, however satisfactory this might have been in itself, it was obviously an expression of the free will of that power, which it might at any time alter or withdraw; and was thus open to the same objections as the other portions of the communications, because it implied the right of Russia to annul the treaty on the ground of allegations of which she constituted herself the only judge.

The question therefore arose, Lord Granville contended, not whether any desire expressed by Russia ought to be carefully examined in a friendly spirit by the co-signatory powers, but whether they were to accept from her the announcement that, by her own act, without any consent from them, she had released herself from a solemn covenant. If, instead of such a declaration, the Russian government had addressed the powers who were parties to the treaty of 1856, and had proposed for consideration with them whether anything had occurred which could be held to amount to an infraction of the treaty, or whether there was anything in the terms which, from altered circumstances, pressed with undue severity upon Russia, or which, in the course of events, had become unnecessary for the due protection of Turkey, they would not have refused to examine the question in concert with the co-signatories to the treaty. Whatever might have been the result of such communications, a risk of future complications, and a very dangerous precedent as to the validity of international obligations, would have been avoided.

To this reply of Lord Granville's, Prince Gortschakoff answered by a deliberate falsehood, as will appear from the following despatch, sent by Lord Granville to Sir A. Buchanan:—

"Foreign Office, November 28, 1870.

"Sir,—Baron Brunnow read to me on the 25th instant, and gave me a copy of, the inclosed despatch from Prince Gortschakoff, in reply to my despatch to your excellency of the 10th instant, on the subject of the denunciation by Russia of the treaty arrangements of 1856 for the neutralisation of the Black Sea.

"On receiving it, I stated to his excellency that I could not make any observations on it without consulting my colleagues, but that I should be glad to ask his excellency a question as to a matter of fact.

"In the despatch it was stated that Russia would not have demanded anything better than to arrive at the result by an agreement with the powers who signed the treaty of 1856, but that all the attempts which had been made at different times to assemble the powers in common deliberations, in order to avert the causes of the complications which disturb the general peace, had constantly failed. I asked Baron Brunnow whether he could tell me when Russia had made any propositions to this country for the revision of the treaty of 1856. His excellency answered, that Russia had never done so; but that on certain occasions, when certain contingencies were discussed, he himself had stated, both to Lord Malmesbury and to Lord Clarendon, that if they were realised, Russia would reserve to herself the right of calling in question some of the provisions of the treaty of 1856.

"I asked whether any of the events to which he referred had come to pass. He replied in the negative. He referred also to proposals for congresses on European matters not connected with Turkey.

"I then observed that this reply was hardly an answer to my question; upon which his excellency said that he had no authority to discuss the despatch with me;

that if I wanted explanations I should address myself to your excellency.

"I observed, that surely when in a despatch an appeal was made to my knowledge of a fact, I did nothing unusual in asking the ambassador who brought me the despatch to tell me what were the facts alluded to. I added, 'Have you any objection to tell me whether, during the last twelve years which you have passed in this country, there has ever been any proposition from Russia to Great Britain for the revision of the treaty of 1856?' He answered, 'No.' I said, 'I may quote this as your answer?' To which he answered in the affirmative, and added, that if I wanted further explanations I must address myself to your excellency.

"GRANVILLE."

This was plain, unmistakeable language; and on this the British government ought to have taken their stand. If not prepared to force Russia to observe the treaty of Paris in its integrity, they ought to have refused to be any party to its destruction, and have allowed Russia to follow her own course, under strong protest, and the reserval of future action. Yet, on the very same day, he sent another despatch to Sir Andrew for communication to Prince Gortschakoff; in which he stated, that "her majesty's government had no objection to accept the invitation which had been made by Prussia to a conference, upon the understanding that it assembled without any foregone conclusion as to its results. In such case her majesty's government would be glad to consider with perfect fairness, and the respect due to a great and friendly power, any proposals which Russia might have to make."

With these words Lord Granville inscribed his name in the list of *autologophagi*—the people who devour their own words; so that Prince Gortschakoff naturally considered it unnecessary to reply to the first despatch, which Lord Granville swallowed when he wrote the second; but, having gained his point, set about preparing the proposals he intended to submit to the conference—one to set forth the articles contained in the treaty of Paris, which Russia had declared null and void.

These articles, as well as the stipulations annexed to them, and forming an integral part of them, run as follows:—

"ART. 11. The Black Sea is neutralised; its waters and its ports, thrown open to the mercantile marine of every nation, are formally and in perpetuity interdicted to the flag of war, either of the powers possessing its coasts, or of any other power, with the exceptions mentioned in articles 14 and 19 of the present treaty.

"ART. 13. The Black Sea being neutralised, according to the terms of Article 11, the maintenance or establishment, upon its coast, of military maritime arsenals becomes alike unnecessary and purposeless; in consequence, his majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, and his imperial majesty the Sultan, engage not to establish or to maintain upon that coast any military maritime arsenal.

"ART. 14. Their majesties the Emperor of all the Russias and the Sultan, having concluded a convention for the purpose of settling the force and the number of light vessels necessary for the service of their coasts, which they reserve to themselves to maintain in the Black Sea, that convention is annexed to the present treaty, and shall have the same force and validity as if it formed an integral part thereof. It cannot be either annulled or modified without the assent of the powers signing the present treaty."

These are the articles of the treaty. The stipulations as between the allies and the Emperor of Russia, are contained in the following two articles:—

"ART 1. The high contracting parties mutually engage not to have in the Black Sea any other vessels of war than those of which the number, the force, and the dimensions are hereinafter stipulated.

"ART 2. The high contracting parties reserve to themselves each to maintain in that sea six steam-vessels of fifty metres in length at the time of floatation, of a tonnage of 800 tons at the maximum, and four light steam or sailing-vessels, of a tonnage which shall not exceed 200 tons each."

Those between the Sultan and the Czar, limiting their naval force in the Black Sea, are also contained in two articles:—

"ART 2. The Sultan reserves to himself, as in past times, to deliver firmans of passage for light vessels under flag of war, which shall be employed, as is usual, in the service of the missions of foreign powers.

"ART 3. The same exception applies to the light vessels under flag of war, which each of the contracting powers is authorised

to station at the mouths of the Danube, in order to secure the execution of the regulations relative to the liberty of that river, and the number of which is not to exceed two for each power."

Now, it is highly characteristic of the government of that day—Mr. Gladstone's ministry—that instead of forming an independent judgment of their own on the merits of the case, and determining to take a decided line of their own, as became the greatest and wealthiest power in the world, they went pottering about Europe asking other governments what they thought about this terrible conduct of Russia. But what they said to the other powers, and what the other powers said to them, was very much like the conversation between Mary Ann and Betsy Jane, when they give vent to their surprise in the exclamations, "Did you ever? No, I never!" To no more than this did the communications from the Courts of Italy and Vienna amount to. They were very sorry, indeed; the conduct of Russia was quite inexcusable; but they contented themselves with pointing out how utterly unfounded were the complaints of Russia, and that was all. There remained Prince Bismarck, who was before Paris with the besieging army. To him Mr. Odo Russell, of the embassy at Berlin, was sent with the Russian circular and Lord Granville's reply. He was received by Prince Bismarck on November 21, 1870; and, during a three hours' conversation, he gathered from the prince, that the Russian circular of the 19th October had taken him by surprise; that while he had always held that the treaty of 1856 pressed with undue severity on Russia, he entirely disapproved of the manner adopted, and the time selected, by the Russian government to force on a revision of that treaty; and that, finally, he regretted that he could neither interfere, nor answer the Russian circular officially, in consequence of the war; but that, anxious as he was to prevent the outbreak of another war, he would strongly recommend conferences at Constantinople before hostilities.

Having telegraphed these first results to Lord Granville, Mr. Russell waited again upon Count Bismarck, at ten o'clock P.M.

This second conversation lasted till past midnight; and the chancellor, who had meanwhile communicated telegraphically with the Prussian minister at St. Petersburg, authorised Mr. Russell to telegraph to London, that, if Lord Granville consented, he would willingly take the initiative of proposing a conference for the purpose of endeavouring to find a pacific solution to a question which Mr. Russell frankly stated, was of a nature, in its present state, to compel England, with or without allies, to go to war with Russia.

At the same time, Count Bismarck, who had ascertained Prince Gortschakoff's readiness to receive the representatives of the co-signatory powers, was in favour of holding the conference at St. Petersburg, as the presence of the emperor to give immediate sanction to the decisions of his representatives, might be conducive to a more rapid and satisfactory settlement of the question than could be the case at Constantinople, from whence a reference to St. Petersburg would necessarily involve a loss of many days. In case of a conference being agreed on, he also desired Lord Granville to communicate with, and invite the co-operation of, the French government.

The arguments used by Mr. Odo Russell, in his interview with Count Bismarck, gave great umbrage to certain parties in England, and caused a demand for explanations in the Houses of Parliament, which led to Mr. Russell's giving a detailed account of his arguments, and his reasons for using them. His letter on this subject to Lord Granville is so manly, and presents so strong a contrast to the rest of the diplomatic utterances on the subject, that it will be read with pleasure, and a regret that the conduct of the Foreign Office was not entrusted to him rather than to his amiable, but timid chief. He wrote:—

"My Lord,—I see by the parliamentary reports in the *Times* of the 17th and 25th instant, that a question has arisen in regard to the argument used by me, and published in the correspondence respecting the treaty of 1856, p. 45, No. 76, of the 22nd November last, to the effect, that the 'question raised by Prince Gortschakoff was of a nature, in its present state, to compel us, with or without allies, to go to war with Russia.'

"As it may be convenient that I should place on record, for future reference, the reasons which induced me to use that argument, the responsibility of which must rest on me, and on me alone, I have the honour to state—

"1st. That we are bound, by the tri-

partite treaty of the 15th of April, 1856, to consider any infraction of the treaty of the 30th of March, 1856, as a *casus belli*.

"2nd. That Prince Gortschakoff's notes of October $\frac{18}{31}$ and of $\frac{\text{October}}{\text{November}}\ \frac{30}{11}$, assuming the right to renounce the stipulations of that treaty which directly touched her interests, appeared to me to involve the assumption of a right to renounce the whole of the treaty.

"3rd. That her majesty's government had declared, on the 10th of November last, that it was impossible, on their part, to give any sanction to the course announced by Prince Gortschakoff.

"4th. That this renunciation by Russia, which her majesty's government could not sanction, of a portion of the treaty of March 30th, 1856, opened a discussion which might unsettle the cordial understanding between the two governments, because it was of a nature in its present state, that is, in the state it was in on the 22nd of November last, to compel us to go to war in virtue of the tripartite treaty of the 15th of April, 1856, by which we had bound ourselves to consider any infraction of the treaty of the 30th of March Russia was then renouncing, as a *casus belli*.

"5th. That France being then otherwise engaged, and Austria unprepared, we might be compelled to go to war with Russia, even without our allies, having bound ourselves, on the 15th of April, 1856, to guarantee, jointly and severally, the stipulations recorded in the treaty of the 30th March, 1856, threatened by the assumed right of renunciation by Russia, which her majesty's government declined to sanction.

"6th. That not having been instructed to state that the question I had been sent to submit to the Prussian government was not, in the opinion of her majesty's government, of a nature to compel us ever to go to war, notwithstanding our treaty engagements, I used the arguments which I believed in my conscience to be true.—ODO RUSSELL."

Lord Granville, however, and the Gladstone ministry, thought differently. Not only did they refuse to support single-handed the treaty ignored by Russia, but they also refused to adopt even the dignified course of abstaining from being any parties to the abrogation of the treaty, and thus retaining their liberty of action at a future and more convenient date. On the contrary, they at once acceded to Count Bismarck's proposal for a conference, only stipulating that it should be held in London, and not in St. Petersburg. Lord Granville, therefore, wrote to Count Bismarck, thanking him for his offer to invite the powers to a conference, and begged him immediately to do so. This Count Bismarck did, with the exception of the French government, the invitation to which, on account of the war, he left to Lord Granville to make.

This point was reached by December 1, 1870. From that date to January 17, 1871, the time was filled up by a series of disputes, misunderstandings, and trivialities, which are without a parallel in history.

When Lord Lyons communicated the invitation to France to take part in the conference, to Count Chaudordy at Tours, M. Chaudordy said that he had received telegrams from various quarters, which left no doubt upon his mind that the proposal was essentially a Prussian proposal, and would be, nay, had been, so presented to Europe, and that he had already telegraphed to M. Tissot to ask Lord Granville for explanations. The information, he asserted, which he had received, however, was too distinct to leave any doubt upon his mind; and he must confess that his own view of the matter was entirely changed in consequence. At first he had thought that England had proposed the conference; and to a proposal emanating from Great Britain, or any other neutral power, France would have been disposed to give a ready assent: but it was a very different thing to acquiesce in a measure brought forward by an enemy, and by an enemy who was waging war in France itself with unprecedented rigour. He did not see how France could hold any proper position in a conference thus held under Prussian auspices. At any rate, he should have been unable to give Lord Lyons the answer of the government, as two members of it, M. Gambetta and M. Crémieux, had been absent with the army near Orleans, and had only just returned. He would, however, bring the matter before them in the afternoon.

To this Lord Lyons replied by beseeching M. de Chaudordy not to allow his own judgment, or that of the government, to be warped by the connection of Prussia with the proposal they had to consider; for it was clear that it would be for the advantage of France that the conference should meet, and that she should be represented

in it; and it would be greatly regretted if the government should be guided by an exaggerated sensitiveness on what was really little more than a matter of punctilio.

Hereupon, M. de Chaudordy said that, if the proposal had originated with England, or with any neutral, he should have felt sure that the government would have unhesitatingly accepted it. As it was, he could not undertake to give any opinion as to what the answer might be.

The next day, M. de Chaudordy informed Lord Lyons that the government delegation at Tours would have been glad to send a representative to the conference, had it not been so entirely a Prussian proposal; and that it could not be expected that France should agree to any proposal of such a nature from a power which was overwhelming her with war in its severest shape, and conducted with an unheard-of rigour. To this Lord Lyons replied by pointing out, that the part played by Prussia in bringing the conference about, might be held to be of importance enough to afford France a pretext for hesitating to join the conference, if she *desired to find a pretext* for hesitation; but that was a great exaggeration of the real facts of the case to call the proposal an entirely Prussian proposal. It was, he said, on the contrary, in fact, much more an English proposal; and it was from him, Lord Lyons, that he had received the first information of the Russian circular.

Still further, Lord Lyons also pointed out, that what Prussia had proposed was a conference to be held at St. Petersburg, without any special conditions. This proposal her majesty's government had rejected, and made a proposal of their own, in which it was expressly stated that the conference was not to be held at St. Petersburg, and in which certain preliminary conditions were laid down as indispensable. It was thus not to the Prussian proposal, but to the English proposal that the French government was asked to consent.

Count Chaudordy, however, refused to accept this view of the situation, and insisted, that, setting all other arguments aside, he would have to refer the question to the government at Paris. He engaged, however, to state the case calmly and fairly to Jules Favre, and to give the proposal his own personal support.

Count Chaudordy's object was, of course, to induce the Prussian authorities to agree to an armistice, pending the duration of the conference. This would naturally have entailed the permission for the authorities in Paris to obtain provisions—a circumstance which no military commander could allow as possible; and it might have been plainly foreseen that there was not the remotest chance of Count Moltke consenting to the proposal.

Still, in spite of this very self-evident proposition, Count Chaudordy informed Lord Lyons, on December 8th, that he had received a letter from M. Jules Favre, which did not convey the formal answer of the government at Paris to the proposal to France to join in a conference on the Russian question, but which expressed the feelings with which the proposal was regarded by that government.

It appeared, M. de Chaudordy said, to be considered sad and incongruous that a French plenipotentiary should be sent to London to talk about the Black Sea, while France itself was suffering the utmost rigour of war at the hands of the Prussians. As England had, at the request of Prussia, invited France to the conference, the government at Paris conceived that her majesty's government had undoubtedly the right to insist upon such concessions being made by Prussia as would render it possible for France to send a plenipotentiary to the conference, and to appear at it with dignity and decorum. For this purpose it would be necessary that the government of national defence should have the means of convoking a national assembly, and of deliberating with some calmness. They, accordingly, once more earnestly requested her majesty's government to use every effort to obtain for France an armistice on reasonable conditions, which must, of course, include the revictualling of Paris for the time the suspension of hostilities continued. These arguments were accompanied by the *naïve* observation, that it would surely be shocking to all Christian feeling, that the season of Christmas and the new year should be desecrated by the continuance of such hostilities as were then being carried on in France; that, in fact, the operations of the enemy's armies should be suspended, in order to let the French people in Paris enjoy their Christmas dinners in comfort and security, and undisturbed by inconsiderate shells and cannon-balls.

With these, and similar arguments, much time and money, in the shape of lengthy telegrams and wordy despatches, were consumed till the 14th December, when Lord Granville telegraphed to Lord Lyons, asking for a definite reply from the French government. Count Chaudordy, however, said, that, as matters stood, it was impossible for him to give any definitive answer on the part of the French government. He must, he said, wait for instructions from the government at Paris, to whom the invitation had been referred. He expected to receive those instructions by the first opportunity; he thought it, indeed, not improbable that they might be in a balloon which was reported to have come down at Honfleur; and promised to let Lord Lyons know the instant he received the orders of the Paris government. At the same time, however, he said that he was empowered to say that, under certain conditions, the delegation at Bordeaux would have no hesitation in accepting at once, on behalf of the whole government, the invitation to the conference, if her majesty's government would obtain for France an armistice, on the basis of a proportionate revictualling of Paris, and thus facilitate the convocation of a national assembly; or, if her majesty's government would give the French government an assurance that the questions between France and Prussia should be treated in the conference. On either of these conditions the delegation at Bordeaux would be warranted in declaring immediately the assent of France. In the meantime, however, the long-expected balloon came to earth, and brought with it a reply from the Paris government, signifying its readiness to send a representative to the approaching conference. This fact was at once communicated to Earl Granville, who thereupon communicated with Count Bernstorff, the Prussian ambassador, and begged him to apply to the German headquarters at Versailles for a safe-conduct for the French envoy to pass through the German lines. Three days later, on December 23rd, Earl Granville issued the invitations for the conference, fixing January 3rd, 1871, for the day of meeting at the Foreign Office. These invitations were accepted, on behalf of their various governments, by Baron Brunnow, Musurus Pasha, Count Bernstorff, Count Apponyi, and the Chevalier Cadorna. At the same time, the French representative in London, M. Tissot, was asked to inform his government that the day had been appointed for the meeting, and to ask them to name their deputy as speedily as possible. The reply of the French government was received on December 27th, to the effect that they accepted the invitation, and that M. Jules Favre would represent France at the conference. But, at the same time, Count Chaudordy added, that it would be desirable, in order to avoid delay, that notice should be given at Paris by the Prussian head-quarters, that the safe-conducts were granted, and a day specified on which they might be used.

Now, to ordinary minds, there would have appeared to be no difficulties in the way of M. Favre's journey to London. But the diplomatic and military mind differs very essentially from the ordinary mind. There was to be no difficulty about granting the safe-conduct; but the difficulty was as to how Jules Favre should be placed in possession of it; for Count Bernstorff informed Earl Granville, that though Count Bismarck was prepared to grant the safe-conduct, and that it was, in fact, already drawn up, and awaiting M. Jules Favre at the German head-quarters, yet M. Favre must send a flag of truce to the commander-in-chief of the besieging army, to apply for it, as the Prussians were determined to send no more flags of truce into Paris until they had received satisfaction for the firing on the one last sent.

This was a terrible *contretemps!* The Prussians would not send an officer into Paris, and Jules Favre would not send a flag of truce to Versailles. There was the safe-conduct all right, but nobody to take it or to fetch it. Two mighty nations, like Germany and France, were so intent upon squabbling as to remind one irresistibly of two school-boys, of whom one has knocked off the other's cap into the middle of the street, the owner refusing to pick it up, rather preferring to risk losing it; whilst the other, equally determined, preferred risking punishment for being the cause of the loss. The apple-woman at the corner, however—in this case Lord Granville—endeavoured to reconcile the squabblers. He wrote a despatch to M. Tissot, saying, with reference to the suggestion which M. Tissot had made him privately, to the effect that he should endeavour to obtain permission for the government of the dele-

gation to send a French officer through the German lines, to inform M. Favre that he would obtain a safe-conduct at the German head-quarters to come to London, that he had mentioned the suggestion to Count Bernstorff, but that his excellency thought it extremely unlikely that such a permission would be given, and alluded to the public announcement of a postal service to Paris. He then asked Count Bernstorff whether it would not be possible to send a French officer, a prisoner on parole, to give the information to M. Favre, and at the same time inquired of Count Bernstorff, in writing, whether he saw objection to his sending the information in Mr. Moran's bag to Mr. Washburne, the American ambassador at Paris.

To this Count Bernstorff made no objection, but informed Earl Granville that such had already been done in this way from Versailles. Consequently Earl Granville wrote to M. Favre, through Mr. Washburne, the following letter, which was so explicit as to leave no doubt upon any reasonable mind as to the state of affairs:—

"Foreign Office, December 29, 1870.

"M. le Ministre,—M. Chaudordy having informed Lord Lyons that your excellency proposed to represent France in the conference agreed to be held in London respecting the neutralisation of the Black Sea, and having asked me to obtain a safe-conduct for your excellency through the Prussian lines, I lost no time in requesting Count Bernstorff to apply for one, and send it to your excellency by a German officer with a flag of truce.

"M. de Bernstorff answered me the next day, saying that a safe-conduct would be at your excellency's disposal as soon as it was asked for by an officer sent from Paris to the German head-quarters, but that it could not be sent by a German officer until satisfaction was given for the officer bearing a flag of truce, who had been fired upon by the French.

"I have been informed by M. Tissot that great delay may occur before your excellency obtains the information from the delegation at Bordeaux; and although I have suggested to Count Bernstorff another means of conveying it, I think it well to avail myself of the opportunity which the American *chargé d'affaires* has been good enough to consent to, in order to tell you what has passed.

"It was intended to hold the conference this week; but, in order to give time to the French plenipotentiary to arrive, the day of meeting was settled for the 3rd of January. I hope your excellency will authorise M. Tissot to represent you at the first sitting, when I shall propose that nothing but the question of form be considered; and if, as I much desire, your excellency is able to announce your arrival, I will propose to adjourn the conference for a week in order to obtain the great advantage of your excellency's presence.

"I trust that your excellency will allow me to take this opportunity of expressing my satisfaction at entering into personal communication with you, and the pleasure I shall feel in seeing you in London.

"GRANVILLE."

This letter, as well as one written by Count Bismarck, saying that a safe-conduct from the commander-in-chief of the third army was awaiting him, was handed to Jules Favre by Mr. Washburne. But before M. Favre had received Lord Granville's communication, he said to Mr. Washburne, that he knew nothing at all about any conference, and did not intend to leave Paris at all; and certainly not in consequence of any communication from or through Count Bismarck, as he could not pretend to fathom Count Bismarck's motive. The consequence of this misunderstanding—if misunderstanding it was—and the delay in M. Favre's receipt of Earl Granville's letter, was, that Earl Granville postponed the meeting of the conference from January 3 to January 17, in order to afford the French government another opportunity of sending a representative.

Still, in spite of all this, matters did not progress. Despatch upon despatch was written, but with no further result than that on January 18. Jules Favre wrote to Count Bismarck for a safe-conduct for his family and relations; adding, that "he had not the right to ask for one for himself. Under these circumstances, and resolved that he would not be played with any longer, nor suffer the conference to be any longer delayed, Count Bismarck refused, on January 19, to grant M. Jules Favre the safe-conduct which had been waiting for him since December 28.

It was, therefore, useless to waste any more time, and on January 17, the conference held its first sitting, the plenipotentiaries being Lord Granville, Count Apponyi for Austria, Count Bernstoff for North Germany, Chevalier Cadorna for Italy, Baron Brunnow for Russia, and Musurus Pasha for Turkey.

The result of this first meeting was the establishment of the principle, that no treaty can be abrogated except with the consent of the contracting parties; and, on the proposal of Earl Granville, the following protocol was signed:—

"The plenipotentiaries of North Germany, of Austria-Hungary, of Great Britain, of Italy, of Russia, and of Turkey, assembled to-day in conference, recognise that it is an essential principle of the law of nations that no power can liberate itself from the engagements of a treaty, nor modify the stipulations thereof, unless with the consent of the contracting powers, by means of an amicable arrangement.

"In faith of which the said plenipotentiaries have signed the present protocol.

"Done at London, the 17th January, 1871." Here follow the signatures.

This principle having thus been subscribed to with much solemnity, and placed on record, as it were, as a silent protest against Lord Derby's principles of 1867, Baron Brunnow recapitulated the circumstances and facts which, since the signature of the treaty concluded at Paris on the $\frac{18}{30}$th March, 1856, had induced the powers who signed it to give their assent to different modifications which had contributed to alter in part the letter of the original stipulations. He instanced specially the precedent of the conferences held at different periods at Paris, and cited the decisions adopted by general agreement, with the view of modifying the government of the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia—an alteration which received the sanction of the Sublime Porte, as well as the assent of the other contracting powers, and affirmed that these deviations from the treaty had exercised no influence on the firm intention of the emperor to maintain intact the general principles of the treaty of 1856, which defined the position of Turkey in the system of Europe.

After having explained the views of the Czar on this subject, he pointed out how much the situation of Europe then differed from that which existed at the time of the congress of Paris; and taking into consideration the changes gradually produced by the course of time, expressed an opinion that it would be an act of prudent and wise policy to submit the stipulations of 1856, relative to the navigation of the Black Sea, to a complete revision; for these stipulations, suggested at another period under the influence of conjunctures entirely different from the situation under consideration, were no longer in harmony with the relations of good neighbourhood which still existed between the two riverain powers.

Hereupon Musurus Pasha made a few observations, accepting, in principle, the proposal to revise the stipulations, and proposed the adjournment of the conference, to enable him to have time to consider the proposal of the Russian Court. This was agreed to; and on January 24, the conference met again, with, however, no further result than that it was agreed that, at the next sitting, Baron Brunnow should submit to the conference a draft of the articles it was proposed should be substituted for those in the treaty of Paris on the same subject. This draft, read in the third sitting on February 3, was conceived as follows:—

"ART. 1. The principle of the closing of the Straits of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles in time of peace, invariably established as the ancient rule of the Ottoman empire, and confirmed by the treaty of Paris of March 30, 1856, remains in full force.

"ART. 2. His imperial majesty the Sultan, by virtue of the right of sovereignty which he exercises over the Straits of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, reserves to himself, in time of peace, the power of opening them by way of temporary exception, in case only that the interests of the security of his empire should cause him to recognise the necessity of the presence of the vessels of war of the non-riverain powers.

"ART. 3. It is agreed that the stipulation contained in the preceding article shall, for the future, replace those of Articles 11, 13, and 14, of the treaty of Paris of March 30, 1856, as well as the special convention concluded between the Sublime Porte and Russia, and annexed to the said Article 14.

"ART. 4. The high contracting parties renew and confirm all the stipulations of the treaty of March 30, 1856, as well as of its annexes which are not annulled or modified by the present treaty."

These articles Musurus Pasha declared himself ready to accept, on condition that the words, "friendly powers" should be substituted for "non-riverain powers" in Article 2. This amendment of Musurus Pasha's was generally objected to, his assertion, that it was a diminution of the Sultan's rights, and offensive to Russia, being disposed of by Earl Granville—that in the first instance the contrary was the case, and that in the second, the objection fell to the ground as soon as the Russian government approved of the wording. No agreement was, however, come to until the last sitting, when Chevalier Cadorna proposed that the article should be framed as follows:—

"The principle of the closing of the Straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, such as it has been established by the separate treaty of March 30, 1856, is maintained, with power to his imperial majesty the Sultan to open the said Straits in time of peace to the fleets of the friendly and allied powers, in the event that the execution of the stipulations of the treaty of Paris of March 30, 1856, should require it."

This amended form was generally agreed to, and on May 15, 1871, the treaty was duly ratified in the following form:—

"IN THE NAME OF ALMIGHTY GOD.

"Her majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, &c.; his majesty the Emperor of Germany, &c.; his majesty the Emperor of Austria, &c.; the chief of the executive of the French Republic, the Duc de Broglie, &c.;* his majesty the King of Italy, &c.; his majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, &c., and his majesty the Emperor of the Ottomans, &c., have agreed upon the following articles:—

"ART. 1. Articles 11, 13, and 14 of the treaty of Paris of March 30, 1856, as well as the special convention concluded between Russia and the Sublime Porte, and annexed to the said Article 14, are abrogated, and replaced by the following article.

"ART. 2. The principle of the closing of the Straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, such as it has been established by the separate convention of March 30, 1856, is maintained, with power to his imperial majesty the Sultan to open the said Straits, in time of peace, to the vessels of war of friendly and allied powers, in case the Sublime Porte should judge it necessary in order to secure the execution of the stipulations of the treaty of Paris of March 30, 1856.

"ART. 3. The Black Sea remains open, as heretofore, to the mercantile marine of all nations.

"ART. 4. The commission established by Article 16 of the treaty of Paris, in which the powers who joined in signing the treaty are each represented by a delegate, and which was charged with the designation and execution of the works necessary below Isaktcha, to clear the mouths of the Danube, as well as the neighbouring parts of the Black Sea, from the sands and other impediments which obstruct them, in order to put that part of the river and the said parts of the sea in the best state for navigation, is maintained in its present composition. The duration of that commission is fixed for a further period of twelve years, counting from April 24, 1871; that is to say, till April 24, 1883, being the term of the redemption of the loan contracted by that commission, under the guarantee of Great Britain, Germany, Austria-Hungary, France, Italy, and Turkey.

"ART. 5. The conditions of the re-assembling of the riverain commission, established by Articles 17 of the treaty of Paris of March 30th, 1856, shall be fixed by a previous understanding between the riverain powers, without prejudice to the clause relative to the three Danubian principalities; and in so far as any modification of Article 17 of the said treaty may be involved, this latter shall form the subject of a special convention between the co-signatory powers.

"ART. 6. As the powers which possess the shores of that part of the Danube where the cataracts and the iron gates offer impediments to navigation, reserve to themselves to come to an understanding with the view of removing those impediments, the high contracting parties recognise, from the present moment, their right to levy a provisional tax on vessels of commerce of every flag which may henceforth benefit thereby, until the extinction of the debt contracted for the execution of the works; and they declare Article 16 of the treaty of Paris of 1856, to be inapplicable to that part of the river for a space of time necessary for the repayment of the debt in question.

"ART. 7. All the works and establish-

* The Duke de Broglie attended the conference after the capitulation of Paris.

ments of every kind created by the European commission in execution of the treaty of Paris of 1856, or of the present treaty, shall continue to enjoy the same neutrality which has hitherto protected them, and which shall be equally respected for the future, under all circumstances, by the high contracting parties. The benefits of the immunities which result therefrom, shall extend to the whole administrative and engineering staff of the commission. It is, however, well understood, that the provisions of this article shall in no way affect the right of the Sublime Porte to send, as heretofore, its vessels of war into the Danube in its character of territorial power."

Such were the terms of the treaty of London, which was the first step towards the abandonment of all the results gained by the Crimean war. It was not what was actually ceded to Russia that was of such importance. It was the unworthy concession of principle involved that was of most importance. It was even worse than unworthy; it was a blunder. It acknowledged the right of one power to claim the privilege of refusing to be bound any longer by the terms of a treaty imposed upon it; it followed up the contemptible declaration of Lord Stanley in 1867, and confirmed the new theory, that treaties only confer privileges, but do not entail duties; and, finally, it was as senseless in its provisions as it was opposed to all international law. For the abrogation of the neutralisation of the Black Sea had no value at all for the Russians as long as the Dardanelles and Bosphorus were not under their control. True, they might build ship upon ship in the Euxine, build fortress upon fortress, and arsenal upon arsenal; but all that would be useless to them as long as the entrance and egress to and from the sea was barred to them. A desire, therefore, to abolish the neutralisation of the Euxine could only proceed from two motives—a wish to be free to attack Turkey on her sea-coast, and to secure an outlet for her vessels into the Mediterranean. There was no other motive. But both of these desires were in direct opposition, not only to the letter, but also to the spirit of the treaty of Paris; and had Earl Granville and the British cabinet been but actuated by the commonest sentiment of national honesty and patriotism, they would have taken their stand upon this view; and if they could not have obtained the adhesion of the rest of the powers, they would have summarily closed the conference, and have reserved their rights, if not prepared to act upon them. As it was, the conference of 1871 can only be compared to a penny-gaff meeting of stealers and concealers.

Under these circumstances it almost looks like triviality to direct attention to the terms of this London treaty of 1871. After the equivocations which had preceded it, what value can be attached to any treaty? It would be far better, far more practical, and far more honourable, to do away with treaties altogether, and, taking a page out of the history of the middle ages, only enter into truces of a certain duration, as Richard Lion-heart and Saladin were in the habit of doing.

Still, as a matter of abstract interest, it may be pointed out that, as the great argument for the revision of the treaty of Paris was based on the length of time which had elapsed; that, as the treaty of Paris had been re-affirmed in all its provisions, except in the articles modified by the conference; and that, as it was generally agreed that such modifications were all that was necessary to secure peace—having regard to all this, solemnly re-asserted, "in the name of Almighty God"—it was, at any rate, to be supposed that the question would not be re-opened for some time to come. And, be it noted, the stipulations touching the Danube were altered on this basis, so as to remove all cause of disagreement, and the neutrality of that river solemnly re-guaranteed by all the contracting powers. What the value of this guarantee was, events began rapidly to demonstrate during a course of agitation and intrigue, in Turkey in Europe and Asia, that is without a parallel in history, ancient or modern.

CHAPTER III.

UNDERMINING THE PORTE.

BEFORE entering into the relations between Russia and the Porte, it is necessary to state that the governmental and administrative abuses which have characterised the rule of the Turkish empire have been partly grossly exaggerated, partly grossly under-stated; and have been due, in ninety-seven cases out of a hundred, not to Moslem fanaticism, but to Christian intolerance; not to Turkish vice, but to Christian viciousness; not to Oriental luxury, but to Christian debauchery; and not to Asiatic extravagance, but to European usury. It is not the Moslem and the Turk who are the curse of one of the fairest countries in the world, but it is the gross Hebrew, the bastard Greek, the corrupt Armenian, and the brutish Circassian, who have been the cause of ninety-seven hundredths of the misery which has turned a garden into a desert.

This is universally acknowledged by every one at all conversant with the real state of affairs in the East; by everybody who has had personal experience of these countries, and by every student whose interests, incapacity, or partisanship have not led him into the opposite view.

In saying this, all is said that can be said against the Turkish government. It is a government of intolerance, viciousness, debauchery, and usury, administered by gross Hebrews, bastard Greeks, corrupt Armenians, and brutish Circassians—the sweepings of the modern world piled up on the garbage of the old.

This is classical language. It has been adopted in reference to the government of Turkey repeatedly and repeatedly at various periods, by such literary authorities as Mr. Gladstone, Thomas Carlyle, Mr. Freeman, and other *littérateurs;* and as such it is worthy of being focussed into a few lines —all the more so as it is perfectly well founded, and true in all particulars.

Yet these authorities proposed to remedy this state of affairs by abolishing the Turks; by taking away the dagger, but leaving the assassin scot-free to choose another weapon.

But as this retrograde section of the human species are convinced that all men are liars who presume to think the Turk better than Greek, Slav, and Armenian, and hold that the Moslem is more worthy than the Eastern Christian, it may as well be stated at the outset, that it has been endeavoured, in the following pages, to secure that maximum of accuracy which the amount of veracity still existing amongst the consuls and ambassadors of Great Britain has allowed of. Every fact, therefore, in this present chapter is substantiated on the best authority obtainable; and it will be most convenient to group these facts according to the districts they refer to. The commencement may be made with Asia Minor.

Thus, in December, 1870, whilst the negotiations for the conference on the revision of the treaty of Paris were approaching their conclusion, a force of between 30,000 and 40,000 Russians (and according to some accounts 60,000) were being massed at Akhaltzik and Erivan, two points at a short distance only from the Turkish frontier, near Ardahan and Bayazid in Turkey, the least defensible on that line since Kars had been in some degree fortified. At the same time the Russians had, by degrees, been drawing large supplies of grain from Shuragel and the rich country about Kars, in such quantities as to raise the price of cereals considerably in those quarters.

The object of this concentration can scarcely admit of a doubt. It was to be in readiness to commence hostilities in case the conference should result unfavourably to Russia. But all doubt disappears when it is known that the frontier Kurdish and other tribes, together with the Armenian population, were in a worse state, as regards Turkey, than they were even in 1869. Their relations towards Russia were more intimate, their discontent towards the local government more intense, from causes arising during the weak, inefficient administration of the then Vali, Mustafa Pasha, who, unfortunately, was powerfully supported by the Turkish minister of war; and fanatical, ignorant, and obstinate, united in his per-

TURKEY IN ASIA



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The Map Drawn & Engraved by J. Rapkin.

son the chief civil and military authority, without possessing the requisite energy or ability to carry either on properly.

The military which filled the town exercised unbounded license towards civilians: complaints made against them were disregarded, and consequently they were in a complete state of insubordination and demoralisation. They did not scruple to declare openly, want of confidence in their officers, and the certainty of defeat in the event of hostilities breaking out between Russia and Turkey. The unfortunate influence France was allowed to gain in these countries, had taught them to believe she alone could aid them in emergency, and thus her collapse induced the idea that there was no other nation capable of resisting Russian aggression. Even Turkish officers were heard repeating such remarks; while other Moslems said, "Now that France is lost we can do as we like with the Christians;" and such belief is manifest in the altered state—for the worse—of their demeanour towards them. All the *employés*, from the highest to the lowest, military and civil, except the Mektubtchi, a creature of the Vali's, were on bad terms with him; and each, of course, in his respective department, tried to do as little as possible, and to thwart him as far as he might be able.

This state of things was speedily taken advantage of by the Russians. It was stated in the St. Petersburg papers, that the Christians were leaving Trebizonde by thousands, and immigrating into Russia, in order to escape from the oppression and cruelty of the Turks.

Now, as a matter of fact, not one single native Christian had emigrated from Trebizonde for at least three years previously. But a number of Russian agents succeeded in persuading a number of Greek families to migrate into the Caucasus, where they would be placed in possession of the lands whence the tribes of the Adijeh and the Abchasians had been expelled in 1864 and 1867. One hundred and forty families of these people (about 1,000 souls in all) embarked at Samsun in November, and were landed at Anopa, Novo-Russiska, and Tuapsee, on the Circassian coast. Their reception, however, by the Russian authorities, and the subsequent treatment they were subjected to were such, that within two months 350 perished of sheer misery, and 400 petitioned the Turkish government to allow them to return. The permission was given.

Thus, whatever might be the character of the Turkish administration, that of the Russians was clearly worse, according to these 400 impartial witnesses.

At the same time Russian agents had been sent, as early as 1868, to agitate amongst the Nestorian Christians. They had considerable success, and the immediate result was a letter from the Patriarch Mar Shamun to the Grand Duke Michael, commander of the army of the Caucasus.

To the brother of the mighty Emperor of Russia, the King Michael, of high estate, salutations and peace from Mar Shamun, Patriarch of the East.

"For some time past you have known and heard of the state of the Nestorians, a nation of poor people, numbering more than 16,000 families, living in these mountains at Kurdistan. They have no place to sow a sufficiency of grain to provide themselves with bread. The Kurds have forcibly taken possession of several of our churches and convents; they constantly abduct our virgins, brides, and women, forcing them to turn Moslem. For twenty years and more the Turks have taken possession of the country; but they are worse than the Kurds, as they do not protect us from them, but demand from us military taxes, poll-tax, and other moneys. At the same time the Kurds demand and take from us, as was their custom of old, pretending the Nestorians are their 'zirr kurr' (serfs), that is, bought with money by them. The Turks neither protect our persons, property, nor honour from the Kurds, for which reasons it is difficult for us to give them money (namely, to pay the taxes).

"Now, such being our condition, we beseech your mightiness, for the sake of Jesus, His Baptism, and Cross, either free us from such a state, or procure us a remedy. If, at a subsequent period, you think it necessary, we will send you a special agent on our part, who will be able to inform you of all that is requisite in detail.

"May the Lord preserve you. Amen.

"Given in Kockhannes, from the patriarchal residence.

(Signed and sealed) "The Petitioner,
Patriarch of the East,
"MAR SHAMUN.
"His Father, BENJAMIN."

The complaints of the patriarch, it will be observed, were directed against the Kurds rather than the Turks; but as was also the case in the vilayet of Diarbekir, the chief instigator of all the mischief was a Christian. At Diarbekir, it was a Christian who, in partnership with Hamed Pasha, shared the plunder which his knowledge of the affairs of the Christians enabled him and his associates to make. Of this the patriarch made no mention in his complaints—complaints which the Russian authorities afterwards made use of in their sweeping denunciations of the "Turk." But it was to get a goodly array of such complaints that a young Russian was allowed to leave Tiflis, and marry amongst the Nestorians, the business of his life being the formulation of complaints, and narratives of the atrocities committed by the Kurds and refuse of the Caucasus, with which the Turkish government was so elated.

Now, regarding the Patriarch Mar Shamun, the Nestorian consul, Taylor, states, that "although there was much to be said on both sides, it seemed, without doubt, that the Nestorians, notwithstanding the complaints the Turks brought against them, were more sinned against than sinning, and, therefore, in some measure justified in the pleas they constantly put forward for not liquidating the arrears due from them. For, since 1843, they had been exposed to the daily and nightly attacks of robbers enjoying, owing to religious fellowship, the secret sympathy of government agents. Their churches were ruined or turned into mosques; their virgins and wives ruthlessly torn from their homes, and compelled to abjure their faith; their winter supplies and provisions violently carried off, without payment, by government troops purposely stationed there to protect them; and the original assessment of their taxes so grossly unjust as to be totally out of proportion to their means and numbers, they being assessed for 'Aaneh Askraieh' (military tax) three times the amount of their 'vergu' (ordinary tax), a thing unheard of elsewhere, the one tax being always equal with the other."

This passage shows that Consul Taylor was in nowise favourably disposed towards the Turkish government: no one who knows anything of it is. But the fact is simply this, that the patriarch, in his own small way, was a sort of infallible pope amongst the mountains in the Van district, and objected to the Turks collecting any revenue from his "subjects" as much as he objected to the Kurds, because he wanted to keep whatever income there was for himself. Instead, therefore, of organising a body of local *gendarmes* out of the 70,000 inhabitants who acknowledged his authority, to protect themselves against the Kurds, he wrote whining letters to Russia and to the British episcopacy, in the latter of which he was aided, we are sorry to say, by Vice-Consul Rassam, of Mosul, a native of the country, and originally an *employé* of Mr. Layard's during his explorations at Nineveh—one of that class of foreign individuals whose services are most valuable outside of the British government. Aware of all this, and aware of the machinations of foreign agents, Consul Taylor was anxious that a stop should be put to them by removing, if possible, the cause—by providing sufficient remedies for the wrongs complained of. Thus he had a long conversation with the Vali, Ahmed Pasha, upon all these matters, and as to the course he should pursue with respect to the patriarch and affairs generally in the mountains. The pasha complained, at the outset, that the insubordination existing there was kept up by Russian intrigue, emanating from Georgia and Erzeroum; adding that, in his opinion, nothing could be effected, either for government interests or the Nestorians, as long as the anomaly of an hereditary chief combining spiritual and temporal powers existed in those parts, as afforded in Mar Shamun's case over the Ashiret. Mr. Taylor told him, if that was the only obstacle to a proper redress of the Nestorian complaints, and if he felt his government was and always would be strong enough to protect the Nestorians, in the absence of their chief, from Kurdish and other depredations, and if he would guarantee the condonation by the Porte of all arrears to date, he thought Mar Shamun would readily abdicate his temporal power, which the Porte had allowed him and his predecessors to exercise; and would even remove the patriarchate to Van, were the government to accord him equal privileges and honours with the other patriarchs, place a suitable residence there at his disposal, and guarantee him a yearly pension in conformity with his rank and influence over the 28,000 families who obeyed his

orders in Turkey alone. The pasha said he could not answer for the arrears, but thought there would be no difficulty about the Kurds, or the question about the patriarch's privileges, and that he would support the proposition of a residence and pension if Mar Shamun agreed to the terms Mr. Taylor mentioned. He ended the conversation by asking the consul to put himself in communication, on his part, with Mar Shamun on the subject, and begged him, in reporting his (the pasha's) proposals, to ask for the British ambassador's support for them at head-quarters.

In compliance with the pasha's request, Mr. Taylor communicated with Sir Henry Elliot, advising the acceptance of the pasha's proposals; and also wrote to Mar Shamun, strongly counselling him to close with any offer in the above sense which the Porte might make to him.

All this occurred in 1868. For more than two years the matter remained in abeyance. Ahmed Pasha was succeeded by Ismail Pasha, and Ismail by Mustafa Pasha, both of whom agreed with their predecessor in his views. Still the negotiations did not advance, whether in consequence of Russian intrigue or not. It is, indeed, quite possible that the Russians had no hand in the matter directly. What is of interest and to the point, is the character of the patriarch and his Nestorians. Consul Taylor, indeed, formally acquits the Russians of having any hand in the patriarch's affairs, and gives a graphic account of the further progress of the dispute.

It seems that Mar Shamun, to whom the pasha's ideas were communicated, had no objection to the project proposed; for, personally, he would have been an honoured guest, with a handsome salary, free from the cares of his anomalous position as high priest and chief of a brigand horde; but his father and uncle, who advised him and regulated all his affairs, were totally opposed, as its adoption would have deprived them of the emoluments and consequence they derived from the position of their relative as a semi-independent chief, with absolute control over the lives and property of the mountain Nestorians. The correctness of this statement is substantiated by the fact that Mar Shamun quitted his hitherto absolute seclusion in the mountain, for the first time, in 1869, and visited Van, to confer with the Mutessarif, Ali Kemali Pasha, on the plan proposed. He remained some time there; was treated, seemingly, with all outward respect, and had a pension of 5,000 piastres a month allowed to him and the Tujari chiefs, his pension formerly having only been 500 piastres per month. Mar Shamun, on his part, signed an agreement relative to the future payment of the taxes and arrears; he also engaged, for himself and people, to observe all the rules and regulations prescribed by the vilayet system, which had not yet been introduced into the country under his jurisdiction; and matters having thus been apparently satisfactorily settled, he left for his abode, accompanied by Khoja Yeremieh Shenier, a native of Mossul, and formerly Mr. Taylor's consular dragoman at Diarbekir, and a perfect Chaldean and Syriac scholar, as government agent, to see that the new rules and regulations were properly circulated among, and observed by, the Nestorians, according to the agreement signed by Mar Shamun at Van. It is needless to report what occurred during Khoja Yeremieh's detention on this mission with the patriarch; but the result is that, once again surrounded by his self-interested advisers, Mar Shamun, for himself and the Tujari chiefs, in the presence of the Kaïmakam and Medjliss of Julamerk (the district in which the patriarch's residence is situated), deliberately repudiated all he had before agreed to, his uncle finishing the discussion by saying, "Our nation is like a young bride, whom we will never give up to any one." The written report, embodying this statement in detail, was received at Erzeroum shortly before Mr. Taylor returned from leave in England. Some days after his arrival, the Vali requesting that he would call upon him, Mr. Taylor waited upon him at his residence, when he informed him of Mar Shamun's conduct, and furnished him, at the same time, with Khoja Yeremieh's report.

Still, in spite of this breach of his agreement by Mar Shamun, the governor of Erzeroum still signified his willingness to forgive the Nestorians all their arrears of taxes since 1853 as soon as the patriarch complied with the terms of his engagement. But this was just what the patriarch and his worthy family had no idea of doing; so that, in the autumn of 1871, they still continued to pay what taxes they chose irregularly, and remained as deeply as ever indebted to government for accumulated arrears of taxes. There were also heavy

complaints against them for frequent robberies and cattle-lifting, committed on their neighbours, chance-travellers, and sheep-dealers who frequented their country in the pursuit of trade. The continued leniency of government towards them induced the belief among the chiefs that its conduct was controlled by weakness or deference to the wishes of foreign powers, who would view any coercive measures adopted towards Christians with disapprobation. The ignorant Nestorians were, in some measure, confirmed in these ideas by the misdirected zeal of foreign church propagandists, lay and clerical, whom they regarded as government agents, each to them seeming to set a high value on their friendship, and to look upon its acquisition in the light of an important political gain. Without the slightest intention of entering into communion with any other creed, from the patriarch downwards they trifled with all such agents, encouraged the advances made them, and feigned conviction, backing their hypocrisy with a request for spiritual instructors, with a view simply of securing the sympathy of each sect, which they believed would assure them active intervention in their affairs in case of need. They looked upon all consuls, therefore, as their natural advocates and protectors, and never hesitated to appeal to them on the slightest occasion of real or frivolous complaint.

Such were the Nestorians, the vaunted Christians, high-church dignitaries in England invested with a glory of martyrdom, and whose grievances, woes, and anguishes formed part of the Russian stock-in-trade denunciation of Turkish misrule. What the fate of those precious individuals would be under Russian rule it is not difficult to say. Mar Shamun and the whole of his confraternity would be bundled out of the country, part of his subjects driven at the point of the bayonet into the Holy Russian Church, and the rest hunted across the frontier, where the boundless good-nature of the Turk would allow them to settle down, and his indolence permit them to continue their brigand existence as hitherto.

This was the case with the Tchetchen colony at Ras-el-Ain, in the Diarbekir vilayet, which was called into existence in 1865-'66, in consequence of the immigration of several hundred families of those unruly subjects of Russia in the Caucasus, and ever since its commencement was unadvisedly neglected. Original bad management rendered the colonists from the first careless as to their self-support, for they were maintained entirely, directly they stepped over the border, by rations 20,000 daily, supplied by the authorities through contractors, who, by corrupt connivance with the officers charged with the victualling, occasioned annually an enormous extra outlay to the local treasury, over and beyond the fair market price of the provisions supplied. The indolence induced by gratuitous living and the lax control they were subject to, made the immigrants, never at any time favourable to agricultural industry, yearly more averse to field labour for employment; the majority of the males, therefore, resuming their old Caucasian habits, took either to plundering on the neighbouring caravan routes, or to wholesale razzias on the friendly pastoral tribes in their vicinity. Latterly, the Porte, having become more alive to the losses and damage occasioned by these so-called colonists, and to the value of the country they were located on, took the matter more vigorously in hand, by gradually forcing upon the Tchetchens the obligation of personal labour for subsistence. With this view, Ras-el-Ain was created, as it ought to have been at first, into a separate muttasurruflik, or vice-government, under the Diarbekir Vali, and extensive exceptional powers granted to the governor, Arslan Pasha.

These interesting people, who have never, within the memory of man, gained a living independent of plunder and pillage, consist of the tribes thus classified by Consul Taylor:—

	Families.
The Kara Boolak—	
Notorious vagabonds and thieves, well armed and mounted	3,500
Tchetchens—	
A lazy, worthless set, dissolute and idle, selling their children as slaves. They engage a little in agriculture.	4,100
Nusran—	
An orderly, industrious, agricultural tribe	400
Total	8,000

Or, taking four to a house, 32,000 souls.

Thus, to 30,400 thieves and vagabonds there were only 1,600 decent people, hunted across the frontier by the Russians, who would have massacred every man of them through sheer inability to civilise them. What right, therefore, had the Russian government to complain of the Porte's inability to do what she herself had been

unable to accomplish? But not content even with having inflicted the curse of these people on the inhabitants of Turkey, the Russians, through their agents, incessantly stirred them up against the Porte, and, emboldened by the impunity with which they carried out their policy, at last adopted the same plan quite openly in regard to the Nestorians. A Russian agent established himself in their mountains, and induced many of the people to emigrate to Russia. These emigrants proved the value of their religious convictions by describing themselves, when they applied for their passports at Van, as of the Greek Orthodox persuasion. They knew but too well that this was the only faith in virtue of which the holders would be entitled to consideration within the limits of the "Holy Empire."

The true character of the Nestorian chiefs was, however, too well known for even the Russians to formulate any distinct and detailed demands on their account; but in the autumn of 1872 an event occurred which they turned to good advantage.

Towards the end of September a cold-blooded murder was perpetrated on the person of a certain Khachatur Effendi, Basturmaji, of Erzeroum. The unfortunate man was sitting between his brother and the director of the telegraph, at the corner of the street forming a portion of his property, and quietly smoking, when a horseman rode up and shot him with a pistol through the head. He then turned his horse round and retired as deliberately as he had arrived. The affair occurred in open day (at 4 P.M.), in one of the most frequented parts of the town, at the corner of a large open square (Meidan), surrounded by shops, and hardly a hundred paces from a police-guard of fifty men, who occupied a building in the Meidan. A futile attempt was made by the murdered man's brother to seize the assassin; but, on his threatening him with a carbine, and finding himself totally unsupported, he desisted. The murderer had, to escape detection, enveloped his head in a turban and wrapper, but not so carefully as to prevent the telegraph director, according to his statement, recognising him should he see him again. But notwithstanding the open circumstances of the murder, although some thirty people were thrown into prison on suspicion, the culprit remained at large.

The victim, Khachatur Effendi, commenced life as a retail butcher and sausage-maker. By these trades he obtained a considerable competence, and such influence, owing to the latter, with government, that, though an illiterate, coarse man, unable to read or write, he received, most unworthily it must be confessed, the high grade of "Sanieh." With the active countenance of the Minister of War, Mustafa Pasha, he entered largely into government building and victualling contracts, and was fortunate enough to amass thereby a vast capital. The greater part, with a laudable desire of improving his native town, he invested in city property of a mean description, wherever it was offered for sale, and, amongst other lots, some disgraceful hovels and ruins lying on one side of the Meidan, where he was killed, and in its immediate neighbourhood. These he pulled down, and constructed on their site two really magnificent spacious khans, rows of elegant shops, and a sumptuous bath. A ruined mosque, that stood in the way of his improvements, was also, to the horror of both Moslems and Christians—so difficult is it to please rival parties—entirely repaired and restored at his sole cost. Properly to utilise the new bath, he further purchased the right to a body of water issuing from a source in the "Sheikler Sugag," a street close by, inhabited by the Mufti and majority of the so-called "holy" Moslem fanatics of Erzeroum, who tried their utmost to prevent the sale, alleging for it a previous Wugguf character. This plea, however, on argument, was *not allowed by the tribunal before which such cases are tried, and the property, by its decision, passed legally into the hands of the Christian.* But the Moslems soon had their desired revenge; for, on the first night of the day on which the contested water circulated in the bath, all Khachatur Effendi's new and costly buildings, valued, it is said, at £20,000, were discovered to be on fire, and in a few hours nothing but a heap of crumbling ruins remained. The Moslems, during the disaster, either looked carelessly on or engaged in plunder, no one making a single effort to stay the progress of the flames, although the Vali, Samih Pasha, in person, and his immediate staff, made heroic, long-continued efforts, at the repeated risk of their lives, to stay the conflagration that demolished the handsomest quarter of the town. But, in spite of this misfortune,

Khachatur Effendi, urged by the energy he was remarkable for, and encouraged by the material and moral support of the Vali, and deserved sympathy of all lovers of progress and improvement, at once set about rebuilding his valuable premises. But "Moslem" jealousy and hatred could not brook the spectacle of such energy, after such a disaster, on the part of a Giaour, and he was most foully murdered in open day, scarcely a month after the fire, on the scene of his severe losses.

Touching this affair, Consul Taylor wrote:—"It is needless to say that public opinion fixed the real guilt of both crimes on the Sheikhs inhabiting the street alluded to before, who, secretly combining for the purpose, bribed some wretched, ignorant, fanatical tools to carry out their cowardly, murderous designs. Their object was, of course, to stifle all improvement, all Christian enterprise, with a view of deterring any but their co-religionists—who are incapable—from developing a laudable ambition in progressively improving as they accumulate means and resources due to superior intelligence and activity."

A week or two later, Mr. Taylor, who, as the above passage amply shows, entertained the most adverse opinion of the Turkish officials, wrote to say that the murderer had not been, and was not likely to be, discovered. At the same time he said that the case had been made use of by the Russian consul to aggravate facts, and represent them in his conversations with the natives, as likely, according to him, to occasion a European intervention.

"He finds many listeners," wrote Mr. Taylor; "and, I am afraid, a great many among them who wish to see his words realised. Nor can this feeling be much wondered at; for, throughout this province, the Christians as a body have serious cause of complaint for unredressed and frequently recurring injuries, the perpetrators—Moslems—being always screened by the chief judge, the Muffetish ul Ihkam, who had the courts of justice completely in his power."

The Russian consul naturally made a great stir about the matter; but when it came to be inquired into, it was found that the chief promoter of the gang of Sheikhs above mentioned (without whom, indeed, the murderers would soon have been exposed to the punishment they merited), was, unfortunately for the administration of impartial justice, the chief justice, or Muffetish ul Ihkam, originally a miserable *Greek Christian* from the islands. This rascally renegade openly declared the assassin to have been a Moslem phantom saint in disguise, Khizr Elias, who killed the victim in revenge for the sacrilege done to a mosque by a Christian repairing it; and in like manner, to please the ready dupes around him, he used to affect incredulity of a witness unless he had certain marks on the palms of his hands, which he always examined for that purpose before taking their evidence. His influence on the bench, or in council, was *always directed to destroy a Christian's case, however just, if against a Moslem;* and in criminal cases affecting the latter, the guilty were, in most cases, suffered to escape. His corrupt avarice exceeded even his fanatical partiality: both exercised together defeated, of course, all the ends for which justice was supposed to provide.

And, as in this case, so in almost all others—as has already been said, in ninety-seven cases out of a hundred, there is a Christian, renegade or not, at the bottom of all the mischief. And if such were the elements of which the courts were composed, it may be imagined what was the composition and character of the tithe commissions. On each there were always one or more Christians, who, to curry favour and fill their pockets at the same time, insisted that their co-religionists were deceiving the government, and could pay three times as much as they professed to be unable to pay. The writer has accompanied such tithe commissions on several occasions, and can thoroughly confirm what has been written on the subject in various consular reports; but he will abstain from recounting any of his own experiences from fear of being torn to pieces by infuriated persons and canons for the greater glorification of the "Divine Figure of the North."

Thus it appears, from the consular reports for 1869, that the district of Sileyvan, one of the richest grain-producing districts in the Diarbekir vilayet, or even in Turkey, was suffering, in spite of two abundant harvests, from the intolerable measures pursued by the government to collect the tithes. Each village was compelled to accept the tithes on grains, fruits, and cotton, at a money value based upon *winter and spring prices*, although the former amounted to £1 7*s.* 3*d.* a quarter, while the

season's wheat barely realised 90 piastres, or 16*s.*, for the same measure. Thus the villagers of Aslo, near Farkeyn, had to borrow 30,000 piastres, at 2½ per cent. per month, to make up the deficiency the government agents forced upon them; the whole of their produce, meanwhile, realising only 22,000 piastres; and Farkeyn, the capital of the district, had to pay 24,000 piastres, while they had only 11,000 piastres-worth of produce to discharge the government claim for tithes of 20,000 piastres. In 1865, with wheat at 250 piastres (£2 5*s.* 5*d.*) per quarter, the whole amount of tithe realised from this district was four lacs (£4,000 Turkish). In 1869, with wheat at 90 piastres (16*s.*), it amounted, under the extortionate system of collection practised, to seven lacs (£7,000 Turkish); during the same period, however, of the 106 villages then existing, 76 only remained; and in each one of the latter, five or six *chifliks*, or small farms, were entirely deserted.

The same conditions obtained in the country round Bitlis, with its rich undulating plains, which, however, had become of little value, as they were infested with the common curse of the country, the Kurds.

These vagabonds preyed upon the unfortunate agricultural sedentary classes to an extent that greatly facilitated the attempts of Russian agents to induce the sufferers to emigrate to Russian territory. There was not one of their numerous chiefs who had not been several times in prison for well-authenticated atrocities; yet each time they had been in the most unaccountable manner released, to resume the same practices that first occasioned their imprisonment.

Mush itself, the capital of the district, is a mean town, with scarcely 2,000 families there and in its vicinity, none of whom were at all on a par with those of Bitlis, who justly had reason to complain that their more important site had not been made the capital of the district.

Six years before Consul Taylor visited the Mush district, the fine plain, on one side of which the town is situated, had a thriving aspect. The villages seemed well peopled, and the crops, though damaged by locusts, in far greater variety and profusion than latterly. Several visits he made to different parts of the plain, and a stay of some days in the town, where he had repeated conversations with Moslems and Christians on the subject, partly explained the cause. The Armenians formed the principal portion of the industrious inhabitants in the plain and near the city, supplying all agricultural labour and trade; while the Moslems, mostly pastoral, living on the slopes of the hills bordering the plain, occupied themselves simply with their flocks. The two races lived, on the whole, at peace; but Reshkotan and Bekran Kurds—intolerable thieves—roamed with their flocks over the mountain pastures to the south; Jibrauli and Modikan Kurds inhabited the high hills to the north-west and south-east; the Hassnanli and Millanli, the northern portions about Bulanik and Malazgerd;—and all of them lived on the sedentary population; for being under very imperfect subjection, it was only by satisfying all demands, however outrageous, that the Christian agriculturists and the Moslem cattle-breeders could maintain their position. One unbearable custom, *Kishlak*, had done more than anything else to contribute to their poverty and decay. That custom, originating in the weakness of the government and growing power of the Kurds, enabled the latter to exercise the extraordinary right of quartering themselves upon the inhabitants, entailing large expenses, not only for fodder for their animals, but also food and fuel for themselves, during at least four months.

Repeated complaints to government did little to remedy this evil; and, consequently, to escape this intolerable burden, 750 families, within the six years ending February, 1869, emigrated to Russia; while 500 more, in the same year, sent representatives to Erivan to negotiate a similar step. The few peasants still unwilling, from old associations and attachment to the soil, to remove, in order to get rid at least of part of the great expense the *Kishlak* entailed upon them, had entirely abandoned the culture of any other grain than wheat, as all others being, in some form or other, useful as food for cattle, their stocks would certainly have been laid under heavy contributions by the Kurds for that purpose. But the Kurds did not confine themselves simply to plunder. The slightest complaint to government on the part of the Christians against them was followed by night attacks, or open assaults in the day, upon them. In this manner, during the year 1869, no less than ten had been killed and forty wounded, because they—the

Christians—had had the temerity to complain to the authorities of the oppression they suffered at the hands of the Kurds. Most of these savages, who affected Turkish allegiance, resided close to the border, between Ani and Bayazid, none of them being farther than twenty to thirty miles from it. All through this district and Shuragel—the ancient Shiraj, formerly the richest and most populous district in Armenia—it was sad to pass so many spots marking the sites of towns and villages, some of them only recently deserted, and encumbered with their ruins, or the mean huts of the indigent population that remained. On many of these deserted sites the massive fabrics of early Armenian churches had successfully resisted the ravages of time, and the efforts of man, urged by an implacable hostility to everything Christian, to destroy them. Round several, in spite of decreasing numbers, poverty, and oppression, the Armenian peasantry still clung with affectionate pertinacity, dragging on an existence, as well as they were able, under the tolerance of the Turkish Aghas, or Beys, who, either as the descendants of the Timariots, or in consequence of the poverty of former owners, had, in the course of time, dispossessed the Christians of the lands and villages about. But the Aghas, though deriving their income from the industry of the Christian fellahs, not unwilling to defend them, were unable to protect them or their crops from the rapacity of the Kurds, the cause of most of the distress the Armenians laboured under. It is hardly possible to enumerate the different methods they pursued to satisfy their wants at the expense of the peaceable, sedentary agricultural classes. They were, however, without reckoning forced contributions and "corvée," so various and onerous as to curtail agriculture and stifle industry, reducing both to the smallest minimum compatible with existence. Thus they had been driven from most of their ancestral lands by the increasing numbers and unpunished license of the Kurds; the crops on lands still in their hands were, when yet green, partially grazed by the flocks of the intruders, who, after what remained was ripened and cut, would not allow the owners to re-sow for autumn crops, as at that time, on their return from the hills, they turned their flocks into the after-grass that then sprang up.

An original course a Kurd would adopt to extort money, was to extract one of their teeth, and then purposely engage in a quarrel with a Christian, during which blows were, of course, exchanged. The Kurd then made a complaint to his chief, producing the extracted tooth in evidence, which he swore was knocked out by the Christian during the quarrel. The chief inflicted in every case, unless he was bribed by the Christian, a fine in money, varying with the reputed wealth of the falsely-accused aggressor, who had no remedy whatever against his accuser. The *pièce de conviction*, that is, the old tooth, never in any case being impounded, served for many similar charges, and was sometimes lent to a friend for the like purpose. This custom was so common, that a provincial proverb said, "A Kurd carries his teeth in his pocket."

From the depredations of the Kurds, comparatively little grain was raised in the district of Kaghizman, supplies being brought from Shuragel. The same causes operated against the culture of cotton and tobacco; while the system prevalent in the Muttasurrflik, of compelling the delivery of tithe-hay in Kars itself, instead of taking it on the spot, pressed particularly heavy upon the fellah. The fruit-gardens in the immediate vicinity of Kaghizman were extensive, yielding £800 annually in tithe, an earnest of what might be expected had labour been free from the trammels already noticed. The town contained 700 Moslem, and 150 Christian houses, who originally, owing to their vicinity to the Russian frontier, and consequent exposure to the attack and requisitions of the enemy in time of war, were exempt from conscription and poll-tax. They were now, however, in common with all borderers, subject to these impositions, which had created considerable ill-feeling amongst them against the government.

That these barbarians, the Kurds, are responsible for most of the violence, is proved by the welfare of districts where they are kept in order, as at Van, where, although the country immediately about is not, from the poorness of its soil and want of water, favourable to cereals, most of the neighbouring districts are highly productive in all sorts of grain and cattle, which, combined with the important manufacturing industry of the town, form lucrative sources of trade. These, and other varied produc-

tions and trades of the whole Muttasurrflik, found a ready market at Van, and rendered the city, containing 18,000 souls, of which 10,000 are Armenian, a highly important commercial site. Its merchants, nearly all Christians, were numerous and wealthy, resorting annually to Constantinople for the furtherance of their operations. Poverty, at the same time, was reduced to a minimum, as the surplus population emigrated yearly to the capital, where they were universally employed as porters.

The inhabitants of the surrounding country, from the richness of the soil, would undoubtedly have made equal strides to prosperity and wealth, had they not been so completely under the absolute power of the Kurds, who here, as elsewhere, either rendered every place in their vicinity a desert, or, by their rapacity and requisitions, effectually checked all industry. The mischievous plan of employing local Turks, or Kurds, in sub-governments or other district employments, the temporising measures the government had, for the last thirty years, unfortunately pursued with respect to them, had inclined them to believe that no power could reach them, and tended to increase their license, and rendered practices permanent that formerly were exercised at rare intervals only. Hence it arose that not only the Haiderauli and Zelali, inhabiting the country about and to the north and north-west of Van, were in a chronic state of turbulence, but the Hakkari also, a mountainous district south of Van, was in absolute insubordination. Government orders remained dead letters there; it was the Alsatia for all the brigands and miscreants in the land. Murder, robbery, and brigandage were every-day crimes, and, when practised against the Christians, received the sanction and support of the so-called holy men, styled Sheikhs, who infested that country, and who, in fact, were as forward as the Kurds in every act that fanaticism or avarice could dictate. The principal sufferers, although sedentary agricultural Turks must be included in the category, were the Nestorians, Armenians, and Jews.

Within the two years ending February, 1869, several were murdered, others plundered of their property, forced to become Moslems, or emigrate for safety to Persia; while, during the same period, seven Christian churches were destroyed, more than thirty human beings killed, virgins and married women abducted, whole villages devastated and plundered, without (in spite of repeated orders from Constantinople) the slightest notice on the part of the Van and subordinate authorities, or an attempt being made by them to check proceedings that promised ultimately to drive all peaceable people over the borders into Persia and Russia. The chief instigators, Sheikh Obeyd Ullah, of Katuna, and his mureeds (disciples), in the meantime enjoyed the favour of the Kaimakams and Mudirs, and the former the adoration of ignorant Kurds (blind instruments of his will), as they regarded him as little short of the Deity.

Such is a faithful picture of the state of affairs in this part of Asia Minor. It could not be worse. But when we come to analyse it, we find that all the mischief and trouble is due to corrupt Christianity and savage Kurds. These are the active principals of the evil and universal devilry. The Turks, on the other hand—the true Moslem, for the Kurd is nothing at all—are guilty of powerlessness.

Now, why are the Turks powerless? The answer is supplied by Consul Gifford Palgrave, a man who knows Turkey and the Turks as intimately as Lane knows the Egyptians. He says, in a despatch of January 30th, 1868—"As regards judicial injustice, I found that category sub-divided as follows:—

"1. Cases in which the instigator and real oppressor was some rival or interested Christian, who had made a tool of the Ottoman administration to injure his brother Christians. Thus, for instance, the Christian villages of Ak-Dagh, in the vilayet of Angora, have been ruined by an infamous usurer, an Armenian Christian of Yuzgat.

"2. Cases in which weakness or maladministration in high places, injured Christians and Mahommedans alike, but more frequently the latter than the former: for reasons to be stated further on, religious or fanatical motives had nothing to do with it.

"Something might here be said regarding the only Turkish tribunal in which Christian witness is formally and officially non-admitted when given against Mahommedans. I mean the 'Mahkemah,' or ecclesiastical court. None complain more bitterly than do the Turkish officials themselves of the *imperium in imperio* exercised over them through this very tribunal by the Sheikh-ul-Islam, and the mollahs and

kadees under him. Its inconveniences can, however, in most cases be, in a round-about way, remedied by reference and appeal to the civil tribunals; and it is to be hoped that Turkey will, in time, be able to take, with regard to her ecclesiastical courts, those steps which, even in Europe, have been a matter of time and difficulty: but the proposed reorganisation of the 'Mahkemah' belongs to another section of this report.

"Now let us turn the question, and view it from the other side.

"1. At the present moment, the whole burden of military service, active and reserve, falls exclusively on the Mahommedan population. The Christians do, indeed, pay into the public treasury a small—a trifling sum, bearing no real proportion whatever to the advantages it obtains them for their exemption; but, even were the 'Bedel-Askeri,' or ransom service tax, weighty enough to balance the effective value of such exemption to the Christians, it could never equipoise the misery which it entails on their Mahommedan fellow-subjects by the enormous burden of the conscription thus thrown on their unassisted shoulders.

"And this, be it well noticed, not vice nor any other book-fancied cause, is the true reason why the Mahommedan population proportionately decreases, the Christian increases. The whole 'unproductive' element of the empire is formed out of the former alone. It is a crying injustice, and calls for serious consideration and prompt remedy.

"2. The Mahommedan population is absolutely 'unrepresented' at the central, irresponsible, and dissevered government of Constantinople, where the Mahommedan subjects of the Sultan have really no one to whom they can make known their interests, or expose their wrongs. Meanwhile, the Christians have, at the capital, and throughout the empire, as many courts of appeal and redress-demanding representatives as there are consulates, agencies, and sometimes embassies, at hand. Indeed, not only are their complaints listened to when made, but even fabricated for them when not made.

"Hence, and it is a deadly consequence, the full weight, firstly, of fiscal oppression, so natural to a government at once centralised and absolute like the Ottoman; and, secondly, the chief weight of local and individual oppression, unavoidable where a weak, yet unbalanced power resident at the capital neglects, as it is sure to do, the provinces, falls on the Mahommedan, and not on the Christian population. For the very reason that the cry of the former is, practically, unheard, the latter have a thousand spokesmen.

"3. And this is a corollary of the above—open sedition and abominable crimes severely and speedily punished, when perpetrated by Mahommedans, are only half punished, or are even pardoned altogether, when Christians are the culprits; the hands of justice being for them tied up by consular or analogous intervention.

"The subject might be still further investigated, and instances given in illustration; but thus much must suffice for the main. I will only add that a striking and visible confirmation of what has now been stated is afforded, not on the coasts only, but in the centremost interior, the very supposed focus of Mahommedan fanaticism, by the manner in which the Christians of those districts flaunt their ostentatious wealth in splendid houses, gay dresses, and all the ornaments of prosperity—a manner wholly incompatible with anything of that oppression so much talked of for them at a distance. Among the Mahommedan population these conditions are sadly reversed.

"It is a mistake, though not an unfrequent one, to attribute the evident prosperity of the Christians in Turkey, by comparison with the Mahommedans, to some greater energy on their part, industry, and other virtues. Truth is, that in vigour, in probity, and in steady work, the Mahommedans are, as a rule, decidedly a-head of their Greek and Armenian fellow-countrymen. But the former have been, and are, systematically over-burdened, not to say oppressed; while the latter, under protection of their advantageous position in the Ottoman empire, have been enriching themselves for the last half century mainly by questionable speculation, or by direct fraud and usury.

"Nor can the Ottoman empire right itself till its burdens be equally distributed on its two shoulders, the Mahommedan and the Christian, not exclusively heaped up on the former as they now are. Either the Christians must be put on a level with the Mahommedans, by being brought down to them, or, much better, the Mahommedans must be brought up to a level with the Christians by a conscription lightened

because shared, and by an equable administration, combined with some attention to the interests of the provinces, and of a loyal and hard-working, not merely of an intriguing and money-jobbing, population.

"As matters now stand (1869), the Ottoman government lies under the very serious charge of oppressing its Mahommedan in favour of its Christian subjects. I regret to have to confirm the charge."

Thus, the testimony of a witness favourable to the Turks, when compared with the testimony and admissions of Mr. Taylor, who was unfavourable to the Turks, will, probably, suffice to give a tolerably correct idea of the real state of things. Of the two witnesses, Consul Palgrave is the more reliable.

Finally, it may be asked how it is that the complaints against the Turks are nearly all confined to those districts so close to the Russian frontier? How is it that we do not hear the same accounts further west, until we reach the European frontiers of Russia? How is it that the atrocities of the Mussulman only occur in the extreme portions of the empire, just where Russia exercises her influence, and not in the districts lying in between?

An examination into the affairs of Bulgaria and Servia will fully supply any further answer that may be required.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GATES OF EUROPE.

WHEN a member of parliament, Mr. Forsyth, gravely states, in a moment of forgetfulness, without contradiction from any of the six hundred who represent the collective wisdom of Great Britain, that the Roumanians, or Wallachs, are a Slav race, there must be something radically wrong in the knowledge of the six hundred regarding those countries between the Carpathian and the Ægean Sea, the Adriatic and the Pontus, that may be called, in an ethnographical and a political sense, the Gates of Europe. Whatever the theoretical ancestors of the Wallachs may have been, there is no doubt but that they have become as distinct a race as the English, by a judicious course of natural selection, in which the Hebrew has been an important element,—one might almost say a predominating element, would not such an assertion grievously wound the feelings of the *élite* of Bucharest and Galatz, who have discarded the appellation of Wallachs for the prouder title of Roumanians, signifying thereby their rooted conviction that they are the descendants of the ancient Romans—scions of the patricians of Rome, in the same way as the present inhabitants of Malta are all descended from the Knights of St. John. Their appearance is Oriental; their language an apparent mixture of Latin, Italian, and Spanish; and their features about as similar to a Slav's as a Chinaman's are to a Red Indian's. Finally, they hate the Slavs with an intensity that is only equalled by the contempt the Slavs evince for them.

But the ignorance, which is inexcusable in one of the six hundred, may be condoned in the case of the general public. Most of the books concerning these regions have been written for the furtherance of some special object, but none have as yet given an impartial account of the medley of races and creeds which have been making havoc of the country since the days of the Greek emperors. Some few standard works, such as those of Ubicini, Lejean, Kanitz, and Hahn, have appeared in tolerable abundance; a few geographical works, such as those of Barth, Petter, and Roskievicz, have helped to make the foreign public a little better acquainted with the borderland between Europe and Asia; whilst, *per contra*, myriads of political and missionary lucubrations have been showered down upon an unoffending public, until the Eastern question, and everything appertaining to it, has become an enigma, past solution in its present form of propounding. If it be asked, how it happens that these regions are so little known, the reply is to be found in the difficulty of locomotion, the number of languages necessary, and the absence of all accommodation for the

traveller of the day. And, in truth, except for the historian, there is nothing in the country but scenery to attract attention. These races and regions have only a political interest for the general public; so that even the coast of Dalmatia, with its chain of fair and historical cities ranging from Zara down to Cattaro, is comparatively unknown, though Sir Gardner Wilkinson long ago directed attention to this beautiful strip of mountain land, with its numberless land-locked bays, meandering inlets, ancient towns, and picturesque population revelling in a climate surpassing even the far-famed Riviera. If thus the very entrance, in spite of its beauty and accessibility by the Austrian Lloyd's excellent steamers, is ignored by the ordinary traveller, as well as by author and artist, no wonder that the land beyond is as unknown to the general public as Central Asia.

But then, how many people are able to converse in Italian, German, Hungarian, Slav, Greek, Turkish, and Rouman? A knowledge of these tongues is quite necessary to travel from the Adriatic to the Pontus, if the wanderer really desires to acquire accurate information, or even to understand what he sees. And not only must he be prepared to rough it from beginning to end, but also to be regarded as an object of suspicion by everybody. By the time he may have succeeded in overcoming the distrust of one section of the various races, he is sure to have roused that of another; for in a country where accommodation and locomotion depend so much on the good-will of the natives, and the inquisitiveness leaves that of the traditional Yankee far behind, it is quite astonishing how rapidly one's reputation travels in advance, and fixes one down, as it were, in a certain groove. Besides all this, the uncouth appearance and manners of the people are not calculated to inspire interest. An enthusiastic traveller, who had determined to explore the country thoroughly for a couple of years, abandoned the attempt in despair after a two months' trial, alleging, as a reason, that the different races were like so many date-stones—hard to crack, and when cracked, nothing inside them. But then he only spoke a little Italian, mixed with a smattering of German.

In truth, however, apart from the fact of these people belonging to the great human family, and thus, at any rate, containing within them the germs of future development, they are interesting as being the residue of the various races who have traversed these regions on their way to and from Asia. They occupy, in truth, a "debatable ground," on which Scythians, Huns, Magyars, Greeks, and Romans, first planted their standards on their way to conquest, and where the Cross first fell a prey in Europe to the Crescent, in the very midst of its temples and priests. Here the Turks met with their first check, in their progress westward, from the Magyars, who, for centuries, protected Europe from their incursions, and even regained much of the ground that the Moslem had won. It may truly be said that the Danubian and Balkan provinces are the very gates of Europe, which have been fought for, in uninterrupted succession, by Greek and Roman, Hungarian, Slav, and Turk, and have furnished the scenes for an internecine warfare to which every generation has contributed its quota. No wonder, then, that these provinces have no memorials of the past but traditions of blood, fire, and rapine, and no signs in the present but those of hatred, jealousy, and massacre. Here where, south of the Danube, people speak of Europe as though they were beyond it; where the clash of conflicting races and creeds has never ceased; where every man's hand is armed and raised ready to strike his neighbour; where continual misery has hardened all sympathy and generosity out of his heart;—here an heritage has been left behind of brutality, mendacity, distrust, and selfishness, that is not to be equalled in the annals of any other nation.

This is not an inviting picture; and however interesting to the historian as an ethnological riddle—however curious to the student of human nature in its aberrations, it is certainly not calculated to attract the ordinary traveller, or to awaken that interest which generous minds have always felt in races and nations who are able to base their appeals for sympathy not only on what they have suffered, but also on what they have already accomplished, and are still willing to do. The Slav races of Turkey have no relics of past grandeur. One of the oldest races in Europe, the Turkish Slav, can produce no proof of former greatness, no architecture, no sculpture, no paintings, no art, no literature. He has no record of the value of his existence in any works even

of simple utility; his national history is a melancholy *pesma*—legendary song—of bloodshed, futile struggles, treachery, renegadism, and dissension. Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that there should have been a certain admiration for the Turk, who towers above the human *débris* around him. This admiration arose, in a great measure, from the frequent perusal of "Eothen," and Curtis's "Nile Notes of an Howadjah," two of the most brilliant results of an exaggerated imagination that ever ensnared the reader.

These, and a host of similar works, called up visions of cypress groves and graceful minarets; of luxurious divans swelling round the limbs of fair-skinned and dark-eyed slaves, whose rose-dyed fingers hovered gracefully over the strings of lute and guitar; of grave turbaned Turks, with their carefully-trimmed beards, who, telling their amber beads, seemed, as described in those romances, to make Haroun-al-Rashid and the "Arabian Nights" realities still existing beyond the seas, behind the golden curtains of the East. In short, Arabs, Moors, Saracens, and Turks; Bagdad, the Alhambra, and Stamboul, were all mixed up in a heterogeneous jumble, and the impression produced, that the chivalry of Saladin, the Oriental wisdom of Nathan the Wise, and all the other subjects of poems and romances without end, were still flourishing beneath the shadow of the Sultan. Thus Arab, Moor, Saracen, and Turk were confounded under the one generic term of Moslem—about as rational a proceeding as regarding the different races of Europe as identical because they are Christians. Wiseacres will smile at these delusions. They are to be deplored, and all the more as there seems to be a tendency among the public to entertain similar delusions regarding that unmitigated nuisance to Europe, the Eastern Christian.

Now, in considering the causes of discontent in the western provinces of Turkey and in Bulgaria, there are several complications which must be rigorously borne in mind at every step of the inquiry. It must be remembered that the presence, on the immediate confines of the empire, of such enemies of the Porte as Servia, Roumania, and Montenegro, to say nothing of the Slav provinces of Austria, afforded the Russian government not only the means of keeping up a continual stir and ferment, but also with a pretext for accusing Austria of agitation in Bosnia and Herzegovina for her own private ends. In short, Russian emissaries, without number, were continually persuading the frontier population of the Austrian provinces to agitate amongst the Slavs on the Turkish side of the rivers Unna and Save; and having succeeded in this endeavour, enabled the Russian government to point out to the Turkish authorities, through General Ignatieff, that the whole of the disturbances in Bosnia and Herzegovina arose from the agitation and intrigues of the Austrian government.

This was so cleverly carried out, that men like Consul Holmes, of Serajevo, regarded largely as a government agitation what was peculiarly the contrary. The agitation, carried on in the military frontier, and along the Save, was excessively embarrassing to the Austrian government; and they took such measures to prevent it as they had at their disposal. Why these measures were, and could not be otherwise than inadequate, requires some explanation; and at the risk of some little digression, it is necessary to know what were the local circumstances so successfully made use of by Russian agitators, from Captain Becker and M. Wesselitzki, upwards, to Consul Jonine and his master, Prince Gortschakoff.

The seats or districts of Austrian agitation, provoked by Russian intrigue, are, roughly speaking, twofold. One extends from the seaport of Hungary down to the frontiers of Montenegro; the other from Fiume to Belgrade, along the rivers Save and Danube. As regards the first of these districts, it would probably puzzle a good many people very considerably to state on what sea the seaport of Hungary lies. And, in truth, it has changed hands so often that some perplexity on the subject might be excusable. Founded by the Romans, and called by them Liburnia, it fell a prey to the old pre-Bismarckian days of blood and iron, to the tempest of tribes, Sarmatians, Slavs, Goths, Huns, and Vandals, that swept down from the east and made civilisation groan. They changed its name to Rieka, the Slavic for river or stream; and Rieka it remained for a goodly space of time, leading a doubtful existence, sometimes in collusion with the pirates who infested the Adriatic from Veglia down to the Narenta, and sometimes warring against them. Cut off from the rest of the world

by a barren, inhospitable karst, the bora howling around it in winter, the sirocco scorching it in summer, its inhabitants were not remarkable for their intellectual capabilities, and, consequently, offered a rich virgin soil for Jesuit cultivation. The good fathers, therefore, established themselves in Rieka, and built a church there—a Pantheon-like edifice *in miniature*—which they dedicated to St. Veit, and succeeded in getting the name of the town itself changed to St. Veit am Flaume, in order to distinguish it from the other St. Veits, which are so plentiful in the broad domains of Austria. For a time St. Veit am Flaume flourished. The Counts of Frangipani had a castle there, levied black-mail, and generally co-operated with the Jesuits, who had been so successful in schooling the St. Veit am Flaumers, that when the angel which took up the Virgin's house at Nazareth, to save it from the Turks, stopped at St. Veit am Flaume, it struck him as eminently suitable as a final resting-place for the holy mansion, a previous sojourn in the Sabioncello not having turned out satisfactorily. But, from one cause and another, the St. Veit am Flaumers did not duly appreciate the gift, and so the angel disappeared with it again one fine night, and took it to Loreto, to the permanent pecuniary loss of St. Veit am Flaume, which might otherwise have prospered in matters spiritual and temporal, even as Loreto, to the present day, or Lourdes, by the grace of Bernadette. The good Jesuit fathers were sorely exercised by this want of confidence, especially as St. Veit (St. Vitus) himself also threatened to abandon the town to its fate—whatever that might be—in consequence of being deprived of the saintly edifice. But the Jesuits consoled him by promising him the company of a real saint once a-year—of a virgin of undoubted integrity—to wit, that of St. Ursula, she of the 10,000 virgins, whose bones repose in the odour of sanctity in the church of St. Ursula, at Cologne. Accordingly, on St. Veit's festival, an effigy of the saint, together with her dowry-box (which, like so many others, had fallen into the hands of the Jesuits), was taken in gorgeous procession to the chapel of St. Vitus, and the two saints left together during the night for a friendly chat. Next day she was fetched down again, with her dowry-box plentifully replenished. Thus the ceremony went on for a goodly round of years, till some matter-of-fact statistician made the strange discovery that, in spite of St. Ursula and her 10,000 immaculate maidens, the number of virgins in St. Veit am Flaume decreased alarmingly every year; and as it was found that they generally disappeared on St. Vitus's day, the ceremony was abolished by "royal decree," and St. Vitus compelled to take his turn in ordinary with the other saints of the calendar. St. Veit thus being under a cloud, and the Italian party in strength, the name of the town was once more changed into Fiume, by which appellation it is still known for the moment, though there are several proposals to re-christen it with a true, full-sounding Hungarian name, which, doubtless, would have to give way to another—say Rieka Rediviva—when the great South Slavonic empire enters upon the enjoyment of its scattered estates. However, the Jesuit fathers made one more last and supreme attempt to wean the Fiumaners from their evil ways, and erected a large crucifix outside the cathedral. But one day, when a band of the Fiumaner youth were playing marbles at the foot of this crucifix, one of them, a godless youth who deservedly lost, also lost his temper, and vowed if he lost again that he would throw a stone at the crucifix. He did lose, and he did throw a stone at the figure, which forthwith began to bleed at the place where it was struck. But the wicked youth said he didn't care; nor did any of the adult Fiumaners seem to care; for, with the exception of a silver plate, "donated" by an old lady of ninety-five to plaster up the wound with, the endeavours of the fathers bore no fruit whatever, and so they took their crucifix into the church itself, and hid it carefully away in the sacristy, where the faithful may still behold it on the payment of a small fee to the sacristan.

After this, Fiume went on through the world in a meandering, purposeless fashion, as was but to be expected from a town that refused to appreciate the Virgin's house, St. Vitus, St. Ursula, a Bleeding Crucifix, and the Jesuit Fathers; so that when it was incorporated with Hungary in 1866, it was but receiving the just measure of its sins. It certainly was hard for Croatian Fiume to be placed under Hungarian rule, just because Hungary, like a self-willed boy, refused to play with Austria against the Prussians, unless Croatia and Fiume were given over to her, together with Slavonia and Syrmia. To be handed over to the

traitor, like the silver penny given to Judas Iscariot for his treachery, greatly hurt the Fiumaners. They strove against it energetically, but to no purpose. The Magyar was determined. Fiume was to be an Hungarian port, and Hungarian it became. Forthwith, then, works were commenced to make it a port worthy of the nation it belonged to. The harbour was enlarged, moles and railways constructed at an enormous cost, all of which helped considerably to calm the Fiume mind, for it brought money into the town; so that at present there is not much murmuring against the Magyar. They are biding the day when no more money will be forthcoming; when the works constructed will be proved to be unremunerative, and the splendid houses building can find no tenants, and rents are nowhere. Then there will be great clamour, and the Fiumaner loudly claim his tiny per-centage on the minute amount of capital he has invested in these works.

Still, there is no doubt but that Fiume is progressing; but it owes no little portion of its prosperity to foreign enterprise, besides Hungarian enterprise; for, of course, they, like the Saxons in Ireland, are aliens and foreigners. The largest private establishment in Fiume is that of Messrs. Smith and Meynier, paper manufacturers. Years ago, young Smith, senior, drifted to Fiume, and, after much tribulation, stumbled upon the idea to invest in the linen rags with which the Croatian peasantry encase their lower members, and became a rag-merchant. Here he was on the high road to fortune, which bubbled up towards him in the shape of a torrent of clear blue water, rising from a rock-bound gorge a few minutes distant from the town. At this spot Smith, after great difficulties, succeeded in establishing a small mill, fed by the stream running down the gorge, the establishment having increased from year to year, till it has become the largest of its kind south of the Alps, and supplying the whole of the Levant with its products, and even the General Post-Office with the paper for the new thick post-cards. Smith, senior, who had entered into partnership with a Frenchman named Meynier, died in harness. His son, having married a daughter of the late Charles Lever, has left Fiume, and remains only a sleeping partner in the Anglo-French firm that has done much for Fiume.

Another establishment of European celebrity, yet comparatively unknown, leads a busy existence in this Protean town. It is that of Mr. Whitehead, who also, in the teeth of the greatest difficulties, has here perfected and manufactures his celebrated fish-torpedo, the submarine monster that, as its admirers predict, is to revolutionise modern naval warfare. For the benefit of ambitious States that have a little hard cash to spare, it may be said that they can purchase the secret and right to manufacture the torpedo by giving an order for fifty, at a cost of £200 each. They plough through the water, silently and accurately, at the rate of about twenty knots an hour for the first 1,000 yards, and eighteen knots an hour for a mile. On these two establishments, together with the government tobacco factory, employing close upon 1,000 hands, the naval school, and one or two smaller factories, Fiume rests its claim for respectful consideration. The staple trade of the town consists of timber, grain, and staves for barrels. The great cooperages of Marseilles, Bordeaux, and Trieste, send out gangs of 400 to 800 hands into the woods round about, and at some distance from Fiume, where they remain all the summer, bringing down the produce in the ox-carts of the country, or by rail, to the town for shipment. Otherwise there is no speciality in Fiume, unless it be the manufacture, by the jewellers, of little Moor's heads for earrings, pins, &c. They are of gold, with black enamel features, and white enamel eyes, and turbans adorned with gold stars. This art dates from the time of the Crusades, and is quite peculiar to Fiume.

The town itself is situated at the head of the Gulf of Quarnero.

"Ch' Italia chiude ed i suoi termini bagna,"

as Dante sings. It is divided into two parts, the western and the eastern, the latter running along the Rieka, which forms the old port, and reminds one somewhat of San Sebastian; whilst the former skirts the bay, and contains the residences of the *élite* of the town. Wedged in between the hills that run across Istria and down the Dalmatian coast, indented by numerous rock-bound inlets, with purple-shadowed Veglia and Cherso in the distance, and the castle of Tersato rising above it behind, it presents a very attractive picture, and would, no doubt, have risen to a proud

position, had not Venice formerly, and Trieste at present, stifled it by their rapid growth. The view over the Adriatic and the adjoining country, from the castle of Tersato, is very beautiful. This castle, formerly belonging to the Counts of Frangipani, is now owned by the son of Colonel Nugent, an officer in the Austrian army, to whom it was given, together with the title of baron, for his services during the French war. He had the ruin partially repaired, and uses a portion of it for a collection of antiquities from Pompeii and Herculaneum—some of them very remarkable—and for some specimens of the old Italian masters and schools.*

No sketch of Fiume would, however, be complete without "Old Charley," H.B.M.'s consul for Fiume. Not that his name is Charles by any manner of means; on the contrary, it is James. But the British sailor having nick-named him "Old Charley," as Old Charley is he known throughout the Adriatic and Mediterranean. Here he is, a battered old hulk, yet sound in all his timbers, "you-wasy, and they-wasy" in his speech, a credit to himself, but none to the Foreign Office, having sacrificed fifty-five years out of the seventy-nine he numbers for the average sum of £50 a-year. It is currently reported in the East, that the Foreign Office is in the habit of employing an experienced life-insurance doctor, whose sole duty it is to travel about inspecting consuls of mature age, and to report on the expected date of their demise. A few months before this date they are pensioned off, *pour encourager les autres*, and to keep up appearances. But as six months must elapse before they can touch the first moiety of their well-earned pension, they generally relieve the nation from any further expense by patriotically dying at once, as poor Mr. Longworth, of Belgrade, recently did, with that rare appreciation of what was expected from him that always characterised him. That "Old Charley" has not yet been inspected and reported on, is due either to the fact that Fiume is too much out of the world, or, let us hope, because he has still a goodly score of years in store; though at seventy-eight that is scarcely to be reckoned on. As a specimen of the Eastern consular service as conducted by the Foreign Office, and also of what material it is sometimes framed, let the following letter show:—

"Fiume, Jany 20th 1875.

"My Lord—

"I have the Honour to beg to be permitted humbly to sollicit Your Lordship's attention to my recital of long services during which my various Superiors had no cause of complaint having ever, during the long period of my Off^{l}. Duties at this Port, given every possible care and attention to every one requiring my Assistance.

"In the Year 1819 I was appointed V. Consul at Fiume and Dependencies by John Leard, Esq. then H.B.M$^{y's}$. Consul & Mr. Consul-Genl. Hoppner then at Venice gave his approbation thereto, & under date 24th Novr. 1819 was confirmed by H.M$^{y's}$ Sec^{y} of State Lord Castlereagh. during the Years 1819-20 & 21 many B^{h} Vessels were laden at Fiume & Buccari with Oak Timber, Plank & Trenails on the Contract that had been entered into by H.M$^{y's}$ Navy Board & Messrs. Adamich and Haire to deliver such Cargoes of Timber into H.M$^{y's}$ Dockyards in England.

"On the demise of Mr. Leard in 1831 I took charge of the Archives of Office, reporting the sad event and so patiently awaiting the decision of H.M$^{y's}$ Sec^{y} of State; on the 19th Feby 1832, the R^{t} H^{ble} Lord Visc^{t} Palmerston was pleased to confirm me granting me £50 Stg. in consideration of having received testimony of my good character and conduct.

"In the Year 1842 His Lordship was pleased to augment the grant to £75 in consequence of a Report made by Sir Thos. Sorell then Consul G^{l}. at Trieste to that effect.

"In the early part of the Year 1844 I was specially sent by Sir Thos. Sorell Consul G^{l}. to Spalatro, there to assist and protect the Interests of the Owners of the Brit^{h} Vessel *Chieftain* Captain Reay as one of the Crew had been shot by the Master at night and arrested and placed under trial by the Judicial Authorities there. On my arrival I found Captain Reay was sentenced to 6 years confinement and his appeal had been forwarded to the Court at Zara; from that Court in 6 days came the Order 'that the prisoner be handed over to my charge, as the trial had been found defective for want of a competent Interpreter,' I then put him in charge of his

* Noteworthy, also, is the parish church at Tersato, with its hundreds of votive offerings in the shape of ships and paintings of dire escapes from shipwreck.

Vessel and cleared her for Malta to be there called to account for his conduct at Spalatro; the Vessel however did not call there but proceeded on to England and when arrived at Portsmouth, Capt. Reay was arrested and sent to the County Prison to abide his trial; the final issue there was an acquittal of Murder. Sir Thos. Sorell expressed personally to me his great satisfaction for my services rendered him, as I had so relieved him from a great torment, for had Capt. Reay been imprisoned at Cape d'Istria or Gradisca near to Trieste, he would have been in his Off^{l}. Jurisdiction.

"In the Year 1854 May 4^{h} my grant was increased to £100 on my Appeal to Government as being the Senr Vice Consul in the Adriatic I prayed to be equalised with my more fortunate colleagues & accordingly the Rt H^{ble} Earl of Clarendon was pleased to grant me the difference.

"Your Lordship, I trust will be graciously pleased to Observe that I have now served during the full period of 55 Years at the aforesaid Grant of £50, 75 & 100 Stg. in addition to which sum for the last 10 Years I am in receipt of £6 per annum as allowed me in compensation of my lost Ionian fees of Office, Your Lordship I hope will now permit me to appeal to Your Lordship's benevolence on the ground of my advanced age 78 my long services, my present honourable position being the Doyen of the Consular Body at Fiume, a position which often places me in embarrassment from my small means at command, as also to meet living and House Rent vastly augmented during the last 10 years so that I do now very humbly Appeal to Your Lordship to take into consideration all my services stated and to permit me to hope to enjoy a little better comfort these few Years longer I may have to carry on with my family through the good Will of the Almighty & I will ever be grateful and pray

"Your Lordship's

"Most humble & Obliged

"Servant,

"Jm^{s}. Thos. Hill.

"To the Earl of Derby etc. etc."

That, as shown by this document, "one of the crew of the *Chieftain* had been shot by the *master* at night, and arrested and put on his trial; that the vessel was cleared for Malta to be called to account for the *captain's* conduct; that the vessel wisely abstained from going to Malta; that the captain was acquitted of murder," are circumstances so remarkable, that it is no wonder Sir Thomas Sorell should be highly delighted at having the case removed from his jurisdiction, and thus being "relieved from a great torment." And having represented the British government for fifty-five years, at an average cost to the nation of about £50 per annum, it is also not surprising that Old Charley's "appeal" has been granted, and that he is still permitted "to hope for to enjoy a little better comfort these few years longer" he may have to carry on with his family. He was still hoping when these lines were penned, and is, probably, doing so yet. Would it not be better to put an end to this hope deferred? Still more, would it not be better if the Foreign Office were to exhibit a little more judgment in the selection of its consular representatives?

The dominating idea of the Fiumaners is a laudable, though apparently hopeless ambition to rival Trieste. This ambition is based on the expectation that, when the Turkish system of railways is extended to Sissek, the traffic will come to Fiume, as being nearer, rather than to Trieste. But, apart from the vested interests of the Südbahn and Staatsbahn, which top the Slavonian lines at St. Peter, Steinbrück and Kanizsa, political considerations must, for a long time at least, render all such expectations abortive. The great highways of commerce in these ports, the Danube, the Drave, and the Save, are already exploited by the Danube Steamship Company; whilst the great consuming centres, Vienna, Presburg, and Pesth, are, in addition, fed by the two lines afore-mentioned, so that the cross-country line, Fiume-Carlstadt-Agram, a stupendous monument of the engineer's and mason's skill, does not yet pay for its wheel-grease; whilst the harbour-works, an Hungarian undertaking, are consuming vast sums of money without any prospect of an adequate return. The trade up the Adriatic is not large enough to permit a remunerative division of profits between three ports lying so closely together as Venice, Trieste, and Fiume. Venice will always command a large share on account of its being the natural port for the Bremen traffic to and from Southern Germany and Upper Italy: Trieste will always be the port, *par excellence*, for Austria,

up to the Erz-Gabirge and Saxon frontier; but Fiume can only attain importance in case of the dreams of Slav, Hungarian, and Italian being wholly or partially realised. Thus, if ever Trieste should come to be the *coronat opus* of Italian unity, the energies of Hungarian or Slav, whichever might have the upper hand, would necessarily be directed to the development of the Fiume traffic and communications. Meantime each party is battling for the supremacy over the other. Thus Fiume, as is, indeed, the whole of Croatia and Dalmatia, is divided socially into three parties, with the occasional addition of a fourth. First, there is the dominant party, the Hungarian; secondly, the Croatian autonomist and democratic party, whose democracy, however, is only a pass-word to autonomy; and, thirdly, the Court Croats, or aristocracy, created in very recent times, and which is foreign to the traditions of the Slavs, who, like the Basques, do not acknowledge any distinction of rank amongst themselves, being naturally noblemen all. This party adheres *per fas et nefas* to the Imperial Court, and strives for the re-establishment of Austrian unity. The fourth party is the Italian, which plays the same part in Austria as the Greeks do in Turkey, by fringing the Slav coasts with a succession of mercantile colonies, ranging from Trieste down to Budua, and which insists, in virtue of the ancient rights of Venice and Ragusa over these countries, that they are really Italian appanages belonging by rights to Italy.

This sketch conveys an accurate idea of the state of affairs generally prevailing all through the Adriatic littoral of the Austrian provinces. In Croatia, the country between the Save, Drave, and the Quarnero, there is somewhat more cohesion amongst the population; but the questions agitating this country are just as burning and productive of discontent as those further south.

If the reader will take the trouble to glance at a railway map of South-eastern Europe, he will observe that a line runs direct south-west from Pesth, past Stuhlweissenburg, the Platten See, and Gross Kanizsa to Agram, or Zagrab, as the Croats love to call it. From Agram, it will be seen that there are two lines of railway running to Fiume, one as long as the other, and both describing a semicircle. Why this should be so, requires some explanation fractionally commercial, chiefly political. The commercial explanation is, that the northern line from Steinbrück to Fiume forms part of the Südbahn from Vienna to Trieste, and the branch from Steinbrück to Agram, built by the same company, was intended to draw off the Agram traffic into the Südbahn, and thence to Vienna and Trieste, the connecting link, Agram-Kanizsa, not having then been completed. Herein there was a certain amount of sense, though the line might have been laid to a nearer and more profitable point. The southern line, Agram-Karlstadt-Fiume, on the other hand, was simply a political conceit, a freak carried out at the cost of over 80,000,000 florins—say £8,000,000. It was part of the scheme that was to make Fiume the seaport of the great Magyar kingdom. "Teremtete!" swore the great Magyar, "if Vienna has its Trieste, shall not Pesth have its Fiume?" So the fiat went forth, and the line Fiume-Karlstadt was built at the above-mentioned cost. Immaterial whether vessels would prefer the Hungarian to the Austrian port or not—immaterial whether the line passed through any centres of traffic or not, it was sufficient to possess the toy, and to be able to prove that there is nothing impossible for the Magyar.

The line itself is a wonderful monument of misapplied engineering and masonry. On leaving Fiume it gradually mounts, skirting the sea-shore at some little distance by an embankment, solidly faced with smoothly-hewn masonry, to Buccari, and then meanders in similar fashion across gullies, hills, and barren Karst to Ogatin. A sea of grey limestone, covered with sage, is all that meets the eye between Buccari and Karlstadt. Here and there it seems as though some frantic attempts had been made to coax a little verdure from the waste of barrenness around; and here and there a solitary mill is seen; though what it grinds it would be hard to say. Two trains a day traverse this wilderness—one a passenger train, the other a goods train; though it has often been said that the latter is a dummy. That the line does not pay for wheel-grease, much less for its repairs, is a fact no one disputes. The very officials seem to regard the line as a stupendous joke, or an unsolvable riddle, and drivers, guards, and station-masters are all agreed that their appointment is virtually a sentence of solitary confinement. The only break in the monotony of their

existence is when a portion of the masonry gives way, or the bora blows the train bodily over the embankment, as, with the exception of the engine, happened a couple of years ago. Collisions never happen; but it would not matter if they did, for the speed of the train is so deliberately slow, that a collision could scarcely equal the concussion produced by the series of rapid osculatory salutes indulged in by the stalwart males of the country when they meet or take leave of each other. Thus, having spent the greater part of a day—nine hours in accomplishing the journey, remarkable for nothing but the natural and logical absence of refreshments on the way—the tram-car arrives, with a feeling of relief seldom experienced, at Agram, the capital of Croatia, favourably situated at a little distance from the Save, in the midst of a fertile plain, whence rises the "Grad," containing the chief official and ecclesiastical buildings. The appearance of the town is agreeable; it has a homely air about it, and is evidently meant for use and not for show, like Buda-Pesth. Altogether, after issuing from the wild karst between Agram and Fiume, a certain surprise is felt at seeing oneself again in the midst of well-stocked shops, and with a choice of good hotels before one. The market, in the centre of which stands a statue of the great Ban of Croatia, Jellachich, which is thronged by a busy, bustling crowd, presents a scene of great animation, especially noticeable being a number of Jew pedlars and traders, who, thanks to Count Molinari, are now free to trade in any part of Croatia and the Militair Greme.

Being the centre of the South Slavonic movement, the seat of the Croatian Diet, and the residence of a bishop, Agram, of course, represents the intellectual activity of the Croats, who meet in great force, afternoon and evening, in the *café Hrvat*—Hrvat, to pronounce which please put an ear of barley the wrong way down your throat and say "cravat," meaning Croatian. Here, in view of Jellachich's statue, Croatian and South Slav patriotism is rampant, and in vain will you look for a single Magyar amidst the dense crowd thronging the saloons. Here meet the journalists, lawyers, and members of the *Landtag*, who are working for the "cause," and discussing the events "over the border." These events were assuming a definite shape as early as the summer of 1873.

For a long time past the relations of the Christian merchants of the north of Bosnia in general, and the better class of Mussulmans, had been of a most unsatisfactory nature. These merchants were comparatively rich, and from their vicinity to Austria, had acquired a more independent character than elsewhere, and had thus, in a corresponding degree, awakened the jealousy and animosity of their Mussulman compatriots. There is no doubt, therefore, that they had been subjected to petty annoyances and small persecutions, for which they had been unable to obtain redress at the hands of the local authorities, and which had irritated them excessively. Still their complaints were exaggerated as to the importance and degree of these vexations, and their own conduct also tended to exasperate the ill-will of the Turks towards them, especially as the enmity of Bosniac Mahommedans is principally directed to the merchant or trading class of Christians, and it is not at all exhibited in the same degree towards the peasant. The former class grows rich, has no interest in common with the Turk, and excites his jealousy; while the latter works for the Mahommedan landowners, and their interests are bound up together. This ill-feeling between the Christian trading classes in Bosnia and the Mussulman proprietors is excessive, and in a great measure has been caused, and is fomented, by local peculiarities. In other parts of Turkey there were Christian and Mahommedan populations, who lived together in much more tolerable amity, and who, though the Turkish element was in the ascendant, and the Christians suffered a certain amount of oppression in consequence, were not subject to the causes which, in Bosnia, tended to a degree of exasperation which was not to be met elsewhere. These causes were the vicinity of the various Slav populations of Austria, Servia, and Montenegro, who, independent of the Turks themselves, never ceased, by writing in the public press, by emissaries, and by facility of personal intercourse, to excite the Christians to discontent by assuring them of their superior political and social position in comparison with their assumed miserable state, and who exasperated the Turks by exaggeration of every matter that occurred, and by threats, sometimes of annexation to Servia—sometimes of invasion, and by abuse of every possible kind. Now, as both Turks and Christians in Bosnia are equally igno-

rant and fanatical, the result of all this was a state of things which was most deplorable, but for which it was difficult to find any remedy. The governor-general of Bosnia, in 1873, was an exceptionably good man, and did his utmost to prevent abuses and to administer justice; but when he required information, and demanded the truth from the local authorities, they unanimously replied that the Christians were wholly to blame; that they did all they could to disturb the public tranquillity, and that the Turks were perfectly innocent, and, in fact, the victims of the animosity and intrigues of the Christians.

The result of this state of affairs was that 327 merchants of Gradiska fled to Austria for protection in July, 1873, alleging that their lives were in danger; and, at the same time, it became known that a number of Christians had been cast into prison at Jaitze, because the wife of a Mussulman had been murdered by brigands. An inquiry into the Gradiska affair was at once demanded by the Austrian consul at Serajevo, M. Theodorovich. His demands were acceded to, and on July 6th he proceeded to Gradiska, in company with the governor-general. The result of the inquiry was that the Christians disagreed among themselves, fully half of them declaring that they had nothing particular to complain of, and accusing those who had crossed the Save of endeavouring, by their intrigues, to embroil the whole Christian community with their Mussulman compatriots. Such being the case, the consuls received a notification from the governor-general, to the effect that thirty-two Christian merchants of Gradiska, whose names were given, having left the Turkish territory, their shops and magazines had been sequestered and sealed up by the authorities, and that the space of a month would be allowed to any foreign or other auditor of these individuals to present their claims. At the same time, with regard to 272 murders, stated in the newspapers to have taken place in the neighbourhood of Gradiska within the space of six weeks, M. Theodorovich said there was a rumour of one; but, though he made inquiries, he could not establish even this one fact.

This incident gave rise to a number of despatches from the foreign consuls to their various governments, each one representing the affair from his own particular point of view. Raschid Pasha, Consuls Holmes and Longworth, all expressed their opinions that the disturbances were due to the presence and instigation of Austrian agitators. This opinion was correct in so far that these agitators may have been Austrian subjects; but it was incorrect in so far as it conveyed the idea that they were government agents. They were simply Slavs, following out their own views, and belonging to that party which advocated the extension of Slav influence at the expense of German and Hungarian.

The Gradiska affair may be taken as a specimen of its class. The Christians of this town, as in all others of sufficient importance, had established an Opechtina, or council, ostensibly, and partly in reality, occupying itself with the administration of the schools and the ecclesiastical revenues, but also acting as a political committee, charged with the propagation of the Slav idea, and, consequently, a focus for foreign agitation. All these Opechtinas were in communication with the revolutionary committee, and the Omladina in Servia, and the Serb districts of Croatia and Hungary; and when the Opechtina of Gradiska was being worked by the agents despatched by these committees, one of its members, a certain Stovo, for whatever reason, whether from malice, conscientious motives, or to curry favour with the Turks, got up a protest against the machinations of the Serb agitators. This protest was in course of being signed, when one of the agitators surprised him, and snatched the paper out of his hands. Determined to frustrate Stovo in his denunciation, the members of the Opechtina who were implicated, lodged a complaint against him before the kaimakam, a governor of Gradiska; but when they found that the kaimakam knew more than they thought he did, they adopted the more prudent course of fleeing across the frontier.

Thus the whole affair resolved itself into the denunciation by an "informer" of a revolutionary committee, which proved its guilt by running away. All this was amply established during the inquiry conducted by M. Theodorovich, the Austrian consul, in spite of the endeavours of the ex-Austrian vice-consul of Banjoluka, M. Draganchich, who was one of the chief agitators acting in favour of the Austrian Slavs.

The affair at Jaitze was similar in its results. The Turkish authorities had heard that two notorious brigands were

concealed in the house of a Christian named Alexi Vartellas, and sent the mudir to arrest them. But the mudir and his people were driven off by the wife of Alexi and her neighbours. Four days afterwards the wife of a Mussulman in the neighbourhood was murdered; and then, and not till then, were Alexi and his accomplices arrested, but, with the exception of Alexi and his wife, set at liberty after the first hearing of the case.

Naturally, the unfavourable report of M. Theodorovich, as to the conduct of the Christians, caused a tempest of indignation in Servia and Croatia. The Croat journal, *Obzor*, declared that Theodorovich had induced the Christians to revoke their complaints on various pretences, and had then left them to their fate; and openly called upon Russia either to form an intimate alliance with Austro-Hungary against Prince Bismarck and a powerful Slav combination against Germany, or boldly declare war to Austria, and take the fate of the Slavs into her own hands. At the same time, the committees redoubled their exertions to organise a systematic revolt; but as the conduct of the Christians in the Gradiska affair, and the report of M. Theodorovich, was fatal, for the moment, to the success of any action on the Austrian frontier and the north of Bosnia, it was resolved, at the instigation of M. Wesselitzki—a Russian agent of Herzegovinian extraction—to address a letter to the Prince of Montenegro, claiming his protection. This letter was signed by a number of Bosniaks and Herzegovinians, and was the commencement of an agitation which was energetically carried on throughout the year 1874, and resulted in the flight of a number of the inhabitants in the district of Nevesinje to Montenegro. Having here received their instructions, and being supplied with funds, they applied to the Porte for permission to return to their homes. This permission was granted, in opposition to the wishes of the governor, who was aware of their object; and, in the beginning of July, 1875, they broke out into open revolt, and, forming into separate bands, commenced a series of attacks on the Turks, and either persuaded or forced the Christians to join them. This movement rapidly increased in intensity, and assumed such proportions that the Porte began to be seriously alarmed, and sent two commissioners, Constant Effendi and Hassan Pasha, to try to arrange matters with the insurgents, who fixed a day to meet them. At the time appointed, however, they did not put in an appearance; and after waiting some time in vain, the two Turkish officials were informed that they did not intend to come at all, as they had no confidence in them. They would only agree to a meeting in case their safety was guaranteed by the European consuls. The result of this action, combined with the information received as to the activity of the committees, and the intrigues carried on, under the auspices of the Russian government, by Prince Milan and Prince Nikita of Montenegro, led to the proposal of a consular commission, which should ascertain the demands of the insurgents, mediate between them and the Turkish authorities, and generally endeavour to arrange a basis for the friendly action of the powers.

This proposal was agreed to, and on September 12th, the commission arrived at Nevesinje, which had been one of the chief scenes of the revolt. They found all the eastern part of the town, and all the bazaar, burnt and in ruins. Dead bodies were lying in various corners unburied; and in one of the streets lay the head of a boy, blackening in the sun. A little Turkish girl was brought to Consul Holmes and his colleagues, the Russian and French consuls, who was suffering from a wound in her throat. One of the insurgents was detected in the act of cutting her head off, when she was fortunately snatched from him by another less bloodthirsty one, and allowed to escape.

On the 15th of September, the first meeting between the insurgents and the consuls took place at the village of Beograd, near Nevesinje. The consuls began by informing the insurgent deputies that there was no hope of assistance from any of the European governments, nor from Servia, nor from Montenegro; and strongly advised them to lay down their arms, and lay their complaints before Server Pasha, who had been delegated by the Porte to inquire into their grievances.

This was but poor consolation for the insurgents, who, moreover, knew better than the consuls what assistance was to be expected from Servia, Montenegro, and Russia. The rest of the tale may be told by Consul Holmes, as he recounted it in his despatch of September 28:—

"In the course of our interviews we were

constantly asked whether the powers would guarantee the execution of justice and reform. We replied that we were merely charged to give them friendly advice as to the best means of relieving themselves from the difficulties in which they were involved, but that they might be sure the Turkish government was sincere in its promises, and that the attention of Europe having been drawn to their affairs, the government could not deceive them without serious loss of honour, and damage to its own vital interests. They asked why Server Pasha had not come with us, and why the delegates of Austria, Germany, and Italy were not with us, if they had the same message to give them. We replied that we had nothing to do with Server Pasha; that we were not acting as Turkish agents, but simply as friendly messengers from the European governments, who, disapproving the means they were adopting to obtain their desires, had sent us to advise them what course they had best pursue, and that we had not come in one body in order to save time, as, while we were here with them, the other delegates had gone to the neighbourhood of Trebinjé, and along the Dalmatian frontier.

"They repeatedly declared that they were, and wished to remain, faithful subjects of the Sultan, taking off their caps at the mention of his name, but that his majesty was deceived by his pashas, and could not be aware of their condition. We again pointed to Server Pasha's mission, this time proceeding direct from the Sultan, as a proof to the contrary.

"In short, the result was, that unless Europe would guarantee their safety from their agas and the authorities, and that the reforms promised should be really carried out, they dared not, and would not, lay down their arms.

"While we were at Beograd, the insurgents repeatedly expressed a fear that they would be attacked by the Turks. One night they nearly all left us, fearing an attack from Hojak, a neighbouring Turkish village which they had not been able to destroy. We assured them that, while we were with them, we did not think they would be molested.

"We had several zaptiehs with us as guides, as well as our cavasses, all of whom were in abject fear the whole time of our stay, as the insurgents, while we were absent, did not hesitate to express their sentiments of hatred and vengeance against all Turks.

"On the 18th two other chiefs came with a few followers, and our interviews with them were to the same purpose, and with the same results as with the others. We were told that, as their chief leaders were engaged in active operations, they could not probably come to meet us; but if they could, they would see us the next day at Trussina, on our way to Dabar. We had previously intended to go to Gatzko, but the insurgents assured us that it would be useless, as their people were dispersed in the mountains defending themselves against Selim Pasha.

"On the 19th we left Beograd, accompanied by a small band of insurgents; and at Trussina we met with about a hundred and fifty more, but no other leading men beyond those we had already seen. We dismounted near a fountain, and had a last interview, in which the same questions and statements were made as at previous meetings—the same replies on our part, and with the same result. At parting, the insurgents said that, if we would go to the neighbourhood of Bilek, they would meet us there, and we should, perhaps, be able to see many others, as the chief body of insurgents was between Bilek and Trebinjé. They said if we went they should see us and join us; if not, they would send a final message to us at Stolatz before the 22nd, but still repeated that they would not submit.

"We left them with the intention of proceeding, if possible, to Bilek. On the way to Stolatz, however, whither we had decided to go first in the hope of receiving some intelligence of our colleagues, we met a couple of battalions, with provisions and ammunition, proceeding in the direction from which we had come. I ordered my cavass to inquire of some of the soldiers in charge of the baggage where they were going. They informed him that they were going to attack the insurgents we had just left, next morning before daybreak. I felt very indignant, as did my colleagues, at this attempt, as it seemed, to profit by the fact of our having assembled together a certain number of insurgents, to attack them when off their guard. On arriving at Stolatz, the kaimakam also stated that an attack was to be made on the insurgents we had left; and on my expressing my disapproval of this proceeding, he said that

he did not know—that he rather thought the troops were marching to Bilek, with provisions for the garrison there. The governor-general had been at Stolatz, and had only left for Mostar two hours before our arrival.

"We heard at Stolatz, also, that our colleagues were at Trebinjé and Zupci, and would, therefore, meet the chiefs of the rebels, who were all in that direction. We waited till the 22nd, and not having received any message from the insurgents at Trussina, as promised, we returned to Mostar."

Thus the famous consular commission came to the end which the Russian consul had determined it should assume.

As for Consul Holmes, who ought to have known better, he fell into the common loose way of speaking of the rival parties, dividing them into "Turks and Christians," which is just the same as saying, "Englishmen and Catholics." He, as well as his colleagues, never drew the proper distinction, or endeavoured to impress his government that the cause of the differences were religious difficulties between men of the same race, in the vast majority of cases accentuated by the civil and military privileges enjoyed by the professors of the one faith over the others.

However, this consular commission was so far of benefit as it demonstrated the absolute necessity for some speedy remedy. This remedy was easy enough to find; but it was not so easy to find any power prepared to enforce it. Russia did not desire a peaceable settlement. She was the chief conspirator. Germany and France counterbalanced each other; Austria was in conflict with herself on the question; and England, as represented by Lord Derby, was equally undecided. At last, Count Andrassy drew up a memorandum, in which he urged upon the Porte the necessity of granting certain reforms, which he formulated as follows:—

1. Religious liberty, full and entire.
2. Abolition of the farming of taxes.
3. A law to guarantee that the product of the direct taxation of Bosnia and Herzegovina should be employed for the immediate interests of the provinces.
4. The institution of a special commission, composed of an equal number of Mussulmans and Christians, to carry out these reforms.
5. The amelioration of the rural populations.

To this memorandum the other powers all agreed; but, instead of presenting it to the Porte with a distinct threat that the reforms in question would be enforced by them if the Sultan did not carry them out, it was presented separately by the respective ambassadors, and did not take the form of a collective note.

The reason for this procedure on the part of Austria was, that Count Andrassy was afraid of rousing the Slavs against him, and thus losing his position. Lord Derby's reason was of the same nature. He was frightened to death at the bare idea of affording any pretext for another discussion of the treaty of Paris, and yet had not the courage to avail himself of the rights accorded by that treaty to the signatory powers, to insist upon the proper treatment of the Christians. This conduct was all the more inexcusable inasmuch as Count Andrassy had to consider the very strong feeling of the Hungarians against the Slavs, and against any policy which might lead to an annexation of the revolted provinces.

Thus matters went on. The Slavs of Austria naturally did all they could, in the face of many and great difficulties, to ferment the disturbances, and they made no secret of it. Committees were openly formed all over the country, ostensibly for the relief of the refugees, of course, who passed over the frontier; but, in fact, the government had quite lost its hand over its subjects, and was powerless to check the most flagrant violations of the frontier. In short, Slavism was rampant throughout the country, and the excitement quite intense. This state of affairs continued throughout 1875, till the beginning of spring, 1876, when a certain change took place, due to the action of the Catholic clergy, who were beginning to be alarmed at the dimensions the movement was taking, and the prominent part played by Servia and Russia as champions of the Orthodox Christians. This change manifested itself amongst the Catholic communities of Bosnia, who held more and more aloof from the movement. From the first they played a very cautious game. Possessing great privileges, the Catholic Church in Bosnia was always careful to remain on good terms with the Porte—as, indeed, it is the modern policy of Catholicism everywhere to seek its sup-

port from the government if any way possible. Their action would have been still more decided in favour of the Porte, if hopes had not been entertained that Austria might, at the last hour, consent to the annexation of Turkish Croatia, and part, at least, of Bosnia and Herzegovina. But when the "atrocity" excitement arose, the Catholic Church felt itself exactly in the same position in regard to the Greek Church, as the Church of England felt itself in regard to dissent. For the *Daily News*, having regained its position as the exponent of the views of the dissenting world, and having called its party to the front on the common ground of humanity and Christianity, the Church of England had not the courage to refuse its co-operation, trusting to time and events to bring about a reaction. Thus the Catholics again took a more prominent *rôle* when they clearly saw that Turkish rule was virtually approaching its end.

The leading idea—the Grundgedante—of this policy of the more foreseeing section, and the most influential section of the Croatian party and the Vatican, is to cement the good relations existing between them and Prince Nikita, of Montenegro. There must ever be a rivalry between the two reigning houses of Servia and Montenegro. Both countries claim the mission of re-uniting the Serb provinces of Turkey, and forming out of them an independent kingdom. Both countries may unite for awhile with the object of taking joint action against the common enemy; but when success has crowned this action, under which leader, under which house, are the destinies of the Serbs to be shaped? The Vatican gives the preference to Prince Nikita; Montenegro is to be the Servian Piedmont, and Prince Nikita its Vittorio Emanuale. All sections of the Serbs and Slavs, Czechs, Croats, and Slovacks, acknowledge the disinterested patriotism of Prince Nikita; all foreign nations bear testimony to his single-mindedness, honesty, and tenacity of purpose. He possesses personal qualities of the highest order, and there is no flaw in his escutcheon. There are no such blots on his shield as those that induced the Emperor of Germany to refuse to receive Prince Milan. There are also no rival houses in Montenegro; no Karageorgevitch, and no Obrenovitch, to disturb the peace by their intrigues. Finally, there is in Montenegro a total absence of all the bureaucratic paraphernalia, modelled on the system of a great country, that make the Servian government the prey of endless intrigues and jealousies. There are as many ministers and heads of departments in Servia to 1,200,000, as in Great Britain to 28,000,000 souls; and the same diversity of personal interests, which, from the absence of broad and general views, degenerates from large-party action into tea-party squabbles and scandal. Added to this is the fact that the Servian people would not find the least difficulty in transferring their allegiance from Prince Milan to Prince Nikita, especially if he brought to the union between Montenegro and Servia a dowry, in the shape of Bosnia and the Herzegovina, to establish an independent State with. On the other hand, the mountaineers of Montenegro would never allow their reigning family, which has such just claims to their affection and esteem, to be swallowed up in the vortex produced by the rival houses of the Obrenovitch and Karageorgevitch, or be ousted in favour of either.

But, in addition to these general principles which guided the Vatican, there was another and special idea that led to their adoption. The Catholic Church has already a firm footing in Bosnia and Herzegovina, whilst in Servia it has none; nor is it likely to acquire any as long as St. Petersburg rules at Belgrad. It became, therefore, of the highest importance for the Vatican, that Bosnia and Herzegovina should not be merged in Servia; but, on the contrary, Servia merged in Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Montenegro. A glance at the map shows, that, in this case at least, common sense is on the side of the church. From Budua to the junction of the Save and Unna an arbitrary line has been drawn, cutting a country inhabited by the same races into so unequal a portion, that the western tract is but a mere strip of sea-coast, possessing the largest number of unrivalled ports, for the distance, in any part of the world; whilst the eastern portion, including Montenegro, is entirely cut off from the sea, or from deriving any advantage offered by the splendid littoral Dalmatia consists of. In any case, a more dog-in-the-manger policy never existed than that of Austria, which refuses to give up Dalmatia—a tract, be it remembered, that does not pay for its administration—to Montenegro and the Turkish Slavs; and also refuses to annex these provinces, or

in any way to assist in their development. Austria has not even the plea of strategic necessity for this policy. There is, first of all, nothing for Cataro, Spalatro or Sebenico to defend; and, secondly, not any of the fortifications on the whole line could resist four-and-twenty hours' bombardment. If ever a coast was marked out for peaceful and commercial purposes, it is that of Dalmatia; and one cannot help a feeling of thorough indignation when one thinks that these fair countries, and a steadfast, loyal people like the Montenegrins, are handed over to misery, simply to satisfy the selfish fears and political conceit of a race who are flaunting their pride in the mediæval tagraggery of a by-gone epoch, when brute force was still synonymous with valour and courage, and have nothing to show for their pretensions but a suspension-bridge, built by English engineers; a gilded post-office, that ignores every language but its own isolated lingo; jobbery canals, to reward patriots of the General Türr stamp; steam-ploughs, and other agricultural machines, that have not yet been paid for—a race, in short, that is strutting the political stage in the costume of the 12th century, and playing a masquerade with the national capital of valour and chivalry their fathers won for them ages ago, but which they have done nothing to deserve, as people will find out when the interest on the Hungarian loan remains *in nubibus;* and Baron Rothschild will inform us how much of the last Hungarian loan he succeeded in placing on the market.

Thus both Dalmatia and the Turkish group of Slav provinces are condemned to stagnation, because a turbulent Magyar race "*teremtetes*" and blusters the marrowless, invertebrate assembly, that propagates itself by a process of fission from year to year, under the name of the Vienna cabinet, into acquiescence with its antiquated and retrogressive views. When one thinks of Magyar and Spaniard, one shudders for the peace of eternity; for how these two races mean to settle their claims to the realms of heaven, whence they are descended, and where only their own respective languages are to be spoken, surpasses the comprehension of mortals this side of the bourne. The only hope is that the question will be settled mundanely, in a sublunary spirit of common sense, by reducing their pretensions to a proper level—a sufficient fall, it is certain, for Magyar conceit.

Now, the Vatican plainly seeing that their hold upon one section of the Panslavistic community would be endangered by the merging of Bosnia, Herzegovina, Montenegro, and, as a necessary corollary, of Dalmatia and Croatia into Servia and a Russian outpost or protectorate, worked hard, and with much hope of success, to attain one of two objects—either to procure the annexation of Bosnia, Herzegovina, Croatia, and Montenegro to Austrian Croatia and Dalmatia, as the South Slavic confederation, state, or province of the future, and incorporate Servia with it, or to procure the formation of a similar state, under the rule of Prince Nikita—not Milan—for the reasons above stated. In short, the Vatican strives for the union of these provinces, either outside the pale of Austria or within it, but at any rate united and freed from Hungarian domination, as well as from Russian and Orthodox encroachments *viâ* Servia.

For how long, and with what tenacity, the Vatican and a portion of the Viennese Court has adhered to this policy, may be judged from the fact that the plan was seriously discussed of proclaiming the Archduke Maximilian King of Servia. All the essential conditions were agreed upon between the royal family and the Servian representatives; but the plan was wrecked by the Servians demanding that the archduke should abjure the Catholic and assume the Orthodox faith. Neither the Vatican nor the traditions of the Hapsburgers would sanction such a step; and thus the archduke was obliged to renounce the crown offered to him. The second that was proposed to him he accepted, with the title of Emperor of Mexico. Having lost this one with his life, in the service of the interests of the church, the least she can now do for him is to award him the crown of martyrdom, with the title of St. Maximilian.

CHAPTER V.

'TWIXT CRESCENT AND CROSS.

MEANTIME, in addition to the insurrection in Herzegovina, the rebellion also broke out in the north of Bosnia, more or less along the confines of the Austrian frontier. The state of these districts during 1876 was sad enough, but still nothing like as bad as was commonly reported, chiefly by the correspondents, who were never nearer this part of the country than Ragusa, several hundred miles away. The following account of the condition of this portion of the disturbed regions was written on the spot:—

A couple of hours' ride by rail, through a fertile district, over the rich black soil that lies between the Save, Drave, and Danube, brings the traveller to Sissek, where the railway comes to an end, and the dominion of the Danube Steam Navigation Company commences. True, some five-and-twenty miles further south there exists a fraction of the projected Turkish lines through Bosnia, running from Novi to Banjaluka; or rather, it begins a little this side of Novi, at Doberlin; but from there to Sissek, Hungarian "interests" block the way.

Sissek lies on the Save, close to the junction with this river of the Kulpa, along the valley of which a railway is also projected to Karlstadt, as part of the line it is intended to build from Essegg to Sissek, and thence to Fiume. This line, connecting the Save, Drave, and Danube with the Adriatic, and which will also be fed by the Turkish lines, will be a very important one, and especially benefit Sissek, which is already a busy, thriving town on both sides of the Save, and the terminus for steam-traffic. Like Agram, one cannot help constrasting its busy, work-day appearance with the idling, Sunday-afternoon-enjoyment aspect of the Hungarian provincial towns. Four times have I visited Sissek within the last three years, and each time I have observed unmistakable signs of progress; whilst such towns as Szegeddin and Czegled in Hungary are always the same, and remind one forcibly of the dense duckweed on a stagnant pond unruffled by any breeze.

Here, so close to the scene of action, we might easily expect to hear some authentic news of the events occurring lower down the river. The expectation was not unfounded as regards news of the most startling description. Bodies were floating in the river, minus the heads, legs, or arms, and tied to stakes in an attitude highly disrespectful to the population on this side of the river. In fact, whilst the heads were looking across into Austria, the bodies turned their backs to it. At some points there were said to be seen some unhappy wretches impaled alive, and who had been known to have been writhing in unspeakable agony for three days and nights—a story that I see has been endorsed by Canon Liddon and Mr. MacColl in the *Times*, from personal observation at some little distance. Now, there is no need to exaggerate the horrors of this Eastern war; they are quite bad enough; but I have been up and down the Save three times, not on board a comfortable steamer, but on horseback, zigzagging about on either side the river, and I have not yet been able to see any such horrors as those sworn to by the officials on board the boats, or the atrocity-mongers of Sissek. The mendacity of the Slav in matters political is so stupendous, that to look for the smallest particle of truth, is like pumping the four oceans dry to find one certain grain of sand.

For these reasons, coupled with my own observations, I refuse to believe the tales told about the impalements, &c., along the Save; and were there room for any "belief" at all regarding the statements of Turk or Slav, I would just as soon believe the former as the latter. As an instance of how the deeds of one are foisted on the other, let the following story suffice. At Kobass, on the 24th of June of this year (1876), I was shown the body of an alleged Turk, which was fearfully mutilated; the head was split, cut off, minus nose and ears, and the eyes gouged out. This was a sample of Christian atrocity. But it struck me as rather curious that here, in Turkish Kobass, amidst a Turkish population, there should

be this solitary instance, especially as there had been no fighting in, or reasonably near, Kobass, to bring the body there. I inquired about it. "Oh, Effendum," was the reply, "they did it over on the other side (of the river). The man was a fisherman, and had unwittingly drifted over to the opposite bank, when he was attacked. We heard his cries for help, and went to his assistance, but were too late." "How did you go to his assistance?" I asked, drily. "Five of us jumped into a boat, and fired on the *giaours*, and then they all ran off into the thicket." "How many of them were there?" "V'allah, twenty or thirty!" "And so," I said, "twenty or thirty men fell upon one man, and ran away when they saw five getting into a boat to cross the river! That won't do." Having taken them aback in this manner, I quietly went to the body and examined it, and proved to my own satisfaction, and to the complete discomfiture of the Turks, that the man, of whatever other religion he may have been, was most certainly neither a Jew nor a Moslem. I could mention a couple of dozen instances, at least, where I was led into a wild-goose chase through the plausible lies told me.

The prevailing character of the Save, like the Drave and Lower Danube, is one of loneliness. Arable land and pasture alternate with low and well-timbered hills, the forest oft-times stretching right down to the water's edge. The villages are mostly wooden; many of the houses built on piles, as at Sviniar, where inundations are frequent, and last sometimes three or four weeks. Altogether, the plains, dark forests, and general mud-and-water aspect of the lower grounds between the Danube, Save, and Drave, present an aspect closely resembling the features we are accustomed to associate with the earlier diluvial periods. At some places I quite imagined I had a lacustrine village before me. I could vividly picture to myself the unwieldy forms of a megatherium or an ichthyosaurus characterising the landscape, and bethought me, frequently, of the lines some poet or other attempts to describe the age in:—

> "The 'grey old age' lacustrine Celt,
> To save him from the wiles
> Of bears and wolves, and such like, dwelt
> On lake-surrounded piles;
> And hugging there a wooden pot,
> He gulped a sorry juice—
> To cheer his sad rheumatic lot—
> Of juniper and spruce."

Only in lieu of juniper and spruce, substitute "slibovitz," a spirit distilled from the prune, which forms here the national beverage, and has quite a Celtic flavour about it. The prune, in fact, is one of the chief staples of trade in Slavonia and Bosnia. Every peasant distils his own liquor, the "Finanz" taking care to get the government tax upon the quantity produced.

This "Finance," somewhat resembling our excise, is a peculiar feature of these parts, not only in those bordering the frontier, but also far in the interior. Combining excise with custom duties, and even the collection of taxes, and possessing a military organisation, they form an influential body of men, in virtue of their official character, their superior education, and the patriotic unity prevailing amongst them. They are all Slavs, necessarily so, in order to carry out their duties, and are thus unadulterated with any Magyar elements. Intensely sympathising with the political objects of the South Slav party, they have done, and are still doing, all they possibly can to promote the success of their brethren across the frontier. I am strictly accurate when I say that, for them, the frontier does not exist when it is unfavourable for their friends on the other side. This state of things is very irritating for the Hungarians, but they cannot prevent it. The troops they send down to the frontier, but who are always quartered at some distance from the river, are quite powerless to counteract the "Finanz" interest; nor, to tell the truth, do they try to do so; for the soldier, as I have seen in Poland, Italy, and France, has a strong objection to what he calls "playing the policeman." His business is not preventative, but executive. Thus when Mr. Holmes, British consul at Serajevo, ascribes the Bosnian troubles, in a great measure, to Austrian intrigue, and the facilities afforded to the insurgents in crossing and making use of the frontier, it must be borne in mind that, as I have shown, the frontier does not exist, and that from the very nature of the circumstances, the government has no power in the matter. Being under Hungarian administration, it is quite certain that the Hungarian government did all in its power to keep these districts well in hand, but quite unsuccessfully. For instance, the sale of powder being strictly forbidden within so-and-so many miles of the frontier, the "Finanz"

are the very men who procure it, and facilitate its transit. One of them told me a very good story. The Turks had been in the habit of coming across the river to buy powder, and, of course, now required large quantities. A trader in Gradiska was applied to by a Turkish merchant to procure him twenty barrels, and was told that, as the sale was forbidden, it could only be procured by dealing in it as black sand—the villanous substitute for blotting-paper, and which bears considerable resemblance to powder. Of course the Turk did not care what it was "declared" as, and thus all the bills of lading, &c., were made out for so-and-so much "Streusand." He received his twenty barrels, paid for them, pocketed his bills of lading, customs receipts, &c., went home to Gradiska, and found there that his barrels contained just what the bill declared—sand, and nothing more. Of course he could do nothing; but I would not like to be in that Austrian trader's shoes if his victim should ever get him into his power.

The Hungarians have thus a hopeless task before them if they desire to cut off communication between the two banks of the river. It is a difficult task to accomplish between two different races or nations —*vide* the Franco-Spanish difficulties during the Carlist war. But to draw an arbitrary line of that sort between communities of the same race, and having the same sympathies and interests, is absolutely impossible. One might as well try to draw a line from Portsmouth to Leith, and forbid communication between the denizens of the two halves, whilst leaving the guardianship of the line in these denizens' own hands. Even if there were a sufficient number of Hungarians to take the place of the "Finanz," they could not do it, from ignorance of the language. And if the difficulties are so great on what is called the "water frontier," and which is formed by the Save and part of the Unna, what must they be on the "dry frontier" (Trockene Grenze), running in a zigzag fashion, with bends and twists innumerable, through marshes and forests, over mountains and vales, from Budua, on the Adriatic, to Brod on the Unna?

Thus, though the minarets and mosques on the right bank of the Save, and the Greek and Latin Cross on the left, show that there is a religious division marked by the waters of the meandering river, there is no difference of race, language, or habits, lay and religious customs, between the population on either side, except as regards their condition. Little as there is to admire on either side, one cannot help being struck by the contrast between the neat-looking villages, with their church steeples and belfries, generally two to each village—a Catholic and a Greek one—and the ramshackle, tumbledown hovels along the opposite bank. And, more significant still, whilst here and there on the Turkish side, a handsome villa in an elevated position, tastefully selected, may be seen gleaming out of the foliage, nothing of that kind is to be observed on the Austrian side. Those houses are the residences of the Beys; they take the place of the baronial strongholds of mediæval times; whilst below them, clustering together in human styes, seethes the suffering mass of humanity whose blood and sweat are poured out into the ground in the service of their masters. On the Austrian side, equality seems, on the whole, to characterise the people. Their houses are all, more or less, of equal size, and equally well kept; though, all the way from Sissek down to Semlin, these two are the only places that can fairly claim the title of a town. But, though primitive in appearance to the highest degree, the houses of the peasantry —Austrian side — are comfortable, well suited to the requirements of the people and exigencies of the climate. The better class live very well; meat, fuel, wine, slibovitz, grain, flax, hemp, &c., are all grown by themselves; and where one proprietor is in want of one of these commodities, he resorts to a system of barter with his neighbours. But, like a bugbear, or horrible nightmare, the shadow of Turkish rule weighs heavily on this district, which ought to be the centre of one of the busiest highways in Europe. Navigable for a distance, as the crow flies, of 300 kilometres, the Save almost connects the Adriatic with the Black Sea, the source of the Kulpa not being more than twelve miles distant from Fiume. And, as though nature intended it as an outlet for the produce of Bosnia, it is abundantly fed by the waters of the Glina, Unna, Bosnia, Verbas, and Drina—all of them rivers that are or might be made navigable for barges and small craft, and running through districts rich in the possession of all kinds of vegetable, animal, and mineral produce.

So much for the Save. A famous high-

way to travel comfortably by, from Adria to Hungary and Servia, it is quite certain that the traveller in search of information regarding the war of 1877-'78, must seek it elsewhere than on board the steamers. If the officials are Germans, "Schwaben," or shortaway, "Schwab," they will indulge in wholesale and indiscriminate vituperation of Slav, Magyar, and Turk alike. If Slavs, if Hungarians, then woe-betide the credulous; but if the traveller wishes to know what the real character of the Bosnian revolt was and is, let him visit the villages along the high road that skirts the Save at a distance of some ten miles, say, beginning at Brod and passing, *viâ* Oriovatz and New Gradisca, to Pakratz. There he will see the material "foreign intriguers" strive to excite into revolt. Excite! Not all the intriguers of Europe could produce such a feeling in the Bosniak mind as excitement. Not all the heroes of all ages and nations would be able to screw up the Bosniak's courage to fighting-point. His spirit is utterly crushed. Even that great attribute of mankind, the consciousness of his misery, is absent in the Bosniak. I can say nothing more expressive than this, nothing that speaks such volumes. If it be doubted that this is true, let me point to facts and figures. The Christian population of Bosnia amounts to some 500,000 souls; of these 160,000 are refugees on Austrian soil, and some 40,000 in Servia, where they have sought and found a shelter. Nearly half the population has run away; the other half is cowering, in abject terror, at the foot of the Moslem, who holds their lives, and the bodies of themselves, their wives, and daughters, at his disposal. The Moslem population amounts to about 400,000: they are the most fanatical, tyrannical, and brutal element in the Moslem world. But they, too, are Bosniaks, Slavs by race and by language, and have no more connection with the Turk or Osman, than an Englishman has with a Caffre. It requires far more love for one's neighbour than, at any rate, I possess, to feel any sympathy with such a race—as a race—of which one-half is composed of brutal renegades, and the other half of abject animals, which have been steadily pursuing a course of retrograde development for the last 600 years. By all means extend sympathy and charity to the individual—we even do that to the homeless dog and the abandoned cat—but do not let false sentiment plunge Europe into a war for the sake of such a race. Keep the causes of this degradation well in view, and insist on the removal of those causes, not so much for their own sakes as for the honour and welfare of the rest of humanity. And in regard to the sympathy that is being lavished on these people—Moslem or Christian—I would just ask, leaving out of the question such amiable souls that would weep over the blighted affections of a youthful frog—how much of this sympathy is less with the people than with the country? In how far is this sympathy provoked by the neglected state of the land, and the non-development of its natural resources. The sight of a fertile estate running to ruin through the incapacity, from whatever cause, of the owner, causes a feeling of pity, not for the proprietor, but for the riches thus running to waste. So with Bosnia. Here is a land running to rack and ruin, that might materially benefit millions of people; and it certainly claims our sympathy in this sense, and in a practical form. The question must be approached in a practical, and not in a sentimental frame of mind.

Thus, to sum up matters under the present circumstances on the Save, I find that there is no question between Turk proper and Slav; but that the existing state of things, atrocious or not, has arisen amidst an homogeneous race, and is due to the jealousies and dissensions of the Slavs themselves. We find that here, in Bosnia, one-half of the race, the landed proprietors, became renegades, and identified themselves with their conquerors. The other half, crushed, humiliated beyond description by their own brethren, had but a fraction of personal freedom left them. And this fraction of liberty only helped to produce another division in their broken ranks, and to separate them into two sections, the Orthodox and the Catholic, each of which regards the other with intense aversion, even to the extent of one of them passively uniting with the Moslem.

No sketch of these regions would be complete without a picture of the clerical prince of Croatia.

Not very long ago two men were waiting in the refreshment-room at Mestre for their respective trains. They seemed to know, but took no notice of each other. The one was a tall, gaunt personage, with wiry, grey hair bushing out on either temple, marked features, and small glittering eyes. He

walked with an elastic step, and had all the appearance of a man bearing the responsibilities of a high position, and quite satisfied with the way he was discharging its duties. The other was a short, stout individual, with heavy eyelids, aquiline but flabby nose, and careless, not to say slovenly, in his dress. He, on the other hand, did not impress one with the idea of his being a successful man. On the contrary, he rather conveyed the impression of his being a disappointed man—of what the Germans would call a "Verfehlte Existenz." The former was Joseph George Strossmayer, Bishop of Bosnia, Djakovo, and Syrmia; and the latter was Ernest Renan. The trains came up, and the bishop, the author of Pomponio Leto's "Eight Months in Rome," and the "Letters of Quirinus," went to Rome; whilst the author of the "Life of Jesus" went wandering to Venice. The one had made his peace with the Vatican; the other was still erring outside the pale of any church—a wandering Jew amongst the Pharisees. The one was still a potent factor in the world's society; the other but one of the phantasmagoria of Bohemian life. So, at least, saith society.

As we have said, no picture of South Slavonia would be complete without its virtual, if not declared head—the central figure, in short—that represents the aspirations, capabilities and intellect, the virtues and the failings, of the Southern Slav. It must be remembered that he also represents the Vatican and the Roman Catholic Church, in spite of the views he took, and the line of conduct he pursued, during the Vatican Council. It is well to direct especial attention to this fact, because Canon Liddon and Mr. MacColl, who recently visited the bishop for two days, have certainly misapprehended his political position, and have ascribed principles and ideas to him he is far from entertaining. It is not easy to say how the misapprehension arose—whether the bishop himself caused it, or whether the episcopal splendours of Djakovo occupied too much of the reverend gentlemen's time to correctly appreciate the bishop's views: probably the latter was the case; for two days are scarcely sufficient to master a mind of such intricacy, in spite of his apparent frankness, as Bishop Strossmayer's. Whilst Canon Liddon asserted that the bishop wishes Bosnia to be annexed to Servia, it is just exactly the contrary that is the bishop's desire. In whatever way the error has arisen, it is a fundamental error, and one that nobody could fall into if he had the most elementary knowledge of the question. A moment's consideration will prove that such is the case. Servia is an Orthodox State; Bosnia partially Catholic; and the Vatican opposed *per fas et nefas* to the Orthodox Church, or any extension of its jurisdiction. Bishop Strossmayer, representing the Vatican, could, therefore, not possibly counsel the incorporation of Bosnia with Servia—except, perhaps, as a preliminary step, and in view to future *bouleversements*, which it is just in the interest of Europe to prevent.

With this correction, Canon Liddon's views and opinion that Bishop Strossmayer "probably holds in his hands the tangled threads of the Eastern Question more perfectly than any other man," are quite correct. Quite true, he does. But he pulls them from a specifically Croatian or South Slavonian point of view, and, if he could, would solve the enigma by the light of this view, which just happens to be one of the questions—*i.e.*, whether the disintegration of Turkey is to result in a Croat, a Serb, or a Russo-Panslavonian State? or, whether things are to go on as hitherto after a judicious course of tinkering and re-modelling?

Apart from his personal qualities and talents, Bishop Strossmayer owes his success to accomplishing the most difficult feat of sitting between two stools. Formerly the Court preacher (Hofprediger) of the Burgkapelle in Vienna, he made many influential friends at Court, and was appointed to his present post in 1850; Croatia, from its military services and loyalty, having always enjoyed much imperial favour, especially at that time, when Austria owed so much to the Croatians in suppressing the Hungarian revolution of 1848. Then, a quarter of a century ago, the Panslavistic hydra had not yet reared its countless heads, and Croatia was regarded as one of the mainstays of Austria, to influence which, Hofprediger Strossmayer was regarded as eminently well fitted.

But the causes that made him at that period a *persona gratessima* to the Viennese government, came to an end when Pesth shared with Vienna in the administration of the empire, and shut Croatia out in the cold. The Hungarians would be but too glad could they but get rid of a bishop who stigmatises them as Turks, and worse than

Turks; but the Court and Slavonic party at Vienna are too well aware of his influence not to keep him in his present post; added to which, his liberal views have gained him the support of the anti-ultramontane and anti-concordat parties. At Rome, again, the Vatican would gladly have excommunicated him, as they proposed doing, had he not been indispensable to them from his ascendancy over the Croats. Thus, ecclesiastically obnoxious to the Vatican, politically hated by the Hungarians, he was politically necessary both to the Courts of Rome and Vienna; whilst latterly he has been reconciled to the Vatican, and the past dispute allowed to drop, on the part of the Vatican from expediency, and on his part for the national, *i. e.*, Croatian welfare.

Now Bishop Strossmayer is eminently calculated for preparing the great work that must always precede the unification of crude and diverse materials. If Prince Nikita, in whom the bishop has every confidence, is to be the Vittorio Emanuele of South Slavdom, Strossmayer will certainly be its Cavour. He has laboured for years in the work, promoting culture, industry, and economy, by every means in his power, throughout Croatia. He has largely contributed to an Academy of Art at Agram; under his fostering care literature—national Croatian literature—is flourishing; no Croatian artist applies to him in vain; all men of culture and intelligence are welcome to him; and, if possible, he seeks to retain their services. The amelioration of the condition of the peasantry is constantly before him. In short, there is no subject concerning the progress of the country, from paving a road to founding an academy, to which he does not devote his attention, his influence, and his purse. Add to this his learning; his knowledge of Italian, French, and German; his hospitality, and ways of a refined man of the world, and a courtier; his manly instincts and force of character; his chivalrous enthusiasm for the cause he is engaged in; his diplomatic acumen and political knowledge. Sum all this up, and the result is a perfect Bayard of the church. It would, under these circumstances, seem somewhat ungracious to be obliged to demur to some of the opinions ascribed to him by Canon Liddon and Mr. MacColl; but as these gentlemen have represented him as denying Servian intolerance in regard to the Jews, it may casually be observed that, next to the Magyars, the objects of his greatest aversion are the Jews. But that is such a minor point that it is not worth consideration when discussing Bishop Strossmayer. Suffice it to say that the Croats, under his leadership, consider themselves entitled to assume the hegemony in the South Slavonic state of the future, in virtue of their superior qualities and powers, and would certainly never let themselves be swallowed up by the Serbs.

The daily life of such a man and his surroundings cannot but be interesting, especially when both preserve, in a high degree, the character of ecclesiastical life in the palmy days of its power. We abstain purposely from the word mediæval as used by Canon Liddon, for we quite fail to see what there is peculiarly mediæval about the bishop, his palace, or his surroundings. Nor, from what we remember of Fulham Palace, do we quite see how that building can be compared, externally or internally, to the episcopal residence of Djakovo. It is built in the form of a quadrangle, is one storey high, and surrounds a large courtyard inhabited by a fox, a couple of eagles, and a youthful stork. The basement is taken up with the household offices, stables, &c., a long gallery running round the upper storey, out upon which open the doors of the saloons and rooms occupied by the various officers of the bishop's household, his secretaries, clerks, &c., the chancellerie being on the ground-floor. There are three separate suites of apartments—the grand saloon, hung with the portraits of the former bishops of Djakovo, a billiard-room, and dining-room, leading lengthways away from the front towards the back of the building. Adjoining this suite follows a series of smaller rooms and cabinets, used chiefly for the bishop's guests, the walls of each hung with paintings of various earlier schools, especially Venetian and Tuscan, and of modern Slav artists, all of which are intended as a gift to the National Academy of Art at Agram. To the right of the grand saloon a door leads to the bishop's private apartments, the surroundings of which are certainly more in the style of "the grand monarque" than the others, which are but meagrely furnished, and will be empty when the paintings are gone; whilst the rooms occupied by his secretaries, Monsignore Vorsak, M. Gamperl, and Count Jules de Drohojowski, are of a truly monastic simplicity. A large garden and well-wooded grounds are attached to the

palace; and, in the farther corner of the court-yard, on the right-hand when entering, is the ancient episcopal chapel where the bishop attends mass. Till one o'clock, the episcopal dinner hour, he is engaged in his study, and does not like to be disturbed, no matter by whom, except on business. By that time, however, the guests of the day, and the members of his household, assemble in the grand saloon till he makes his appearance, and leading the way with the chief guest to the place of honour on his right, casts business to the winds, and sets to enjoying himself and delighting the company, which seldom numbers less than a dozen, and generally amounts to twice that number, especially on Sundays and *fête* days, when his table is more than usually crowded. Amongst the guests are the German and Italian artists who are engaged on the frescoes in the cathedral of St. Peter, which the bishop is building partly from funds provided by his predecessors for the purpose, but chiefly from his own pocket. It is a fine structure of bright-red brick in the Italian Romanesque style, the two western towers, surmounted by finely-tapering steeples, and the cupola, being of the same material, and presenting thus a rather peculiar appearance. The crypt and vaults are roomy, and built of solid masonry; whilst the interior, when finished and adorned with the frescoes designed and executed by MM. Zeitz, father and son (pupils of Cornelius and Overbeck, but domiciled in Rome), will bear comparison with that of any of the chief churches in Rome. The visitors are from all corners of Europe; Franciscan friars from Bosnia; officers from Essegg; clerical dignitaries from Agram and Rome; delegates from Dalmatia; artists, authors, and stray waifs from London or Paris, who have remembered the sensation caused by the "wild Croat," as Pio Nono called him, who tried to devour the infallible dogmatists at the Vatican Council. These are the elements which, presided over by a host who knows how to draw his guests out, easily prolong the dinner, with the aid of an excellent *cuisine* and irreproachable cellar, to half-past three or four o'clock. But, be it known, a Slav dinner is no small matter. It must be approached in a spirit of modesty and doubt as to one's capabilities, but with stern determination withal. Not that the viands are so overwhelming in amount, as a general rule; though, on one occasion, no less than forty-seven dishes were served, which took three hours and a-half to work through, being at the rate of one every four minutes and a-half, but on account of the Slav habit of toasting in bumpers of good-sized tumblers. The "Nazdravas" (your health), and the "Zivios" (viva), on such occasions, are something portentous in their frequency. Supposing there are twenty guests at the table, the bishop makes the beginning, and, after a complimentary speech, drinks to your health, to which you bow your acknowledgments, but do not drink in response at once; at the same time he couples your name with that of some lady, present or not. After an interval you rise, and, thanking his excellency, drink with a "Nazdrava" to somebody else's very good health; that person returns the compliment; and thus the toasting goes on and on, till the amount of wine imbibed convinces one that purity, at any rate, exists somewhere, and that is in the bishop's wine —most of it grown on his own estates, which produce some 10,000 gallons a-year. After dinner, coffee and cigars; whilst the bishop, not being a smoker, disappears, and indulges in forty winks, which is rather gratifying as showing, at any rate, one mortal weakness in his armour. But it is not more than forty winks, for he soon reappears for a drive or ride on horseback to his vineyards, park, or preserves, of which he possesses two, one for large, and the other for small game; besides a tract of forest for wild boars. The chief park is divided into two sections by an ordinary fence, separating the common deer from the white deer (*Dammhirsch*), of which there is a herd of 400. Here the bishop amuses himself by taking a shot now and then, but misses on purpose, except when there is a grand *battue* in honour of some high and mighty guest, and proves that he is as keen a sportsman and as good a shot as any Highlander that ever wore a kilt instead of a bishop's apron. Then back to the palace, and supper at 7 P.M.; after which, a rubber with Canon Vorsak and Count Jules de Drohojowski. This goes on till about ten o'clock, and then to bed, where, in his dreams, the bishop still carries on his implacable war against Turk, Hungarian, and Hebrew, and rises at about 5 A.M. in summer, and six in the winter; so that his life is not all play and pleasure.

Yet it is this aspect of his existence that most strikes casual visitors, and produces upon them the impression of "mediæval splendour;" which Canon Liddon ran away with, or which ran away with him, and led him into such statements as that the bishop's "head-servant" is called "Harem Pasha," when alluding to the bishop's "Pandour," an official for out-door work that every nobleman possesses, and who is dressed in the regular Pandour costume of red, blue, or other colour, adorned with an intricate system of brass-plates and bells, and strings and tassels, and whom it would be the height of presumption to attempt to describe. He is truly an important-looking and imposing personage, and appears to have had the same effect with his "Asiatic splendour" upon the Canon, that the beadle, in his scarlet cloak, is intended to exercise on the infantile mind. So far from the title "Harem Pasha," which so touches the Canon's sense of humour as applied to a Roman Catholic bishop's "head-servant," being a remnant of Turkish customs, it is nothing else but a nick-name given to him in reference to a little episode, of which, no doubt, his manly or imposing form was the original cause. Finally, he is not the bishop's head-servant at all. That personage is a demure gentleman in black; and if the Canon gave his parting douceur to the Pandour instead of to him, it is an additional proof of the value of brilliant externals, though it is to be lamented, in this case, for the opinion that will be entertained of the Canon in the servant's hall at Djakovo.

These, it will be said, are very small matters. But if small things are thus misrepresented when it would have been quite as easy to represent them correctly, the other representations must also be taken *cum grano magno—maximo*, in fact. For it must be remembered that the bishop's table is a peculiar institution —a sort of political alembic—that receives a continual strain of crude materials, and distils them over, chastened and purified, for export all over the country, and beyond it. Thus the Canon and Mr. MacColl were wonderfully well rectified in the episcopal sense, and, like the port-wine fortified with a modicum of alcohol, were sent back to England with a tinge of mediævalism to suit stronger tastes. Of course, all such free hospitality always has its object when the host is a public character, and produces its effect, as Lady Glencora has shown us, especially where society is not so scrupulously conscientious as was the duke and her other critics. A Croat, above all, Catholic in all his instincts by nature, Roman Catholic by his profession, diplomatist, politician, and courtier by taste and turn of mind, and an eminently practical idealist, Bishop Strossmayer does not enunciate a single word that has not its well-defined object. His most sparkling anecdotes have a hidden moral, an *argumentum ad hominem* in them; and it is only by continually bearing this in mind, that one can fully estimate the important object he is playing for—*i.e.*, the elevation of the Slav generally, the Croat in particular, and the reduction of the Hungarian influence to its numerical proportions.

It cannot be denied that he has a good case. His special complaints are, that the Hungarians swallow up 55 per cent. of the Croatian revenue for imperial purposes, and only leave them 45 per cent. for educational and public works; that the postal service, the telegraphs, and all other important posts are occupied by Hungarians; that they are abolishing German in the national schools, and substituting Hungarian; that they have allowed the Jews to settle within the quondam military frontier; in short, that Croatia is to the Hungarian government that which Bosnia is to the Turkish. Emancipation from Hungary is his primary object, as a Croat and Slav; and to obtain this object he would enter into any temporary arrangement with Servia, or the young Servian party, to produce the necessary pressure. Turkish misrule is of secondary importance compared to this object. Of course it must go with the rest, but Hungarian misrule must go also, and the Magyars, instead of draining Croatia of its money, pay up their own arrears of taxes, which amount to very many millions, amongst the nobility alone.

Still, with all these administrative drawbacks, the lot of the Slav peasant, even in Turkey, under ordinary conditions, is materially far superior to that of the peasant in any other country, no matter where. The real evil in the rural economy of the Slav districts, on either side of the border, is the absence of a rural middle class—a yeomanry.

But with all its material advantages, rural Slavonia does not present an inviting picture.

A ride from Fiume to Bihach, from Glina to Brod, and a drive from Brod to Essegg, with an occasional detour right and left towards the Save or the Drave, will probably amply satisfy the most ardent investigator in his quest for information. As to the best season for any such expedition, the intending tourist can take his choice of any of the four that constitute the Slavonic calendar. Here they are:—

> Snow, slush, and mud;
> Rain, mud, and mire;
> Wind, dust, and fire;
> Malaria, gnats, and fleas.

These, as far as an extensive experience shows, are the twelve signs of the Slavonic zodiac. They are enlivened by a perpetual chorus of frogs, exclaiming, in an everlasting drone, "What the devil!—what the devil!"—and unable to get on any farther for sheer wonderment as to what the mischief any sane man can want to come to Slavonia for. The dark soil of the country, the rank vegetation, the endless stretches of corn and maize, rising out of an undergrowth of great gourds, the melancholy, shaggy buffaloes, in a sad, pachydermatous enjoyment of their native mud, and the solemn, uncouth peasantry, stalking through their fields like so many grave storks that have lost their beaks, all impress one with a sense of depression and monotony it is vain to struggle against. There is no cheerfulness either in the landscape or its inhabitants. Mud is the characteristic feature of the scene for three parts of the year. And even during those months that, in most countries, impart some light-heartedness and merriment into rural life—during the harvest and the vintage—the only approach to blitheness consists in the music of a ragged gipsy-band, and the songs and dances of the peasantry, which are all three simply horrible in their oppressive melancholy. Of course the peasant is not remarkable for his cheerfulness in any country; the plough takes it out of his back, and swinging the flail is not an intellectual exercise. But he is, at any rate, boisterous at times, and indulges, now and then, in venting his feelings in some strong, hearty fashion; but the Slavonic peasant takes his woes and pleasures in a caterwauling miaouing fashion, which is the acme of mental stagnation. To hear some Slavonic Corydon serenading his Phillis, is the veriest desolation of sound. It seems to be the lament of a maiden cat bewailing, like Jephtha's daughter, her virginity on the top of a deserted garret in a plague-stricken town. The dance of the Slavonic peasant, instead of warming the blood a little, and causing the performer to indulge in the eccentric steps and bounds the German or French peasants delight in, consists in the dancers forming a ring by laying their hands on each other's shoulders, and jumping up about two inches, whilst imparting a tremulous motion to the body by bending the knees on the downward stroke, till they all look like so many animated lumps of quivering jelly. All this is performed to the wail of half-a-dozen violins, each playing a different tune on half-a-dozen notes. Take any six notes of the preliminary screech of violins in Wagner's "Tannhäuser," transpose them into a minor key, play them over and over again, and the effect of Slavonic national melody will be pretty fairly realised.

To make up for this burden of melancholy, the Slav, generally speaking, sets his stomach upon a pedestal, and then straightway falls down and worships it. He is undoubtedly fond of good and abundant food; and, to tell the truth, his *cuisine* is by no means bad, though, like all primitive people's, rather too rich. It is immensely varied, and thus makes some amends for the monotony of his life and the landscape it is set in. As a natural consequence of this monotony, he is also fond of bright colours, and exhibits herein almost as bad a taste as we do, which is certainly saying a great deal. Red, blue, and yellow, in glaring juxtaposition, are, of course, his favourite colours; and on gala occasions, and on Sundays, when the sheepskin jacket is new, and the linen trousers so broad that they look just like petticoats, and are clean and white, there is a certain awkward picturesqueness about the Slavonic peasant of the Danube that still savours strongly of the East, especially in the Turkey-carpet sort of embroidery with which he and his better-half adorn their festive garments. This sort of embroidery—in coarse worsted—is claimed by Bishop Strossmayer as an original Slavic art. As it is the only one the Slavs lay claim to, they may as well be allowed to enjoy whatever reputation it affords them. Otherwise, female Slavonic attire is simple in the extreme, consisting of a jacket of sheepskin, the wool turned inside, and a

chemise, of which one end is generally looped up, exhibiting an expanse of leg and thigh more like the fairy queens and Dianas of burlesque, than what one would expect the prosaic peasant-woman of Slavonia to resemble. And, in fact, there is no romantic foundation for the attire, but, on the contrary, a very material one. The bottomless mud of Slavonia, that forces even the clergy to wear Hessian boots, like so many hussars, would be fatal to shoes, stockings, or petticoats; and thus the bare leg, in its unadorned and natural beauty, is best adapted for progressing through the mire, that curls up, in graceful festoons between the Slavonic toes, to the tune of a constant squish.

This mud has, also, considerably influenced the plan on which the villages are built. The houses, semi-quadrangular, or simply gable-ended towards the street, are built alongside the high-road, forming one long street, so that in populous districts, as between Oriovatz and Brod, one village is scarcely ended before the other one commences. Contrary to what one would expect, the village inns, as a rule, are very fair; the beds are clean, and furnished with a most formidable pile of mattresses. Conveniences, of course, are useless luxuries. The wide expanse of nature is always close at hand. The food, however, is good and cheap. It is not easy to spend more than five shillings a day for board and lodging, including an ample supply of the wine of the country. Especially good and cheap are the poultry, eggs, and milk. Geese and turkeys cost about one florin to a florin and a-half—two to three shillings a-piece; and, to judge from the abundance of the latter birds, one might be well disposed to credit the explanation of Turkey being so called because of the number of turkeys growing there and thereabouts. The milk, being buffalo milk, is very rich, and costs three-halfpence to twopence a quart. A good cup of coffee and a plentiful supply of "Obers" (cream), such as one gets in most of the inns, is not to be despised. Butter and cheese, however, are unknown; whilst, in a country supposed to be devoted to the culture of pigs, it is remarkable how little pork, ham, and bacon are used. Of fruits, the grape, melon, and prune are the chief. Apples and pears are few and bad. Maize takes the place, in the Slavonic kitchen economy, of the potato; but onions and garlic are worthy of Egypt, as well as are the cucumbers. No wonder that the Jews were anxious to settle down in Slavonia, and appreciate its gifts. Not only does it contain the produce of the Promised Land—milk, honey, and wine in abundance, but also that of Egypt in the days of their happiness on the Nile—to wit, the flesh-pots, the onions, the garlics, and the cucumbers, which they seemed chiefly to have sighed for during their wanderings, and impressed upon Moses the fact that the Jewish stomach is a serious thing, and not to be trifled with. Add to this the fish from the Save, Drave, and Danube, the caviare and stewed carp—of which Israel and the monks are so fond—and it will be acknowledged that Slavonia would not be a bad kind of place if the people would but wash themselves sometimes, and comb their hair, say once a month.

As might be imagined, in a country where the cost of replenishing the larder is so slight, hospitality is indulged in on a large scale, and visitors and strangers entertained with the best beds and the best of everything. It is the old story, however—civilisation and the primitive virtues do not combine. The greater the rascality and the swindling, the more highly civilised is the nation. Hence, peculation, robbery, swindling, &c., are very rare in Slavonia; love in the month of May, and slibovitz in the month of January, being the chief causes of crime in shape of battery, assault, and homicide. Swindling the government, of course, does not count: that is rather a "popular" virtue. One of the characteristic features of a Slavonic village is the wells, with their long dipping-poles stretching athwart the sky; whilst on the high-roads, the rail-carts, drawn by three horses, generally at a sharp trot or a gallop, at once remind one of the Russian "Troika." There is also another institution in rural Slavonia, not met with elsewhere—truly and literally, the Wayside Inn. The proprietor of the village tavern is entitled by his licence to appropriate a convenient piece of ground alongside the road, and to furnish it with a primitive hearth of two or more conveniently-lying stones. On each side, and about six or eight feet apart, he fixes a forked stick—fork uppermost, and one opposite the other. A whole pig or sheep is transfixed on a wooden spit, which rests on the above-mentioned forks, and is then roasted before the fire, the innkeeper furnishing the wood for a small sum, and

trusting to the consumption of drink for a "fair profit." This institution is made use of by the cattle-drivers, waggoners, and gipsies; the monopoly being sometimes sublet to the butcher of the place, who roasts his own meat, and retails it to the passers-by, at the rate of about 2*d.* a pound, cooked. This is the only form of impalement to be met with in Slavonia, Turkish or otherwise.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SERVIAN AGITATION.

THE action of the Croats and Slavonians along the confines of Bosnia and the Herzegovina, naturally roused the jealousy of the Serbs, and spurred the Omladina on to redoubled exertions. They were alarmed at the influence which the Croat and Catholic party were acquiring in these provinces. Even the flight of refugees across the frontier into Austria was regarded as most serious, as it gave the Croats an additional claim to consideration in the future. And not only was the alarm felt by the political parties; it was also largely shared in by the clergy, who justly feared the progress which was being made by the Roman Catholics. The attitude of Montenegro also caused great uneasiness, for it was very generally believed that Prince Nikita wished to take the lead in the consolidation of the Serb provinces belonging to, or under the tutelage of, the Porte. At the same time the Serbs in Hungary were straining every nerve to precipitate events. Threatened on all sides by the Croats, by the Germans, by the Hungarians, they felt convinced that, unless Prince Milan adopted a bold policy, they would see Bosnia and Herzegovina cut off from Servia for ever, and handed over to the Croats, whose instinct for their own interests would far outweigh any of the historical ties or the racial relation between them and the Serbs.

Thus, whilst professing the same desires, and asserting their community of interests, there were three distinct parties, each pursuing the same end with different objects.

Bosnia and Herzegovina were the prize. To obtain this prize was the object of Croat, Serb, and Montenegrin alike. The Croats, led by General Rodich and Bishop Strossmayer, and supported by a powerful Court party at Vienna, were opposed by the Hungarians openly and energetically, and intrigued against by Serb and Montenegrin. The Serbs, headed by M. Ristics, and supported by Russia, were equally opposed by the Hungarians, and intrigued against by Croats and Montenegrins. The Montenegrins, however, owing to their peculiar position and the compactness of their interests, enjoyed the most freedom from attack. Supported strongly by Russia, they were temporised with by Croat, Serb, and Turk alike. The principality was not large enough to cause any fear of permanent conflict with Austria, and could always be played off against Servia, or *vice versâ*.

The position of Prince Milan, therefore, when the insurrection in Bosnia broke out, was not an enviable one. To the north and the west of Bosnia the Croats were having it all their own way. In the south, the greater proximity of Montenegro, and the more warlike and sturdy character of the people, threw the Herzegovinians into the arms of Prince Nikita. In the east, on the Serbo-Bosnian frontier, the Turks were in considerable force. They held the fortress of Mali Zwornik, with the line of the Drina, and were in strong numbers at Serajevo, the capital of the province, which, besides, had very strong military positions at Trawnik, Fotscha, Vishegrad, &c. Servia was thus, more or less, out of the running; and, besides, she had no money.

Now, as far as real grievances went, the Serbs had none at all. They paid a very small tribute to the Porte, and were under the protection of the great powers. Between them and the Sultan there were none but the smallest differences. One was the Mali Zwornik question—a frontier dispute chiefly, as with all the rest—entailed by the erratic caprices of the river Drina, which insisted every year or two on altering its course, to spite either Turk or

Serb. Then there was the railway question; but this was less of a political than of a financial question.

There was, therefore, no earthly practical reason why Servia should have interfered in the Bosnian question at all. As for the rhodomontades about sympathy with the oppressed races in Bosnia and Bulgaria, sympathy with the misfortune of others is an unknown quality in Servia. Gratitude, hospitality, charity, the novel characteristics of semi-savage races, are unheard of. All the talk, therefore, of the wars of the insurgent provinces formed but the stock-in-trade of the journalists of the *Obzor*, *Vidovdan*, *Zastava*, *Serbski Novine*, &c., and furnished but the material for intriguers throughout Slavdom to fill their own pockets, and to attain place and position, or to supply the wood for the hobby-horses on which Mr. Freeman and Messrs. Liddon and MacColl pranced to Exeter Hall and Hyde Park after their more arduous ritualistic labours.

The Serbs themselves were quite aware that they had nothing to complain of which might not easily be obtained from the Porte with a little frank consideration; and they knew perfectly well that the possession of a few acres of ground on a disputed frontier border was not worth going to war about, and would not be allowed by the other powers. But when the insurrection in Bosnia arose, the opportunity was eagerly seized by the tuft-hunters and intriguers, and the cry of sympathy and patriotism raised to cover personal ambitious avarice, and, it may be said, the demands of necessity.

The agitation in Servia arose partly within the principality, and partly without.

Within, it proceeded from the considerable number of people who had abandoned agricultural pursuits, and migrated to the towns. The Serb, when he has gained a little education, and become acquainted with the *tingel-tangels* and can-can circles of Vienna and Pesth, conceives a great repugnance to a country life. His ambition is to become a merchant or a statesman—the citizen of a town. He will sell his little patrimony and establish a booth, a commission-agency, or anything that does not require much work, but allows of much talk. But he has little aptitude for commerce, less for industrial pursuits, and is thus left far behind in the race by the Jew and the German. Hence his deep hatred of the two races. Without brains, without energy for practical affairs, he degenerates into an intriguing idler and habitual conspirator. Such is the case in all ranks. To take an instance: Sir Charles Bright purchased a large mining estate at Kutschaina. He employed between 400 and 500 men; but the Serbs were almost useless, and he was obliged to employ Wallachs, Hungarians, and Bulgarians—the latter proving especially useful, and a peaceable, economical body—whilst the Serbs were cantankerous, disputatious, idle, greedy, drunken, and dishonest. The same was the opinion given by the manager of a neighbouring estate at Maidanpek, and by every foreign employer of Serb labour.

There was thus a large number of malcontents, who concentrated naturally in the capital, at Belgrade, and found that patriotism, if properly worked, was a sufficiently remunerative trade. Every opportunity was eagerly seized to stir up the mud and fish in the troubled waters. The railway question furnished these gentlemen with an opportunity. It was generally agreed that this railway was to be built; it was to connect the Hungarian terminus at Basiasch with the Turkish terminus at Mitrovitza; it was to run along the valley of the Morava, and would, no doubt, prove of great benefit to the country. There were no difficulties at all in the way; there was plenty of wood, there was plenty of coal, and the mineral and agricultural riches of the adjoining districts were such as to promise a reasonable profit. The only impediment was the capital. Unfortunately, there had been a Servian timber company formed, which had left an exceedingly diagreeable impression regarding Servia in the Western money-markets, where next to nothing was known of Servia; whilst in the more contiguous money-markets at Vienna, Pesth, and Trieste, far too much was known of the interesting country to allow of a single penny being subscribed for any purpose whatsoever.

Some capitalists, however, such as Messrs. Crawley, Power and Co., and a very large number of invertebrate syndicates, turned their attention to the proposed line, and negotiations were opened up, which all led to nothing. Everybody wanted so many commissions, that the whole of the proposed capital would have been swamped by them alone. Finally, the government itself de-

termined to take up the matter, and try to get a loan for two millions. Agents were, therefore, sent to all the chief capitals—to London, Vienna, Berlin, Paris, Amsterdam, and St. Petersburg. They knocked at the doors of the large banking firms, and based their expectations chiefly on the fact, that Servia had never yet contracted a loan, and was, therefore, unencumbered. These expectations were, however, speedily damped by the very general observation, that Servia's immunity from debt arose, not from her flourishing condition, but from the fact that nobody would lend her anything. In vain did she offer lands, timber, taxes, duties, as guarantee; syndicates, agents, and government all met with the same reply and the host of tuft-hunters, and the flocks' of crows ready to pounce upon the golden prey were bitterly disappointed, broke out into loud complaints, and cast about for fresh fields and pastures new. The immediate result, of course, was dissatisfaction with the government, and especially with the minister of finance, M. C. Mijatovich, who was the chief promoter of the railway scheme.

M. Mijatovich, a mild, gentlemanly little man, with lustrous, melancholy eyes, and habitually attired in a white hat and sky-blue trousers, was a gentleman of considerable education, and had married an American lady twice his size. As one of the consular corps used to observe, M. Mijatovich was thus doubly overweighted—by his foreign connection, and his superior education, which placed him, at a moderate estimation, fully a century in advance of his countrymen. Still, even as the porker of Chicago had ousted the acorn-fed pig of the Servian wilds, and sailed up the Danube in the shape of portly barrels of lard, so M. Mijatovich fancied that he would be able to substitute the ideas of New York and London for those of Belgrade and Kragujevatz; and at the same time he fancied, that with Madame Mijatovich's assistance, he would also be able to convince London what a magnificent future was awaiting Servia. With this intention he caused Madame Mijatovich to write a book about Servia and its prospects. It was a very sober production—so sober, in fact, that it was very appropriately published by the well-known temperance bookseller, Mr. Tweedie; but as it only gave one side of the question, it did not produce the effect fondly hoped for. This was bad enough;

but failing in the railway and loan scheme, M. Mijatovich also managed to displease the very large tribe of "bankers" and money-changers by his manipulation of the old currency when he introduced the new coinage, by preventing the State from incurring a loss for the benefit of these gentlemen. Thus failing in negotiating a loan, failing in providing pickings for the multitude, and even contemplating the introduction of laws to prevent fraudulent bankruptcy, and a few other cherished institutions, such as the oppression of Jews and foreign traders in the interior, M. Mijatovich only retained his position because there was really not the vestige of a reason to attack him.

Thus, for a time, M. Mijatovich, who gave the whole tone to the cabinet, went on projecting reforms of various kinds, and spasmodically making another attempt at a little loan, when the disturbances in Bosnia broke out. This was the signal for the tuft-hunters, for the professional patriots, for journalists' editors, to swarm up like a crowd of gnats on a summer's eve, and buzz around M. Mijatovich's ears. His rival, M. Ristich, at once took advantage of the movement, and summoned the unruly spirits, from near and far, to come in their thousands to Belgrade. And they came. They swarmed into the *cafés* and hotels, into the "Servian Crown," the "King of Servia," the "Hotel de Paris," all in a state of greater or lesser impecuniosity, but with unlimited capacities for the assimilation of solids and the absorption of liquids. There was not room for them all in Belgrade, and many slept in Semlin, on Austrian territory on the other side of the Save, whilst they ate, drank, and conspired in Belgrade. Business of all kind got to a standstill; the creditors clamoured, the debtors complained and cried loudly for the *moratorium*. This broke M. Mijatovich's back; he and the rest of the cabinet resigned, and M. Ristich succeeded him as the head of the war party. Of course the *moratorium*—the suspension of payment of bills of exchange—was granted, and patriotism allowed to run rampant at the expense of the foreign merchants in or out of Servia. Not the least unimportant section of agitators was the host of newspaper correspondents located in Belgrade and Semlin. They were divided into two sections, the anti-Servian and the pro-Servian. The latter remained in Belgrade,

the former in Semlin. The pro-Servians were the correspondents of the Croat journals, *Obzor*, &c., of the Hungarian-Serb paper *Zastava*, of the Bohemian paper *Politik*, and endless writers for the Russian and French press. The English press was represented only for a short time by a correspondent for the *Manchester Guardian*. The anti-Serbs were the correspondents of the Hungarian and Austrian papers, the *Peste Lloyd*, *Budapesti Napilap*, *Ellenör*, *Neue Freie Presse*, &c. All these gentlemen were animated by the fiercest opposition or partizanship, and, as a rule, did nothing but frequent the *cafés* of Belgrade or Semlin, and take their intelligence from the most untrustworthy sources, without attempting to make any independent inquiries. A few put themselves in communication with the consuls; some with the ministers, and such as wished to become ministers; others with the host of adventurers who had come to fish in the troubled stream. But the majority evolved events out of their inner consciousness, according to their desires.

The result of all this was a turmoil and a ferment, of which there were no signs a few miles out of the town. In the country people knew absolutely nothing of what was going on. All that gradually filtered through to them, was a report that the Turks were going to attack Servia, and the government contemplating calling out the militia. The news, however, did not produce much effect, and M. Ristich saw that he would have to adopt other measures to create an excitement. He accomplished this by convoking the Skuptchina in Kragujevatz, the ancient capital of Servia, ostensibly to place it beyond the agitating influences in Belgrade, but in reality to transfer a portion of that agitation into the interior of the country. In the meantime, wishing to keep on good terms with the moderate and conservative party, he offered no objections to M. Mijatovich's becoming Prince Milan's private secretary.

Such was the state of affairs in the autumn of 1875. There was an exceedingly active and unscrupulous war-party, headed by M. Ristich, which was determined to plunge the country into war. "Action" was their cry; in what that action should consist, on what basis it should be taken, they were not at all clear about. The dominating idea was jealousy of Montenegrin and Croat. But they could not determine whether this action should be independent, whether it should be undertaken in conjunction with Austria, with Russia, or only with the assistance of the Omladina. Everywhere there were divided counsels, and, as a consequence, they drifted hither and thither, till they became, more or less, the laughing-stock of all Europe. The consuls were equally undecided and divided. There had been a pretty general three-cornered duel going on amongst them for some time. Dr. Rosen, the Prussian consul, demanded precedence of the French consul, who, in virtue of his title as agent diplomatique, would not yield on the point. At the same time Dr. Rosen had growled with the Russian consul, M. Kartzoff, and refused to be conciliated. At last the other consuls proposed that M. Kartzoff should call upon Dr. Rosen, and Dr. Rosen then return the visit. But, at the last moment, Dr. Rosen refused to receive M. Kartzoff, and the result was, that the incident which had led to diplomatic representations by Prince Bismarck and other ministers, terminated by a friendly communication from Prince Gortschakoff, that Dr. Rosen was a very troublesome person, and had better be sent away from Belgrade. This was done, and the question of precedence settled by Mr. White, the British consul, proposing that it should go by seniority of service in Servia, and not by rank; so that the Greek consul was constituted *doyen* of the consular corps.

This, however, did not bring any real union into the consular body. The indecision of the foreign governments was reflected in the action of their consuls. The only one who seemed to know what to do, and who did it, was the German consul, Count Bray. But then, as he was formally instructed to do nothing but keep his government *au courant* of all that occurred, his task was not very onerous or difficult.

Consul White, on the other hand, from whatever reason, acted in an official and an unofficial capacity. Whilst officially counselling the prince and his ministers to keep the peace and allay the excitement, he at the same time said, that if they followed his advice as a private individual, they would at once take action and declare war. There is no doubt whatever as to this singular action on the part of Consul White. By some it was ascribed to the influence of his wife, a Polish lady. But as the Poles

by no means love the Serbs, and still more hate the Russians, whose policy it was to stir up Servia into a declaration of war, this explanation will not hold water. It was probably due to the turn public opinion was taking in England, and a desire to appear a friend of Servia, which dictated his policy. That it was a fact, appeared not only from the positive statements of Prince Milan and M. Mijatovich, but from his own utterances.

In fact, M. Mijatovich met his unofficial advice with the argument that Servia did not wish to cut herself off completely from Turkey. "Servia," he said, "is far too weak to stand alone; she would inevitably gravitate towards Austria. It is beyond doubt that, sooner or later, the Serbs on either side of the Save and Danube will become united. But it is not to be supposed for an instant that Servia will ever be powerful enough to wrest the Serb districts of Austro-Hungary from the empire. In all probability it will be Austria which will wrest Servia from Turkey. For that reason, whilst we wish to secure absolute local independence and a complete autonomy, we do not wish to snap the thread which binds us to the Porte, and entitles us to claim the protection of the Turkish government."

This was a sensible and intelligent policy. But it did not suit the views of M. Ristich as the apostle of the great idea—of a mighty Servia—of the Omladinist Utopia. Had Mr. White reported in this sense to his government, and had they taken corresponding action, in all probability the whole Servian war would have been avoided, together with the disastrous complications that resulted from it. He may possibly have done so; but nothing appears in the Blue Books to warrant the supposition. On the contrary, in his despatch of September 13th, 1875, he simply encloses a translation of the prince's speech at the opening of the Skuptchina, and the reply of the deputies, as they appeared in the official gazette; whereas it is perfectly well known that M. Ristich induced the deputies to present a secret address to the prince, urging him to take up arms for the prohibition of the Bosnian insurgents. He knew perfectly well that such a document existed, for he was informed of it by M. Mijatovich; besides which, it was also well known that M. Ristich only succeeded, after enormous pressure, in gaining a small majority for the insertion of the following passages in the reply:—

"Verily the present condition of Servia is a very complicated one, as your highness has said; our people are disturbed in their domestic quietness. The large forces collected by the Ottoman Porte on our frontiers, and the hostile attitude assumed by these towards Servia, has compelled a portion of our countrymen on our eastern and western frontier to leave their fields and their homes for the purpose of watching over the security of our country.

"The Servian nation, which has redeemed this dear country with its swords and blood, is mindful of the words spoken by your highness in a proclamation in 1872, 'that it would be a sin to lose the smallest portion of this heritage of our fathers, and it is little enough to our credit that we add nothing to it.'

"These words are engraved on our hearts. The times are serious, no doubt; but no less serious, sire, is the will of the Servian people to rise to the height of the occasion.

"Wherefore, the Skuptchina declares hereby solemnly, on behalf of the Servian people, their readiness, as a nation, to defend their fatherland and its liberties, and to preserve inviolate the inheritance of the great Milosch, and of our fathers: there is no sacrifice which Servia is not ready to make on the altar of the country. At the voice of your highness the entire nation is ready, as one man, to present itself to defend our native soil.

"Sire, the secular sufferings of our brethren in Bosnia and in the Herzegovina, have compelled them to rise in arms and fight for their natural and their national rights.

"The effusion of their blood offends our fraternal feelings. Their cry of despair finds a noble echo in other parts of the civilised world. We cannot, we ought not to remain insensible to their fate.

"The Skuptchina is penetrated with the deepest gratitude at seeing that your highness' conviction is, that these disturbances must be tranquillised by obtaining permanent satisfaction for our oppressed brethren.

"In this patriotic direction you may rely on the support of the Servian people, who are prepared to place at your highness' disposal all the means required to accomplish this great task."

These passages were forwarded by Consul

White to his government on September 23rd, at the same time as he received the official French translation.* But they had been given to him some time before by M. Mijatovich, who translated them for his convenience in the above form, in order that the British government might have early information. At the same time he told Mr. White what pressure it had been necessary to bring to bear upon the assembly, which, by the way, held its sittings with closed doors. Why did not Consul White avail himself then of this opportunity to inform government how matters actually stood?

No doubt Mr. White would deny all this: but it remains a fact all the same. Internal evidence also proves that the above passages were not written by an Englishman. The translation was certainly not made by Mr. Henneage, nor by Mr. Spooner, nor by any Englishman. For instance, "secular sufferings" is scarcely a translation of *siècles de souffrances*—centuries of suffering—as appears in the official French translation.

Nor does the passage, "It would be a sin to lose the smallest portion of this heritage of our fathers, and it is little enough to our credit that we add nothing to it," accurately represent what was really said—*i.e.*, "It would be a serious responsibility to lose the least of what our fathers acquired, and unworthy to add nothing to it." Equally so, the phrase, "These disturbances must be tranquillised," is scarcely English.

In short, Consul White did not make such use of the opportunities offered to him as might have placed the government in a position to appreciate the full significance of the movement which was in progress. Or, if he did, government has successfully kept the secret, and is greatly responsible for what ensued.

It was not until the spring of 1876 that Mr. White began to inform the government of the threatening aspect of affairs. On February 5th, he wrote:—

"Although the echoes which reach this place from Vienna and Berlin, and even from St. Petersburg, are extremely pacific, and would lead one to suppose that political men in the continental capitals look upon the present disturbances in Turkey as in a fair way of being solved in the sense of Count Andrassy's project, it is my duty to report to your lordship, that there are numerous indications in Servia which, unfortunately, point to a contrary result.

"The preparations which have been steadily going on for some months, and which are now prosecuted with renewed vigour; the extraordinary powers voted by the 'Skuptchina,' and demanded by the Servian administration; the activity of numerous unofficial agents, whose connections are well known—all confirm the supposition that something important is in contemplation.

"With the return of spring, a supreme effort will probably be made to enlarge the area of the insurrection, and to delay a pacific solution in the Herzegovina, by importing into the shifting sands of Eastern politics a Bosnian and Servian, and, possibly, a Bulgarian, and other questions."

This despatch was followed up by another on February 17th, which, however, conveyed singularly inaccurate impressions as regards the attitude of Russia towards Servia. He wrote:—

"Ever since the commencement of the present disturbances in the Herzegovina, it has been apparent that the conduct of the Prince of Montenegro has been exercising an influence on the attitude of Servia, and his example has been constantly used as a reproach to Prince Milan in the Slav newspapers published in the Hungarian dominions, and even by violent partisans of the 'Omladina' in this principality.

"The connection of that prince with the origin and duration of the present insurrection is generally believed here, and invoked as a title to popular favour amongst Slavs.

"There are some circumstances in which that prince has been particularly fortunate, and which contribute to invest him with a peculiar reputation of success in the national cause.

"He is said to have secured a loan, whilst Servia, with superior resources, has hitherto failed in contracting one; he appears to have escaped the admonitions of either Russia or Austria for his conduct, whilst Servia received a solemn warning from the great powers last October; more than that, the Imperial Court of Russia has given Prince Nicholas several indications of its sympathy, whilst Prince Milan has had none bestowed upon him since Count Soumarokoff's mission here at his marriage; and even the customary presents granted by

* Turkey, No. 2 (1876), C—1475.

the Czar on those occasions have been hitherto withheld.

"Somehow or other an idea has got abroad that, sooner or later, the Prince of Montenegro would derive actual benefit, in the shape of an accession of territory, concurrently with the termination of the insurrection.

"This supposition, though, as far as I can see, resting upon no basis, acts as a stimulant on the excitable politicians of Belgrade; and having been recently repeated, as if approaching realisation, produced an unusual sensation here, by giving the war party a most welcome and convenient argument.

"I felt it my duty to inform your excellency of this mischievous report on the 10th instant, at 7 A.M., by telegraph, and received a contradiction of it in reply on the 14th instant.

"In the meantime, the Prince of Montenegro considered it his interest to send one likewise to Prince Milan; and I see from the *Times* newspaper of the 12th instant, that he has thought it worth his while to get a similar denial published in a telegram, dated Cettigné, February 11th, disclaiming at the same time 'any discouragement by his government of the insurrection.'

"The despatch of a new special envoy from here to Cettigné had been intended for some weeks previously, and Colonel Ranko Alimpitch was at once sent off in that capacity, with instructions, at the same time, to transmit here regular information as to the conditions and plans of the insurgent forces.

"It is evident, therefore, that an approaching pacification is not anticipated here, and that Servia may be induced, in the long run, to paticipate in the struggle, unless the pacification of the Herzegovina is more prompt and easy than people here are disposed or willing to believe." *

This despatch was followed up by another, of which the following extract is given:—

"I beg to assure your excellency that I have been assured, from a source which I have hitherto found reliable, that the chief reason which has prompted Prince Milan to assume a bolder and quasi-martial attitude, is the growing suspicion in his mind that a bait, in the shape of an accession of territory, was about to be offered by Austria, on behalf of the Porte, to the Prince of Montenegro.

"This opinion is strongly entertained here by persons who are supposed to be well acquainted with the nature of the relations which have existed, during the last two years, between the Court of Vienna and that prince.

"It is admitted that probably Prince Nicholas would be content with a secret promise to that effect just now, and would be willing to wait for its realisation until such time as the insurrection has been completely subdued."

Now, the false impression conveyed in these despatches is produced by the statement that Russia looked upon Montenegro with more favour than upon Servia, and that there was a jealousy of Montenegro in consequence. That is quite incorreet. The jealousy of Montenegro existed long before this period, and was the cause of Russia's displeasure, not *vice versâ*. The Russian agents—who alone were believed, official representations being very properly regarded as only undertaken to keep up appearances—had incessantly urged Servia to war; and it was the hesitation of Servia, which could not make up its mind between following the Austrian lead or the Russian desires, that led to the disfavour the Czar was induced to regard Servia with. At the same time, however, Russia had no special interest in Servia at all. The Serbs were not a race the Russians cared about benefiting. They only required somebody to keep the fire going, and made use of Prince Milan simply as a *pis aller*—a second string to her bow, in case Montenegro should succumb.

This was perfectly well seen through at Belgrade; and there is no doubt but that if Austria and England had combined, Servia would have followed their counsels instead of those of the unofficial Russian agents.

But instead of showing how affairs really stood, Mr. White talks about the Omladina as though it had been a potent factor in determining the policy of Prince Milan. Instead of endeavouring to effect a *rapprochement* between Servia and Austria by showing what influences were at work to estrange the two countries; instead of showing that Count Andrassy, by poohpoohing Servia, whilst allowing the Croats to do what they liked, and by persecuting the Hungarian Serbs to please the Magyars, was really doing his best to urge on the conflict, and inducing the belief at Belgrade

* Turkey, No. 3 (1876), C—1531.

that Austria was thoroughly opposed to Servia, and thinking only of the annexation of Bosnia; instead of showing all this—for which he had ample materials—Consul White did his best to produce the impression that the movement in Servia was a national movement, fostered by jealousy of Prince Nikita of Montenegro. And in conformity with this policy, he repeated the platitudes regarding the doings of the terrible Omladina, which were gravely enumerated by Count Andrassy and others, with the object of showing that society was dangerously threatened by this and other secret associations, which were solidarily united with the revolution.

The Austrian State had nothing to fear from the Omladina, any more than Russia had anything to fear from her secret societies. It suited the government, however, to magnify their importance, pretend that it was endangered by them, yet at the same time making what use they could of them both ways. They were allowed to proceed a certain distance in their agitation, in order to afford the government a pretext for asserting the existence of the question. But at no time was the Omladina beyond the control of the government authorities.

As for the influence of the Omladina on Prince Milan, it was *nil;* it was used by him and his advisers as it was by the Austrians. But in itself, and as an organisation, it had no power whatever beyond what was publicly known, publicly allowed and sanctioned by the authorities.

All this was so well known, that it is simply astounding to read such a despatch as the following, which was sent by Consul White to London on April 28th, 1876:—

"In the political events which are either going on or preparing in this part of Europe, two distinct Slav bodies are likely to exercise no small influence—viz., the *Omladinists in Hungary* and the Slavonic committee in Moscow.

"The *Omladinists are the Slav home rulers of Hungary;* as such, they are hated and despised by the governing (Magyar) class in that kingdom; and hitherto they had shown so defective a political organisation, that their importance arose *much more from their supposed connection with certain parties at Court at Vienna*, and on account of their actual relations with the revolutionary party in the principality of Servia, than on account of any immediate influence as agitators in Croatia, Dalmatia, or Slavonia. Actual events are foreshowing a change in this respect.

"From 1849 to July 1875, *these Slavs* were chiefly aiming at the attainment of a recognition of certain home-rule prerogatives, by means of their opposition to Magyar or Hungarian supremacy. With that view they took up arms under Jellachich for the Emperor Francis Joseph in 1849, opposed the restitution of the ancient Hungarian constitution till 1867, and have carried on a more or less factious constitutional opposition to the dominant party since that year.

"But the sympathies which *the Southern Slavs* were able not only to set forth openly, but also to which they could give practical effect during six months, in favour of the insurgent Slavs in the Herzegovina, have modified *their position,* and the aspirations of *that race have acquired fresh vigour from the Adriatic to the Drave, and from the Drave to the Theiss and the Save,* by giving them a cohesion and a common bond of hope, by making them view the cause of the Turkish rayahs as their own, and their emancipation from Ottoman rule as an object of primary importance for Austrian Slavs, by which they can attain an influence which they have not had for centuries, and which they have hitherto sought in vain on the hustings or in parliamentary assemblies.

"Their proximity to the scene of the insurrection has enabled the Croats and Dalmatians to give the insurgents far more real assistance than they can have derived from Servia, and the public men of the latter principality have seen themselves gradually ousted by these, and by the Prince of Montenegro, from the leadership of the national cause, which Servia considered hitherto as its peculiar mission and attribute.

"The Slavonic committees in Russia, and especially the central one at Moscow, have contributed a good deal to propagate sympathy for the insurgent cause in the Russian empire, and to collect funds for the support of that cause."

Consul White here makes the surprising statement that the Omladina and the Croats, and the rest of the Austrian Slavs, were working together for one object, whilst, as we have shown, they simply made use of the same means to attain different objects.

He ought to have pointed out that the Omladina differed essentially in its objects from the Croat party; that its importance

only arose from whatever connection it had with Servia; and that, far from being connected with the Court party at Vienna, in the sense of being supported by that party for the attainment of its particular object, it was only used by the Court party in so far as it might assist the Croat and Catholic movement.

Consul White must have known all this; and certainly he was aware of it the same day he wrote the above despatch; for there is another despatch from him, dated the same day, April 28th, in which the following passages occur:—

"The prince takes no pains to conceal that more than ever he considers a collision with the Porte as within the range of possibilities; but he continues to disclaim, at the same time, any intention to act as the aggressor. He pointed out to me, the other day, that that portion of Bosnia which is conterminous to Servia has been entirely free from armed bands since last November, when the Papas Zarko was repulsed into Servia, whilst the insurgents, who had within the last few weeks made their appearance on the river Unna, between Bihatch, Novi, and Kostainitza, were all in proximity to the Austrian frontier, and he *defied any one to show that Servia had been instrumental in fostering insurrection in that part of Bosnia*, though he added that such an accusation had been made somewhere, evidently alluding to Austrian authorities.

"Indeed, it is generally believed here that this last rising in that part of Bosnia which I have described above, and which is generally known by the name of Turkish Croatia, owed its main support to *Austrian Slavs*.

"Whilst the above are, no doubt, the views of the most influential persons in this principality, corresponding military preparations are carried on unremittingly with immense care and attention; and although the purchases of stores of different kinds are contracted for on a scale corresponding to the smallness of the resources of this juvenile State, most of these indicate by their nature the contemplation of a regular warfare at no distant period, and payments for them have well-nigh exhausted the small supplies of cash which either existed in the treasury a few months back, or which have accrued to it since. It does not appear that any means have succeeded, up to this moment, in providing for a mode by which it would be possible to replenish the exchequer before it is thoroughly drained—a moment which cannot be far off.

"The delivery of some of the stores will not be supplied by the contractors till May, and to the end of June; and the intended purchase of horses in Bessarabia having turned out a total failure, on account of their high price, these are brought daily across the Danube from the inundated districts of Hungary by dealers, and those that are approved of are bought by the war department.

"All these facts would lead one to suppose that a regular campaign was in contemplation; the militia has been divided in six divisions, and all the arrangements of this new organisation are, I believe, sufficiently advanced to enable Servia to enter the field at very short notice, and perhaps even before all the preparations are fully completed, should it be considered advantageous to do so.

"In conversation with the foreign representatives, persons in authority tell us that all these preparations have a purely defensive character, and that the advent of the war party in the councils of the Sultan might, at any moment, expose Servia to an attack, and her prince to the merited reproach of his people, were he to leave such a danger out of his calculations.

"Thus much I may say, that I have not met a single politician of any note in Servia who did not contemplate, sooner or later, hostilities with the Porte—*not with a view to independence, but for the purpose of the acquisition of Bosnia, and through the deeply-rooted desire of making the present principality the nucleus of a larger Slavonic State under the suzerainty of the Porte, as long as European Turkey forms a compact State.*

"All are unanimous and agreed on this subject without exception. A few entertain a faint hope that the same result might be attained by negotiations with the Porte if any of the great powers could be made favourable to such a project; but not even these exclude an appeal to arms altogether from their calculations; so that it may be asserted without hesitation, that the only differences existing amongst Servian public men in this respect are as to time, and appreciations of the fittest opportunity."

This proves amply that it was well known at Belgrade, in all circles having any

knowledge of the facts, that the two movements, the Croat and the Omladina, though moving side by side, were really opposed to each other. In fact, they were rival suitors for the fair lady Bosnia, whom they were equally intent on delivering from the hands of the Turk. Now, why did not Mr. White clearly state the circumstances long before? And how is it that he did not state, in 1875, that "not a single politician of any note in Servia wished anything but the development of Servia under the suzerainty of the Porte," but left this important intelligence till 1876, when it was too late? He cannot even plead ignorance; which, though it would not be to the credit of his employers, would, at any rate, absolve him to a certain degree. He was repeatedly informed of the true state of affairs. In strong contrast to his habits in Warsaw during the Polish insurrection, when he kept the doors of the consulate double-locked, barred, and chained, in Belgrade he kept open house, and was fully informed, from hour to hour, of all that passed.

Now, having drawn a line between the Croats and the Omladinists, it will be easier to define the precise relations of this terrible body to Servia, and to appreciate the influence it is said to have exercised on affairs at its true value.

It was, in fact, a three-headed monster. The one head was Svetovar Milatics; the second was Karageorgevitch; the third was "General" Stratimirovitch. Each of these three despised the other, and repudiated all association with each other.

"General" Stratimirovitch is a descendant of the Patriarch Stratimirovitch, under whose auspices, a couple of centuries ago, a large number of Serbs fled from Turkey, and, seeking refuge in Austria, formed a considerable portion of the ancestors of the Hungarian Serbs. In 1848, Stratimirovitch rendered considerable service in the campaign under Jellachich against the Hungarians, and was promoted to the rank of general. In reward for this, and for services to the emperor of a more personal nature, he was presented with an estate, and granted a certain sum of money. But estate and money soon disappeared, owing to his intemperate habits and gambling propensities. After awhile, circumstances arose which resulted in his being cashiered; henceforth he was never mentioned but with contempt, and with shrugging of shoulders, which is more significant than words. For years he dragged on a hang-dog existence, always on the look-out for something to turn up. That "something" appeared, as he fondly thought, in the shape of the Bosnian insurrection and the imminent action of Servia, as was generally expected. So Stratimirovitch, resuming his title of general, proceeded to Belgrade, and made the most tempting offers to Prince Milan and his ministers. He was accompanied by a consummate rascal and notorious brawler, a man called Rankovics, who was his general factotum, his "gallopin," and called himself the "General's" secretary. Others of a similar stamp followed him to Belgrade, where he established a regular recruiting bureau. The Servian ministers, much as they disliked the personal character of the man, nevertheless entered into negotiations with him as much to keep him in sight, and prevent his doing any mischief elsewhere, as for any other reason. At the same time they had a sort of idea that his military experience might be useful, as there were no officers in the Servian army, of his rank, who had had any experience of actual warfare. The commander-in-chief, General Zach, was, first of all, an aged man, a very amiable man, indeed, but untried in the field; and secondly, he was a Bohemian, and not a Serb. So Stratimirovitch was provisionally accepted for a command, and supplied with a moderate amount of money to enable him to keep himself and his family of several children, who had accompanied him to Belgrade, and to gather round him a number of penniless individuals and adventurers from all the four quarters of the globe.

The second Omladinist chief was Karageorgevitch. This person, popularly supposed to have caused the assassination of Prince Michael, was protected by the Hungarians and Austrians as a useful card to play against Prince Milan in case of necessity. But when the insurrection broke out, he determined to play a game on his own account, and, recruiting a body of men at his own expense, made periodical expeditions across the border whenever an opportunity offered to raise a few head of cattle, when there were no troops in the way. His chief object, however, in these expeditions, was the distribution of a number of medals, on one side of which

was his own effigy, and on the other the motto, "Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality." With these medals, and a proclamation calling upon all the Slavs to appear at the unfurling of the banner of their emancipation on the plains of Kossovo, where the conquest of Servia by the Turks was accomplished, Karageorgevitch expected to be able to establish a great Servian republic on the ruins of the house of Obrenovitch. But Kossova was unfortunately a long way off, and right in the midst of the Paynim's territory, so that neither medals nor appeal were sufficient to rally the Servian braves round the banner which Karageorgevitch may, or may not, have had ready to unfurl. On the other hand, both medals and proclamation furnished the material for diplomatic representations, and afforded Count Andrassy an opportunity to direct Sir Andrew Buchanan's attention to the difficulties which the imperial government had to contend with. What with the Omladina, what with the refugees, and what with Karageorgevitch, the poor count really did not know what to do. He was badgered on all sides, and even Prince Milan called him to account for allowing the Pretender to pass and repass the frontier without molestation. And insult was even added to injury; for when Prince Wrede, the Austrian consul in Belgrade, following Count Andrassy's instructions, declared that the Hungarian government would be only too glad to intern Karageorgevitch, as they had Liubibratich, if they could only find him, the Servian authorities offered to lend Count Andrassy one of their own detectives, who was able to follow all his movements. However, Karageorgevitch's expeditions had no further result than the above representations, and a despatch from Sir Andrew to the Earl of Derby, to the effect that 4,000 of the medals had been distributed amongst the Serbs in Bosnia and the adjoining districts of Servia. Now to show how small beginnings lead to great ends in the diplomatic world, as elsewhere also, it may here be mentioned that these famous medals were the speculation of a clerk in a mercantile house in Karlova, of the name of Veslin. Following the custom in the Nüremberg and Birmingham trade, of providing buttons, studs, snuff-boxes, &c., with the portraits of celebrated men, he had had a number of these counters made on the chance of selling them amongst the admirers of Karageorgevitch, who, unlike the "unfortunate nobleman, had no brains but plenty of money," and was himself Veslin's chief customer. It was a cheap and facile way of attaining notoriety, and of bringing his name before the general public, as well as within the Foreign Offices of the European capitals, and even into the numismatic collections in the museums of Pesth and Vienna.

This is probably as much as most people will care to know about the proceedings of the Karageorgevitch Omladina. Still, be it remembered, it was regarded as one of the questions, and really seriously discussed by statesmen and diplomatists with portentous gravity.

The third, and chief of the Omladinists, was Svetovar Miletics, one of the Serb deputies in the Hungarian parliament, and proprietor and editor of the *Zastava*, a Serb paper published in Neusatz.

Neusatz, it may be mentioned, is a flourishing little town opposite the frowning walls and ramparts of the celebrated fortress of Peterwardein, and one of the great centres of the Serb colonies in Hungary. It drives a considerable trade in grain, wine, &c., and is altogether a progressive place. A little further down the river we come to Carlovitz—better known to the British public through Max Greger's advertisements of the red wine, grown on the slopes of the hills which surround it; but of high importance to the Serb population as the seat of the Serb patriarch, and as surely also an important centre for Serb agitation. Still further down the river, an hour's distance by steamer, past Belgrade, at a little way up the river Temes, lies Pancsova, also a great centre for the "Omladina," and represented in the Hungarian parliament by D. Michael Polit, an intimate friend of Miletics'. North-west of Pancsova, and on the railway from Bosiasch to Pesth, lies Verschetz, the fourth focus of Serb agitation. The country in between these four places is the home and birth-place of the Omladina; and between these towns and Belgrade and Semlin, there was a constant communication and agitation going on. The agents of the Omladina would start from Neusatz, proceed to Belgrade by steamer, thence continue to Pancsova, on to Verschetz, and then across country back to Neusatz, or to other minor places in the interior. A constant ferment was going on. At Neusatz,

the brother of Dr. Michael Polit, a hosier and linendraper, was one of the chief agents and forwarders of goods, circulars, proclamations, &c. He occupied in Neusatz just the same position as his fellow-hosier, M. de Soubras, the Carlist agent at Perpignan, and sold patriotism by the piece or the yard, and sedition by the bale, and "Miletics' buttons" by the gross.

All through this region there was an atmosphere of mystery and conspiracy; an oppressive sense of something always going to happen. Men gathered into knots, and engaged in eager conversation, which was immediately hushed on the approach of other groups. First-class passengers in the boats conferred mysteriously with steerage and second-class passengers; and mysterious people always came down to the landing-stage when the boat arrived at any of the stations, and held more mysterious commune with the travellers. In short, it was a perpetual Guy Fawkes' day, and everybody expected, or affected to expect, that there would be a tremendous explosion, which somehow or other would blow up all Hungary, Turkey, and portions of Austria and Roumania, and leave all that was worth leaving in the shape of the mighty Servian empire.

Of this state of things, Count Andrassy, M. Tisza, Count Beust, and the whole host of kindred diplomaticuli made immense capital. "The Omladina! the Omladina!" was their perpetual exclamation. The *Politische Correspondenz* was full of its doings; Lord Beaconsfield even shook his head when it was mentioned; and it was classed with the rest of the secret societies which have played an important part in the world's history.

Yet there never was such a wind-bag of an association as this same Omladina. As an effective political body it had no more substance than a pastrycook's flour-bag, and could produce no further practical result than one of these same bags when little Tommy puffs it full of wind, and explodes it between his hands, highly delighted with the consequent bang. The slightest puncture was sufficient to make the whole concern collapse.

Still it was pretended by the heads of the State that it was a most dangerous society; and this impression, owing to the childish affectation of mystery its members observed, rapidly gained ground, fostered, as it was, by the government authorities and the Magyar irreconcilables, until the excitement became so great as to allow of the arrest of Dr. Svetovar Miletics on a charge of high treason, and his imprisonment in the fortress of Buda Pesth on July 6, 1876, a few days after the declaration of war by Prince Milan against Turkey. Here Miletics remained until January 8, 1878, without being brought to trial. It was universally acknowledged at the time that this measure was one of "precaution." The government had played long enough with the Omladina, and had allowed it to assume the proportions of a "question," convenient to the policy of the government; but, having accomplished its work in this sense, it was decided to prevent any chance of its really becoming, what it pretended to be, an association of practical importance.

Now, no better picture of the Omladina exists than that presented at the trial of Dr. Miletics on January 8, 1878. Be it noted that the whole power of the Hungarian government, the whole energy of the police, and the services of a host of spies, had been put into motion to obtain evidence against Dr. Miletics, and that the prosecution had over eighteen months to prepare its case.

The accusation against Dr. Miletics was that he had excited hatred amongst the Serbs against Hungary, and enmity against the constitution and the integrity of the State.

The first witness called was George Rankovics, who stated that in June, 1875, he went to Belgrade to take part in the war which the Servian government was contemplating against the Turks. But as the Servian government could not make up their minds as rapidly as the state of Mr. Rankovics' finances rendered desirable, he entered the service of General Stratimirovitch, as "secretary, and for all other services."

He declared that, in June, 1876, Dr. Miletics arrived at Belgrade, where he made a speech in the room No. 9 of the hotel, *King of Servia*, in the presence of a number of Serb patriots. In the course of this speech, Miletics, according to Rankovics, declared that there were 20,000 to 30,000 volunteers in the Hungarian districts of Banat, the Bácska, and the Servian military frontier, ready to take up arms and assist Servia in her war against Turkey; that in order to enable these

volunteers to pass into Servia, a rebellion in Hungary would have to be arranged, and that for this purpose Servia would have to supply money and arms—though, as for arms, there were, perhaps, enough already in the country. To this purpose Miletics declared that all present would devote their whole energies, and that, if Servia should be victorious, she would wrest the Serb districts from Hungary, and unite the Banat, the Bácska and Syrmia to one great kingdom, under Prince Milan. After having made this speech, Miletics and his friends, Professors Boskovicz, Kassopinovich, &c., went to M. Ristich, and, declared Rankovics, remained with him in conference until 3 A.M.

In reply to the judge, as to whether he himself was present, he answered in the negative; but said, "he knew it."

"And," asked the judge, "why did you leave Belgrade?"

"I had had enough of the beggary and rubbish. I did nothing but indulge in dissipation, and I saw no money coming in." He then went on to say that the Servian government had spent 30,000 ducats amongst the Omladinists; and on being asked by the judge whether the Omladina still existed, he replied that he had doubted it, but that now looking around him, he saw that all the witnesses arrayed against him were Omladinists. "How do you know that?" inquired the judge. "Because I do!" was the unanswerable reply. On the other hand, when Dr. Polit cross-examined him, and asked whether Stratimirovitch was a friend or an enemy of Dr. Miletics, he shouted, at the top of his voice, "How do I know?" and when reproved by the judge for his violence, declared that he could not help it, as he was naturally violent, and not responsible for his nature. All this called forth loud bursts of laughter from the Serbs, so that the judge was obliged to interfere, and threaten to clear the court.

In reply to this accusation, Miletics categorically denied everything Rankovics had said about the alleged meeting, and that he had never seen the man to his knowledge; and, in reply to the judge, stated that he went to Belgrade to assure the prince that he was not opposed to him, and that the opposition to his government was dictated by conscientious motives, and was by no means antagonistic to Prince Milan personally, nor to his dynasty. As a matter of fact, his doubts as to his reception were so great that, at first, he intended to sleep in Semlin, but that ultimately he went to Belgrade, and took up his quarters at the *Servian Crown*, and never put his foot inside the *King of Servia*, where he did no more than drink a glass of beer at one of the tables outside the hotel. Both these houses, in fact, are on the promenade, just before the citadel; one is at one end, the second at the other end of the same block of buildings, and both are the resort of the Belgrade *beau monde*, which assembles at one or the other to drink beer and sup to the strains of the gipsy bands. As for room No. 9, in the *King of Servia*, at the very time when he was supposed to be holding his seditious speech, it was occupied by Senator Gravitovics. These declarations of Miletics were fully confirmed by a host of witnesses, who swore that Miletics was never in the hotel, who accounted for all his time during the three days he was in Belgrade, and had never heard of the alleged meeting in the *King of Servia*.

Rankovics, however, insisted on the truth of his assertions; and when several witnesses proved that he had declared in prison, where he was confined after his escape from Belgrade, that he had threatened to denounce so many people that the prison would not hold them all, he shouted, "That's a lie! I was only savage at being arrested for a political crime, and at being shut up in one cell with 1,000 bugs and five million fleas!" This led the way to some inquiries into Mr. Rankovics' antecedents, when it was established that he had been condemned to six months' imprisoment for rape and assault, and had also been accused of forgery: this charge, however, had been dropped by the prosecution, consisting of his brother and brother-in-law.

In addition to this, the authorities of his parish stated, officially, that he bore a very bad character, had always lived a dissipated and immoral life, and had frequently been punished for breaking the public peace. In short, he was an unmitigated scoundrel.

So much for George Rankovics and his testimony.

The next witness was a certain Kornel Jovanovics. Mr. Jovanovics, a book-keeper at Beckskerek, was so moved in his patriotic soul at the woes of the Christians

in Turkey, and the refugees in Austria, that when he heard that Miletics had returned from Belgrade, he went to ask his advice as to a project he, the patriotic Jovanovics, had conceived, of collecting funds for the benefit of the wounded and refugees. His examination and cross-examination throws such a vivid light upon the whole affair, that it will be highly interesting to read it *in extenso*.

President: "What was the object of your journey?"

Jovanovics: "The collection of funds for the benefit of the refugees and the Christians in Turkey."

President: "Not their liberation?"

Jovanovics: "No; only for the refugees and the wounded."

President: "Why did you go to Neusatz?"

Jovanovics: "I had a brother there, Dr. Jovanovics, and I went to him, and other acquaintances, to ask them for advice. I also requested them to get up a subscription to defray the expenses of my journey; and it was by their advice that I appropriated 100 florins out of the subscriptions I received for that purpose."

Dr. Lassky: "In your preliminary examination, you said that Dr. Miletics had recommended you to undertake your subscriptionary journey."

Jovanovics: "During this inquiry I was very ill with the fever, and often signed the protocols without reading or understanding them. They are, consequently, incorrect."

President: "You also received a visiting card from Dr. Miletics, on which we find your name in Miletics' handwriting. What did he give you that card for?"

Jovanovics: "I wanted it as an introduction to people I did not know personally. I did not tell Miletics so; but simply asked him to give it to me, and he complied with my request."

Judge: "How did you know that Servia was in want of money?"

Jovanovics: "I read it in the *Serbski Novine*."

Judge: "But in your preliminary examination you said that Miletics had told you so, and that he had promised the prince to 'place' 100,000 to 500,000 florins of the Servian loan, and that you were going to get it taken up in Hungary?"

Jovanovics: "I meant to place more than 500,000. But Miletics had nothing to do with it, nor did he tell me anything about it."

In reply to a question by the judge as to the object with which he had written various names down on the card in question, he said that he had written one because the person in question had been killed in the war, and the other because it was such a very funny name. The rest were those of people who had "fled" to the Herzegovina.

Called upon by the judge to explain his connection with Jovanovics, Miletics said that he did not remember giving him any card; on the contrary, he was certain he had not done so; and that it was more than likely that Jovanovics had procured it from his brother, upon whom he, Miletics, had frequently called. Anyhow, it was publicly notorious what part Jovanovics was playing; and that his journey was no secret. He had received leave of absence from his chief to collect subscriptions and push the sale of a book he had written, when he was arrested on a charge of agitation.

Hereupon the examination of Jovanovics was resumed, and Rankovics confronted with him. He denied having told Rankovics, with whom he had been imprisoned, that the Omladina still existed. The Omladina was dissolved. It was a literary society established in Verschetz, with the sanction of the authorities.

Dr. Miletics: "I beg to observe, that, in his first examination, Rankovics stated that I, and not the Prince of Montenegro, was the head of the Omladina."

Rankovics: "Bosh! Jovanovics said that Miletics was the head of the Hungarian Omladina; but that the Prince of Montenegro was the head of the whole band."

Jovanovics: "The Omladina was but one society, and did not have two presidents. Also, I must say that I was shut up with Rankovics in the same cell for six weeks; and one day, whilst looking at the almanac over his bed, he said to me, 'I'll just tell you something in confidence. I never saw Miletics in Belgrade at all. Why doesn't he get up a revolution amongst the Serbs? Hang him!'—(Turning to Rankovics)—Confess, did you not say that?"

Rankovics (laughing): "Yes, I did."

Jovanovics: "You also said, 'What a pity it is that General Stratimirovitch is arrested. He could easily recruit 30,000 to 40,000 volunteers here. Poor devil! to be

shut up just now.'—Did you not say that?"

Rankovics: "Yes, I said all that."

Jovanovics: "You also said, 'Now I cannot do anything but betray the whole band, or go into prison.'"

Rankovics: "Yes, I said that, too."

This *nonchalant* attitude of Mr. Rankovics put Mr Jovanovics into such a state of excitement, that he could not proceed for a few minutes, and then accused Rankovics of being bribed by the authorities to give false evidence; stating, amongst other things, that he always had plenty of money, and smoked nothing but "the best cigars and the finest 'Sultan Flor,' which he wasted in a most wicked manner."

In reply to this, Mr. Rankovics declared, "that it was well known that he always smoked the best tobacco; and, if he had no money, he would rather smoke none at all than poison himself with cabbage-stalks: finally, that he had managed to scrape together a sum of 867 florins in Belgrade; and that that was all the good he ever got out of that pigstye of a town."

And this was all that Mr. Jovanovics could get out of Mr. Rankovics.

The next witness brought to confront Jovanovics was Pope Peter Pericz, an Orthodox priest in Bassahid. He stated that he had known Jovanovics since his youth, and had met him in June, 1876, when Jovanovics had asked him what chance there was of getting the people in his district to take up the Servian loan. He replied that the harvest had been so bad, that there was no chance of their doing so to any amount. In reply to the question whether Jovanovics had told him anything about the interview of Miletics with Prince Milan, he said 'No;' and that he knew all about it before he saw Jovanovics, as he was in the habit of reading the newspapers. Hereupon Pope Peter Pericz was confronted with a man named Lujanovics, which gave rise to the following delectable episode:—

Judge: "What did his reverence tell you about Jovanovics?"

Lujanovics: "I called him out into the passage, and asked him, in confidence, whether Jovanovics had not been talking of other matters besides the Servian loan. He then said that in case war should break out between Servia and the Porte, a revolution might break out amongst the Hungarian Serbs."

Judge: "Now, Mr. Priest, what have you to say to that?"

Pericz: "I can state upon my oath that no such conversation took place."

Judge (to Lujanovics): "Say it to his face. Repeat your statement to his face."

Lujanovics (turning to the priest): "If you deny that, your reverence, you are a liar!"

Pericz: "You're another!"

This passage of epithets led to some judicial remonstrances, with no further result than that both witnesses adhered to their assertions.

The next witness was a Serb, the mayor of Gross Kikinda. He deposed that he had been invited to supper at M. Majinski's, a solicitor of Gross Kikinda, at which he met Jovanovics, who said that Prince Milan had been told by Miletics that 30,000 to 40,000 Serbs in Hungary were ready to join him against Turkey. But at the same time he did not understand Jovanovics to say that Miletics had told him so; he only related it as a piece of news. Altogether, the supper at Herr Majinski's appears to have been a rather jovial affair. At another supper, one of the "seditious speeches" was made by a certain Markovicz. His niece had just been presented by her father with a fine horse, and Markovicz called upon her to promise this horse to the first Servian warrior who should take a Turkish battery. Mademoiselle Markovicz, however, replied that she did not mean to give her horse away to anybody—not even to a Servian warrior.

This exhausted the Jovanovics portion of the inquiry. It resulted, from this inquiry, that Mr. Jovanovics decided to make a tour to "collect" subscriptions for the relief of the wounded and refugees; that at the same time he took advantage of the opportunity to push the sale of a book, written by him, on the art of book-keeping; that he appropriated a portion of the subscriptions to pay his expenses; that he endeavoured to place shares of the Servian loan in Hungary; and that he had, somehow or other, obtained a card from Dr. Miletics.

The next witness was an old friend, Veslin. He was a counter-jumper in the establishment of John Polit, hosier and linendraper, and being thus as it were to the manner born, had had a number of buttons, studs, and medals struck, this time with the portrait of Dr. Svetovar Miletics, and the motto, "Czernagora, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Servia, Croatia, Slavonia, Bácska." The sale of these medals and buttons, said the witness, he had regarded as a matter of speculation. It was, he declared, just the same thing as the sale of gingerbread cakes with a portrait of Kossuth, at the time when the Hungarians rebelled against Austria, and were put down by the Serbs and Russians. There was no secret at all about the matter. His own initials, J. P. V., were on the medals; and far from Dr. Miletics, whom he had never spoken to, approving of his speculation, he was very indignant at it, and sent him back one of these medals made of gold, which he had sent for his acceptance. He only wanted to make money by the transaction. It was a common "dodge," he said, and numbers of similar medals and counters were about, with effigies of Serbs, Hungarians, Austrians, and Italians of note. Finally, he declared, and his evidence was borne out by the testimony of the director of the museum, that these medals had been struck years ago, and had circulated without any opposition on the part of the authorities.

This closed the evidence for the prosecution. The prosecutor, Dr. Böck, summed it up in a long speech, and considering that he had fully proved the guilt of the prisoner, demanded the full penalty accorded by the law—death, or imprisonment for life.

He was followed by Dr. Polit, who tore the arguments of the prosecutor to shreds, in a magnificent speech of several hours' duration. At the conclusion, Dr. Miletics rose. This concluding incident in the comedy is thus related by the *Pester Lloyd*, a Hungarian journal, the reputed organ of Count Andrassy, and which, therefore, cannot be suspected of partiality towards the prisoner.

"I am glad," he said, "that the light of publicity has been cast upon my conduct. The prosecutor states that I have followed the paths of high treason for years. Since when? I will not boast of what Francis Déak said to me in 1860, when I was introduced to him: '*Vérmes szerb, de jo hazafi*,'—a sanguine Serb, but a good patriot—but it is due to all whom I have the honour of knowing, and who have honoured me with their friendship, that it should be known what Déak himself said of me. The prosecutor seems to have forgotten everything that happened between the years 1860 and 1868.

"They were years of trial and tribulation. We all know how necessary it then was for all nationalities to hold together and combine to obtain constitutional rights. Although not decisive—for with all the political and material superiority of the Hungarians, they were unable to secure their constitution without foreign assistance—the help at that time of the Hungarian Serbs was certainly not unimportant. Then we Serbs, in spite of the reminiscences of 1848, joined in the demand for a constitution for Hungary: then I was a *jo hazafi*, a good patriot; but now, eight years later, because I wish that we Slavs should also constitutionally battle for our constitutional rights, I am called *hazaáruló* and *felségsérto*,* traitor and betrayer, and placed in the dock as a criminal."

At these words Miletics was overcome by emotion, and his eyes filled with tears. He then entered into a learned discussion with the prosecutor on intricate points of law, and showed a most wonderful mastery of the laws brought to bear against him. It was truly a strange sight to see this old man, his emaciated features flushed with excitement, and strongly contrasting with his grey beard and long snow-white hair, as he sat before a little table and turned over the pages of the great folios his counsel handed to him, criticising the Latin text word by word, and refuting the argument of the prosecution. The whole scene savoured rather of a legal discussion in ancient times by learned scholars, than of a trial in a modern court of law—even of a trial for high treason.

But it was all of no avail. The next day, after a six days' trial, Svetovar Miletics was found guilty of high treason on the above evidence, and sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

Comment on this trial is superfluous. No case in the Turkish courts of law, corrupt as they may be, could exceed this in point of flagrant injustice and national hatred—contemptible, mean, despicable beyond expression. On the unsupported testimony of a notorious scoundrel, a violator, a forgerer, a pimp, the jackal of a drunken general who had married the cast-off mistress of an emperor, Miletics was condemned to imprisonment for five years in the cells of Buda citadel. After eighteen months' preparation, this was all the evidence the State could adduce against him! This was all they could prove against the

* *Lese Majesty.*

Omladina. On their own showing, the dreaded society consisted of a Jovanovics, who went about collecting funds, and trying to place shares of a Servian loan; who appropriated part of the proceeds—perhaps the greater part—and used a card of Miletics', which he had stolen from his brother, to give an air of importance to himself; and, finally, of a counter-jumper at a hosier's, who speculated in buttons, and made use of an honest man's trade to put money into a blackguard's pocket. After eighteen months, this was all the Austrian government, police, detectives, and spies could find out against a literary society whose policy was represented by the diplomatists as subversive of society, and a grave danger to the State.

At the same time, however, it would not be accurate to say that the Omladina was not a political body also. It was; but only in the same sense as the Reform Club, or any of the Liberal or Conservative associations in England, without one-tenth of their organisation. But as for the Omladina, as a body, having had any practical weight, or having exercised any material influence on the course of events, it is perfectly absurd to say so. That individuals were found like John Polit, Jovanovics, Rankovics, and Veslin, to embark in speculative adventures under the cloak of patriotism, was natural, and would have been the case without any Omladina at all; but under no circumstances could the organisation of the Omladina, or its active help to the insurgents, be compared, in the remotest degree, with the activity of the Carlist sympathisers and adventurers on the French frontier. Personal experience, in fact, and the perusal of documents written in 1875 by Polit and Miletics, now lying on the table whilst these lines are being penned, assess the influence of the Omladinists still lower even than appears from official documents and the great trial of the chief of the "society" himself. Throughout, 90 per cent. of those who took an active part in the agitation were animated by the most sordid motives; they were the black sheep of a country where the species is peculiarly abundant; and scarcely one of them was there who might not have been arrested for half-a-dozen misdemeanours. Yet, in spite of all these notorious facts, we find Lord Loftus writing that, "in regard to Servia, Prince Gortschakoff stated that the interest of the Russians was to support Prince Milan against the 'Omladina' and the violent revolutionary party who were plotting his overthrow; and he had lately drawn the attention of the Austrian cabinet to the secret workings of this party, not only in Servia, but in the adjoining Austrian provinces, as also to the intrigues of Karageorgevitch and his followers. His highness had recommended that these revolutionary proceedings and elements should be carefully watched, and that they should be put down with a strong hand."

What Prince Gortschakoff really was doing was exciting Prince Milan's suspicions against Austria, and preparing the way for that influx of Russians which was soon to give quite a different complexion to affairs.

With this we may conclude the Omladina incident in the affairs of Servia. It is abundantly plain that Servia was in the hands of her ministers—*i.e.*, of Ristich; and that she hoped, by skilful manœuvring between Austria and Russia, to be able to secure enough for herself to counterbalance any acquisitions that might be made by Montenegro. The only real influence brought to bear upon her was that exercised by those two countries.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BERLIN MEMORANDUM.

In considering the part played by Montenegro in the local scramble, as it may be called, for the provinces of European Turkey, the manifesto of Prince Nikita, issued on May 8th, 1876, is worthy of the fullest attention. It is a remarkable document;

and with some exceptions, less in matters of fact than in matters of inference, it is also remarkably accurate, and worthy of being placed on record. It was sent to all the European governments, and contained one noteworthy warning which we have reason to know was due to Russian initiation, but which, if it had been properly appreciated and acted on by the powers, would have probably prevented the war which ensued.

He wrote:—"For years the province of Herzegovina has been the theatre of continual disorders, and the position of the Christian majority of the population has been rendered intolerable. The reforms and guarantees accorded, time after time, by the government of his majesty the Sultan, with a good faith which we are far from suspecting, have not attained their end, because, in this, as unfortunately in everything else, the authorities charged to apply them have set themselves to annul their effect, in which they have been actively aided by the Mahommedan minority.

"This minority, in concert with the civil and judicial magistrates, as well as with the military leaders, has never failed, after the publication with a great flourish of the decrees of the Porte, to make them a dead letter, even before their application had been attempted. The vexations and refusals of justice, in great as in small matters, continued as in the past, and the rayah had, no more than formerly, an hour of security for himself, his family, and his goods. Such a situation would exasperate the most gentle populations; much less, then, could unlimited patience be expected from a people strangers to all civilising influences, and whose masters themselves set the example of contempt of the laws. Life itself had become insupportable; when a people is reduced to this we know the result.

"A striking proof of the despair to which the Herzegovinians were reduced is the perfect brotherhood to which daily sufferings have led two hostile religions. To those who know the hatred which everywhere in the East divides the Roman Catholics and the Orthodox Greek Church, this fact speaks for itself. At this hour Catholic priests and Greek popes fight together, mixed up in the same ranks."

(This, as was pointed out in another place, was owing to the peculiar relations existing between Prince Nikita and Bishop Strossmayer, and other leaders of the Croat movement, and not so much from a community of interests or sympathies.)

"During the year 1874, the misery of the Christians having reached its height, there were, in various parts of the province, movements precursory to a rising, to which the authorities responded by doubling their rigour, and by the summary arrest of a certain number of notables. Others, escaping pursuit, took refuge in Montenegro, asking the prince to give them an asylum, and even to help them to shake off the yoke.

"Prince Nicholas, faithful to international laws, refused to listen to this last request; but, well knowing the state of things which had necessitated the flight of his guests, he did his utmost to make possible their return in safety to their homes. At the same time he made known to the powers, by a memorial dated April, 1875, the situation in which the neighbouring territories were placed.

"Then, as ever, when there was question of a good action, he had the good fortune to obtain the powerful assistance of the government of his majesty the Emperor of Austria, which was ready to make itself, at Constantinople, the medium for communicating his highness's wishes. Thanks to this support, the Porte granted an amnesty for the acts of agitation, and for the illegal departure of the notables. Besides this, she instituted a commission of officials, charged to receive and record the claims of the Herzegovinians. As soon as the emigrants had returned and the commission was installed, there happened, what always has happened in Turkey since the Sultans have undertaken reforms, the new decrees were left unexecuted like the preceding ones, and the delegates did nothing but commence, formally, the inquiry with which they were charged. The native Mussulmans, irritated, redoubled their acts of violence and molestation under the eyes of the commission, which was either powerless or their accomplice; and the Christians, at the end of their patience, listened only to the voice of despair.

"It was thus that the present insurrection broke out, without any preliminary arrangement or preparation.

"It is quite useless to relate the history of this war of detail, of surprises, of small engagements, which has only been signalised by the animosity of the two

parties, and by the vengeance exercised, without distinction, on entire districts, by the Turks.

"Since the commencement of this crisis, the Christian powers, anxious as they should be to circumscribe the incendiary focus, in order to prevent it from becoming by degrees a general conflagration, addressed themselves to the Prince of Montenegro, whose action might decide or arrest the gravest complications. Entering without hesitation into their views, and moved by the same sentiments of order and peace, the prince gave his promise to observe neutrality, and he is happy to be able to say that he has kept this engagement. He even wishes it to be remarked, by the way, that he has given a striking proof at the same time of his fidelity to his engagements, and of his power over his people, by preventing them from throwing themselves blindly into the struggle, as they would have done formerly. This fact shows, as it is not useless to observe, what progress the country has made in the path of order and respect for the laws during the last quarter of a century."

Then recapitulating the endeavours made by the powers to restore peace in the revolted provinces, and detailing the ferocious measures taken by the Turks to suppress the rebellion, the prince concludes with the passage to which reference has been made.

"In the general break-up," he said, "the Turkish nation, in spite of the admirable patience which characterises it, driven to despair, cannot fail to call upon its courage to inflict, to the utmost of its ability, a terrible vengeance upon its rivals, before accepting the ruin of its power.

"*The crisis which is impending, if the last moment for averting it be not seized upon, cannot be circumscribed; the whole peninsula of the Balkan will be enveloped in it. It is no business of ours to deal with what concerns Bosnia, Servia, and Bulgaria; but we cannot be blind to the evident connection of all that is going on in European Turkey.* The Mussulmans on their side will make no distinctions; all Christians, whatever their nationality or religion, are fatally included in the number of enemies to be destroyed. We know perfectly well, and the whole world ought to know with us, that, as the normal centre of independence, our little State is specially designed for implacable vengeance; also, no one will be surprised that, whilst preparing to the best of our ability to defend our existence, we should take, in spite of the humble position we occupy on the map, the initiative of an appeal to Europe.

"We do not pretend to point out what form of negotiations, congresses, conferences, or correspondence between the governments may be best suited to attain the desired object, and still less to bring forward questions which do not affect our country alone, or the provinces that surround it. But we earnestly intreat the powers not to lose sight of the fact that the Porte will not, cannot, and, indeed, from the Mussulman point of view, ought not to entertain serious projects of reform and justice towards its Christian subjects; that, had she such projects, she is powerless to execute them; that the supreme and inevitable crisis will burst forth of itself by the force of circumstances, in spite of diplomatic notes and fine promises of the divan.

"Europe alone, by acting in concert with promptitude and determination, can still, by interposing her will, prevent the horrors of a war of extermination."

Now, there appears to be scarcely any doubt that this manifesto of Prince Nikita's was dictated partly by his own convictions, and partly in consequence of Russian advice, in view of the conference about to be held at Berlin between Prince Bismarck, Count Andrassy, and Prince Gortschakoff, to concert fresh measures for forcing the Porte to grant substantial reforms. It is, in fact, impossible to resist this conviction, quite apart from any other information, when we compare the following passage in a despatch from Lord Loftus, relating to a conversation he had with Prince Gortschakoff on April 30, with the passage in the prince's circular which we have italicised.

"There can be no doubt," said his highness, "that, in case a pacification could not be accomplished, the insurrection would assume much larger proportions, and a flame would be kindled in Bulgaria, Epirus, Thessaly, and Albania, which the Porte, with its weakened resources, would be unable to extinguish; and the Christian powers of Europe, awakened by public opinion to the call of humanity, will have to interpose to arrest the effusion of blood."

Nor is this all. For when, in consequence of Mukhtar Pasha's report, that, when proceeding to the relief of Niksics, he found that the insurgents were largely composed of Montenegrins, the Porte seemed decided to attack Montenegro, but assured the powers that nothing beyond the assembling of some troops at Scutari, for defensive purposes, had been discussed at the council held at the Porte, and Lord Derby presumed that the joint action of the representatives at Constantinople was no longer called for, Prince Gortschakoff still considered that, in the eye of Europe, as well as of the Turks, the non-active participation of England in the remonstrances made by the five powers at Constantinople, against a reported intention of Turkey to invade Montenegro, might give rise to misinterpretation and misconstruction, and that a false impression might be deduced, from the apparent silence of England, that she separated herself from the European concert.

The prince, therefore, asked Lord Loftus to express his hopes that, in some form, her majesty's government would convey to the Porte their participation in the opinion of the five powers on the occasion in question, and their satisfaction on learning that the Porte had no intention of attacking Montenegro.

But, at the same time, Prince Gortschakoff observed that the Porte had not abandoned her intention of concentrating a force at Scutari, and he considered this measure as one of a dangerous nature; for, said his highness, "c'est une étincelle près d'une poudrière."

In conversing with Lord Loftus on the attitude of affairs in the Herzegovina, the prince expressed the opinion that the negotiations could not be carried on (as Count Andrassy apparently hoped) on the basis or within the scope of the proposals accepted by the Porte, and remarked that the Porte could not carry out the engagements she had taken; it was impossible for her to do so.

"But," observed Lord Loftus, "the European powers could not possibly say to the Porte, 'We have asked you to undertake an impossibility.'"

"That is true," replied the prince, "but at the time those proposals were made, we conceived that the Porte had more resources, more vitality; that she was not so powerless as she has since proved herself to be."

Now, regarding these utterances, whether by the light of subsequent events or not, there was nothing intrinsically objectionable to them in point of fact. They were consistent with the facts of the case, and ought to have furnished a sufficient basis for agreement, no matter whether Russia was animated by ulterior designs or not. The facts being undisputed, no harm could have been done in accepting them, and insisting on whatever remedy was to be proposed, as long as that remedy did not go beyond the exigencies of the case.

But the hesitation of the English cabinet to interfere in the military operations of the Porte, coupled with the outcry in England against the despatch of the fleet to Besika Bay, which took place a couple of days before the meeting of Prince Bismarck and Count Andrassy with Baron Jomini, produced an impression in Russia as well as in Turkey, that England, as heretofore, intended to assist Turkey, and thus make the Porte far more unyielding than would otherwise have been the case.

But, be it well noted, it was not the despatch of the fleet in itself that produced this stubbornness in the Porte. On the contrary, the Turkish ambassador at Vienna stated plainly, that "THE OUTCRY AND OPPOSITION IN ENGLAND, LEFT NO ROOM FOR DOUBT THAT THE GOVERNMENT INTENDED TO PROTECT TURKEY; FOR," he added, "THERE CAN BE NO QUESTION BUT THAT THE ATTITUDE OF THE OPPOSITION AFFORDS THE BEST CLUE TO THE REAL INTENTIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT. WHO IS TO SAY WHAT THE CABINET MEANS, IF NOT THE OPPOSITION, WHICH IS MOST NEARLY CONCERNED? YOU MAY SAY WHAT YOU PLEASE; MR. GLADSTONE KNOWS PERFECTLY WELL WHAT THE GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO DO, AND SIR HENRY ELLIOT MAY SAY WHAT HE PLEASES."

This was the view generally taken in Turkey, and, it may also be said, Russia likewise. That it was incorrect, is shown by the following series of telegrams. The answer they supply is irrefutable, except on the supposition, which is inadmissible, that Sir H. Elliot was instructed beforehand to act as he did. On May 9, he telegraphed:—

"Great uneasiness prevails here amongst all classes, and there are grounds for apprehending serious consequences. Nothing certain is known of the designs that may be entertained, but for some days the Mussulmans have been buying up arms. My colleagues believe that the presence of ships of war at Besika Bay might be a pro-

tection to the Christians here, and give them confidence. I entirely agree with them; and, as our squadron is now at Jaffa, I have telegraphed to Mr. Eldridge as follows:—'Inform Admiral Drummond that his early presence here might be useful, and that I would be glad if he would bring his squadron to Besika Bay.'"

The following day, Lord Derby, frightened out of equanimity by this telegram, replied by the following one:—

"Sir,—I have to request that you will explain to her majesty's government more fully your reasons for requiring the presence of the squadron at Besika Bay."

This query of Lord Derby's provoked a repetition of the first telegram, in so laconic a form as quite to preclude any idea of collusion.

"My Lord,—I have the honour to explain, in reply to your lordship's telegraphic despatch, which I received to-day, that I believe that the presence of the squadron at Besika Bay would greatly conduce to the security of the Christians here, who are considered to be in much danger at present."

This "explanation" was followed up the same day by another:—

"Every day the state of things here becomes more critical. My own impression is that the designs of the Mussulmans are directed more against the government than against the Christians; but still, in case of a disturbance, the latter might be placed in great danger by the spirit of fanaticism which prevails. It is doubtful whether the army could be depended upon to act against the Mussulmans. The presence of a second British vessel here is desirable, and I should add that all my colleagues have requested their respective governments to send an armed gun-boat in addition to the 'stationnaires.'"

This telegram left Constantinople at 9.50 P.M. At 10 P.M. the following one was sent off:—

"Reports received from Salonica are far from satisfactory. It would appear that the Turkish force there is insufficient, either to insure tranquillity at the public funeral of the consuls, or to permit of arrests being made. Both our consul, Mr. Blunt, and the commander of the *Bittern*, consider that the presence of two ironclads is much required, and they have telegraphed to the admiral to that effect."

Now, when it is considered that it was only the day before the first despatch arrived that Lord Derby had heard of the murders of the French and German consuls at Salonica, and yet that his lordship wanted "explanations" before ordering the fleet to Besika, it must either be acknowledged that the despatch of the fleet was not due to any preconcerted plan, or that Lord Derby must be credited with an amount of Machiavelianism which there seems to be no grounds for attributing to him.

The outcry against the despatch of the fleet, excusable as it might have been in an ignorant mob, was unpardonable in the case of men who had been in office, and not only knew the byeways and crooked paths of diplomacy, but also had the means of acquiring authentic information if so disposed.

It was under these circumstances that the Austrian and Russian ministers, Count Andrassy and Prince Gortschakoff, met at Prince Bismarck's on May 12, 1876, and drew up the famous document, subsequently known as the Berlin Memorandum. After alluding to the assassinations at Salonica, the memorandum went on to state that, in virtue of the Andrassy note of December 30, 1875, and its acceptance by the Porte, the powers had acquired a moral right—that of watching over the fulfilment of the reforms granted by the Porte; and an obligation—that of insisting that the insurgents should lay down their arms and return to their homes.

"Nevertheless," it continued, "this programme of pacification, though it has been adopted in principle by both parties, has encountered a twofold obstacle.

"The insurgents have declared that past experience forbids them to trust the promises of the Porte without a positive material European guarantee.

"The Porte, on its side, has declared that, as long as the insurgents were scouring the country in arms, and the refugees did not return to their homes, it was materially impossible for it to proceed to the new organisation of the country.

"In the meantime hostilities have resumed their course. The agitation engendered by this strife of eight months has extended to other parts of Turkey. The Mussulman populations have been thereby led to conclude that the Porte had only apparently deferred to the diplomatic action of Europe, and that at heart it did

not intend seriously to apply the promised reforms. Thence arose a revival of religious and political passions, which has contributed to cause the deplorable events at Salonica, and the menacing over-excitement which manifests itself at other points of European Turkey.

"Nor is it doubtful that, in its turn, this explosion of fanaticism reacts on men's minds in Bosnia and Herzegovina as in the neighbouring principalities.

"For the Christians in these countries must have been keenly impressed by the fact of the massacre of the European consuls in open day, in a peaceful town, under the eyes of powerless authorities: how, then, can they be induced to trust themselves to the good-will of Turks, irritated by a protracted and sanguinary struggle?

"Were this state of affairs to be prolonged, the risk would thus be incurred of seeing that general conflagration kindled which the mediation of the great powers was precisely intended to avert.

"It is most essential, therefore, to establish certain guarantees of a nature to insure, beyond doubt, the loyal and full application of the measures agreed upon between the powers and the Porte. It is more than ever urgent to press the government of the Sultan to decide on setting itself seriously to work to fulfil the engagements it has contracted towards Europe.

"As the first step in this direction, the three Imperial Courts propose to insist with the Porte, with all the energy that the united voice of the three powers should possess, on a suspension of arms being effected for the term of two months.

"This interval would enable action to be brought to bear simultaneously on the insurgents and the refugees, to inspire them with confidence in the vigilant solicitude of Europe; on the neighbouring principalities, to exhort them not to hinder this attempt at conciliation; and finally on the Ottoman government, to place it in a position to carry out its promises. By this means the way might be opened for direct negotiations between the Porte and the Bosnian and Herzegovinian delegates, on the basis of the wishes the latter have formulated, and which have been deemed fit to serve as starting-points for a discussion.

"These points are as follows:—

"1. That materials for the reconstruction of dwelling-houses and churches should be furnished to the returning refugees; that their subsistence should be assured to them till they could support themselves by their own labour.

"2. In so far as the distribution of help should appertain to the Turkish commissioner, he should consult as to the measures to be taken with the mixed commission, mentioned in the note of the 30th of December, to guarantee the *bonâ fide* application of the reforms, and control their execution. This commission should be presided over by a Herzegovinian Christian, and be composed of natives faithfully representing the two religions of the country. They should be elected as soon as the armistice should have suspended hostilities.

"3. In order to avoid any collision, advice should be given at Constantinople to concentrate the Turkish troops, at least until excitement has subsided, on some points to be agreed upon.

"4. Christians, as well as Mussulmans, should retain their arms.

"5. The consuls or delegates of the powers shall keep a watch over the application of the reforms in general, and on the steps relative to the repatriation in particular.

"If, with the friendly and cordial support of the great powers, and by the help of an armistice, an arrangement could be concluded on these bases, and be set in train immediately by the return of the refugees, and the election of the mixed commission, a considerable step would be made towards pacification.

"If, however, the armistice were to expire without the efforts of the powers being successful in attaining the end they have in view, the three Imperial Courts are of opinion that it would become necessary to supplement their diplomatic action by the sanction of an agreement with a view to such efficacious measures as might appear to be demanded in the interest of general peace, to check the evil, and prevent its development."

Now there were two items in this document which were clearly objectionable. The one was Article 3; the other Article 4. "Concentrating the Turkish troops" meant their withdrawal to certain specified points, and thus allowing Article 4 to produce its natural result of fresh outrages on both sides, without any authorities to repress them. On the contrary, it ought to have

been proposed that the troops—regular troops of whom no complaint is ever made—should be employed in keeping order, and both Mussulmans and Christians be disarmed to prevent any conflict. But these objections were not made by any of the powers except England and Turkey; whilst Lord Derby fastened chiefly upon the last sentence, and stated, in reply to Count Beust, that, in considering the question of an armistice, it was necessary to look at its effect in a military and political point of view. Unless the armistice suggested were accompanied by proposals that seemed to hold out a reasonable expectation of the re-establishment of peace, he doubted whether the Porte was likely to accept it, for three reasons.

In the first place, he said, an armed insurrection always gains strength by the mere fact of continuing to exist. The longer it lasts, the smaller is the chance of its being ultimately put down. In the next place, the cost of maintaining a Turkish army of not less than 50,000 men on the frontier could not but press heavily on an exhausted exchequer, while the insurgents, fighting among their own mountains, incurred but little expense, and it was impossible that the troops should not become more or less disorganised by being kept inactive in the face of an enemy. Thirdly, what real guarantee could be given for the maintenance of the armistice? On the Turkish side there was an organised government to deal with, and the generals of the Porte would not venture to break engagements into which they had been ordered to enter: but could the same thing be said of the insurgents? Had they recognised chiefs capable of enforcing obedience along the whole frontier? And if they had, could those chiefs be relied on? These were considerations which the government of the Sultan could not overlook.

Count Beust then pressed him to say that, if he gave no support to the proposal, he would at least abstain from opposing it.

To this Lord Derby answered, that he was quite aware of the responsibility that would be incurred by any government that should urge, or even encourage, the Porte to reject advice supported by so general an agreement of the continental powers. He should not press his view, nor would he say that the objections which he had suggested might not be got over; but, if asked, he could only state them for what they might be worth.

Some further conversation followed, in the course of which he told Count Beust that he had no plan to propose, but that it seemed to him idle to talk of putting an end to the war as long as the prince and people of Montenegro were allowed to give it active support and assistance, as they were then doing, being at the same time guarded by the intervention of the powers from all fear of retribution on the part of Turkey.

This action of the government is inexplicable, except on the hypothesis that they wished to precipitate events in Turkey, and see an end put to the Turkish rule without having any hand in it, in order to profit by the inevitable collapse, whilst carefully avoiding any grounds for suspicion on the part of their Mussulman subjects that they were in any way privy to the dismemberment of the Sultan's empire. It is, at any rate, certain that all the powers officially expressed their great regret that England refused her co-operation. Still it must not be forgotten that one word spoken often outweighs a dozen despatches, and there may be some other explanation to account for the hostility to the memorandum which the cabinet evinced.

In case, however, that the government were determined to proceed to extremities should Russia do the same, their policy was a wise one. By keeping themselves free from all entangling engagements, they put themselves into a position to interfere at the given moment with all the freshness and vigour of a strong and uncompromised power.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TERROR IN BULGARIA.

WITH Bosnia, the Herzegovina and Montenegro in revolt—with Servia and Roumania on the point of declaring war, and teeming with insurrectionary committees, which sent their agents swarming over the country, it was not to be expected that Bulgaria would long remain unaffected by the course of events on her borders.

Comparatively unknown until recently, the early history of Bulgaria is that of a series of expeditions against Byzance, until the dissensions in the House of Comnenus enabled Asan I. to throw off the yoke of the Greek Emperor Isaac, and to establish his rule in the district known as the Silva Bulgaria, with the exception of a few strong places which were still held by the Greek emperor's troops. He was crowned in 1186 at Tirnova, which became henceforth the capital of the Bulgarian kings, and where, in 1205, Baldwin was barbarously murdered after the defeat of the Crusaders by the allied Greeks and Bulgarians. The rule of the Asanides was, however, of short duration; and in 1291 Bulgaria fell a prey partly to the contentions of its own rival princes between themselves, and to the intrigues and attacks of the Greek and Latin empires at Constantinople, till it fell more or less under the control of the Servian kings Urosh III. and Dushan. Over this chapter of Bulgaro-Servian history, from the death of Asan I. to the Mussulman conquest, the historians pass very rapidly. In fact, the little they tell us belongs rather to the history of the Greek empire than to that of Bulgaria. It is true that the authorities for this period are of doubtful historical value, and partake largely of the character of tradition and legendary lore; but in the absence of well-authenticated facts, traditions and legends exercise just as great an influence on later generations as the most accurate chronicle, and bring out the character of the people far more than any scientifically written history. It would certainly scarcely be fair to judge the present Bulgarian by what he was in the 13th and 14th centuries, if the country had been as open to surrounding influences as the nations of Western Europe were to each other during the same period, and since then. But it must be remembered that Bulgaria has been isolated for centuries; and events have but too clearly shown that the rude, fierce passions which animated the forefathers have been inherited in nearly all their force by the sons. It is, indeed, a dark chapter of history, a story of rival claimants, supported now by the Servians, now by the Byzantian emperors, and in which treachery and murder succeed each other almost without interruption, and clearly shows what the curse really is that weighs upon the populations of the Balkan peninsula, and what chances the Bulgarians have of being able to bury the past, and inaugurating a fresh history untrammelled by the bloody legacies of former ages. The evil destiny of the Bulgarians does not lie in an inferiority of race, in native barbarity, and inaccessibility to European culture, as their enemies say; nor yet in Islam and Turkish oppression. The evil is more deeply rooted in Bulgaria, as elsewhere throughout Turkey; it is Byzantianism. It arises from the contact of Western with Asiatic ideas, and the endless conflicts that result therefrom, not only as between race and race, but also in each individual in whose mind the rival ideas and passions are continually struggling for the supremacy. It lies in the struggle for the possession of the gates of Europe; for the possession of countries which are not sharply marked off by geographical nor by ethnographical limits, but where there is a mixture of races of various degrees of intelligence and energy, divided from each other by creed, language, and interminable jealousies and hatreds. The Bulgarians succeeded the Greeks; the Turks succeeded the Bulgarians; the Russians have been trying to oust the Turks, and to remove, at least, one element of discord from the blood-stained scene. The Russian sees plainly what other nations refuse to see—though he does not seem to know to which category he himself belongs—that the line of contact between Asiatic and European must be moved farther back, and a rigid division made between the two by concentrating the European elements into

a strong phalanx. *Habent sua fata enim regiones;* and the evil fate of the Balkan peninsula lies in the fact that Asia has always had one foot upon Europe from the days of Xerxes, through the various phases of Byzantian empire, to the days of Abdul Hamid. Asia, whether Russian or Turkish, must retire. It then becomes a question as to the division of responsibility for the protection of the gates, and as to *Quis custodiet custodes* if the keepers of the gates are not strong enough to withstand the onslaughts of their Asiatic enemies. It also becomes a question as to which race is more impregnated with Asiatic ideas, and which is more likely to be able to emancipate itself from the Byzantianism which has been the ruin of the peninsula. In short, whether the Greek or the Slav contains the more fruitful germs of honest political life—not the more mobile intellect—and whether a preponderance can be accorded to either; or, if not, what are to be the limits dividing the two races. In coming to more modern times, we must bear in mind the difference between Servia and Bulgaria, and how the Turks scattered their colonies throughout the country, and stifled all national feeling amongst the Bulgarians, who were left to themselves without protection; whilst Servia, regarded as the bulwark of Christianity against the Moslem, received the support of Austro-Hungary, and was thus enabled to retain its national pride, and develop the strongest patriotism amongst its sons. The Bulgarians, however, lay too much at the mercy of their conquerors; they have gradually degenerated into a hopeless state of resignation; and thus, in 1828-'29, it was only the mountain population that rendered any assistance to the Russians. Still, even this assistance, small though it was, caused much anxiety to the Porte, as well as the subsequent risings in 1837-'38 and 1841, and a beginning was made to introduce some few reforms, which were still further extended after the Crimean war. But meagre though these reforms were, the Bulgarians made such good use of them as to prove incontestably that centuries of Asiatic oppression had not converted them into Asiatics; and after the unsuccessful rising in 1862, the Porte was so thoroughly awakened to the importance of the movement progressing in Bulgaria, that Midhat Pasha was sent to pacify the province, and carry out such reforms as were imperatively necessary, as far as consistent with the safety of the Porte. But Midhat soon saw that the slightest reform would be a weapon against the Porte in the hands of the Bulgarians; and the way in which he put down the insurrection of 1867, which was instigated by Servia to exercise a pressure upon the Porte in the matter of the Servian fortresses, clearly shows that the public works he constructed in Bulgaria were but a poor set-off against the reign of terror he instituted. Fifty-four of the insurgents were sent in heavy irons to Rustzuk, where ten were executed, and the rest banished to Diarbekir, which, however, was reached by a few of them only, most of them dying by the way, or being hanged. Still even these "reforms" caused much displeasure in Constantinople, and Midhat was recalled, to the sorrow and yet to the joy of the Bulgarians. They fully appreciated his strict justice; but, at the same time, they plainly saw that he was only forging stronger fetters for them, and that he was the most dangerous enemy to their political regeneration and independence. With the departure of Midhat, the intrigue of the Servian and Panslavist agitators recommenced; but, with the exception of the revolt at Sophia in 1873, the country remained outwardly quiet. The movement, however, silently progressed, till Europe was struck with horror at the atrocities committed in Batak.

Many travellers in Bulgaria have conceived an idea that the Turks are better off and more civilised than the Bulgarians. The Turk does exhibit more taste in his surroundings than the Bulgarian. His house is more prettily situated and more picturesquely built than that of the Bulgarian. But the advantage is only outwardly in favour of the Turk. Inside the Bulgarian house there is much more neatness, order, and busy life than in the house of the Moslem. There is no family life in the Turk's house as there is in that of the Bulgarian; there is none of that mixing of the sexes which distinguishes the Bulgarian from the Turk, and, in many instances, from the Greek, whose ancient institutions were not so foreign to the idea of the Turkish harem. It is true the social life of the Bulgarian can as yet scarcely be called refined; but there is a marked difference between the tastes of the Bulgarian and the Serb as compared to those

of the Roumanian or Wallach. The latter tend more to the French, the former more to the Saxon modes of thought. But many and many a year will pass away before the Bulgarian will be able to hold his own amidst European nations, unless stringent measures are adopted to free him from the trammels which superstition, assisted by the monks, has imposed upon his mind. The name of the monks in Bulgaria is legion; they are infinitely more numerous and ignorant than in Servia; but what was done in Servia, by the help of elementary schools, could also be accomplished in Bulgaria. Perhaps more easily; for, on the whole, the Bulgarian is far more agriculturally inclined than the Servian, and is not so much attracted by the intriguing town life of his neighbours in Belgrade. On the whole, the Bulgarian is essentially material by nature, as is amply evidenced by the numerous superstitious observances and habits to which he is addicted; though, at the same time, it may be doubted whether these superstitions have more influence over him in his acts and daily life than similar customs in other countries. In short, it is a question whether the Bulgarian attaches more importance to his customs than we do to Guy Fawkes' Day, to the Christmas waits, or the pancakes on Shrove Tuesday. On the whole, it would seem that the Bulgarian observances are practised to give vent to the pent-up animal feelings of the people, who have no other outlet for their superabundant spirits. January 6 seems to be an especially exciting day for the majority, though it must be rather the reverse for the minority. The rites are commenced at dawn of day, by the mothers suddenly rubbing their children all over with snowballs; whilst the adults throughout the village lie in ambush, to souse each other with buckets of cold water. The young men who have been married during the year, are led in procession to the river or well, and are there similarly treated; whilst the wife is led by her step-father to the water, and obliged to get into it, and kiss his hand thrice. Having thus satisfactorily soused each other, they take their revenge on January 8, by disguising themselves in fantastic costumes, and, seizing the first best old woman they come across, either plunge her into the river, or souse her also with divers buckets of water. Lent is ushered in with a variety of ceremonies, such as a universal cleaning of pots and pans; but, strangely enough, the dead are exempted from observing the fast; for, on the second Sunday in Lent, food and drink are placed upon the graves of the deceased, and a procession formed by the women, who go from house to house with lighted tapers in their hands, to give their departed relations a good appetite. Altogether, the twenty-two weeks of Lent, the other thirty Fridays, and even the Wednesdays on which the peasantry also fast, represent an amount of corporal castigation unknown in any other country.

It is no wonder, then, that the Bulgarian tries to make up for his enforced digestive idleness during these days by a considerable indulgence on the others. The ceremonies and observances, however, which must be practised by those of both sexes who aspire to matrimony are peculiarly trying, and shows, in a striking manner, what human nature is prepared to go through in order to get married. The preliminaries are most complicated, and when at last the two are safely married, they silently quit the festive board, accompanied by the midwife of the village, who waits outside the nuptial chamber till she is able to return to the assembled guests and announce that the bride has given undoubted proof of her honour. The happy couple remain invisible in their house for several days, after which the bride's first walk is to the well, where she is soused with water by the married women, into whose ranks she is then worthy to enter. Should she not rejoice the soul of her husband with a son and heir, or at least a daughter, she has to be exorcised, and submit to endless incantation; and, if that is all of no avail, she sallies forth on the 1st of May, at early dawn, and rolls herself naked in the dewy grass. If these are some of the difficulties in getting married—and they are only some of them—it may be imagined what are the difficulties in getting born and dying in Bulgaria. When the father of the family feels his end approaching, he sends for the priest and begins to bargain with him about his funeral, and settles the details of his "wake." Having arranged all this and his other worldly affairs, he feels comfortably prepared to leave the world, and, when his agony commences, to have a lighted taper placed in his hand, his jaws bound up with a cloth, and his eyelids closed. The moment his pulse has stopped, all the

pots, pans, jars, kettles, &c., in the house are turned upside down to prevent his soul from taking refuge in one of them, and great care taken to prevent either man or animal —especially a cat or dog—from stepping across his body, as otherwise he would turn into a vampyre, and be a continual nuisance and a danger to his family and the whole community. A few hours after death the body is buried without any coffin, in a shallow grave, eighteen to twenty-four inches deep, and left there for three years, during which time many offerings of food and wine are placed upon it. At the end of the third year, the bones of the dead man are dug up, carefully washed, put into a linen bag, laid before the episcopal throne, of which there is one in every village, blessed by the pope, and then finally buried for good. Thus the Bulgarian is well taken care of after his death, unless, indeed, there is any reason to believe that he has become a vampyre. In that case the grave is opened and the body transfixed by a stake, or a nail is driven into his breast. If the body is very well preserved, then it is riddled with pistol-shots, and the earth stamped down firmly upon it, or sometimes it is burnt to ashes by a fire made of thorn.

These customs, and a hundred others, are naturally fostered by the ignorant monkhood as a source of revenue, which they share with the old women who play the part of doctors and exorcisers. But it must not be imagined for a moment that the Bulgarian allows these superstitions to interfere with his daily work, or that they lead him to indulge in laziness, as would be, and is, the case in southern climes. On the contrary, when it is remembered what a drain upon his resources the claims of the priesthood, the monkhood, and the Turks exercise, it is wonderful that he has so much left for himself as he has, and that he is able to live in comparative affluence. Nothing short of the most unflagging labour would enable him to do so; and that he does work with extreme energy and perseverance we have the word of such men as Kanitz, one of the contractors for various works along the Danube.

Now with these people the Turks were incapable of amalgamating like, for instance, the Normans with the Saxons, on account of the great barrier interposed by the fundamental differences of the faiths of Moslem and Christian. So great is this difference in its political aspect, that those Bulgarians, as in Bosnia, who became Mussulmans, grew more fanatical than the original Moslem. An immense gulf thus separated the ruler from the ruled, and, in a similar way, the Stamboul Court from those of Western Europe. This gulf was bridged over by the descendants of the Byzantians, and they—Greeks, Armenians, and Jews—rapidly acquired that power, and instituted that organisation of corruption, and all the vices that is known as the Sublime Porte. The strength of the Turk thus lies in the fact that he is sitting between two stools—between Slav and Greek. Both parties contended for his favour, and strove to acquire the ascendancy over him. In the struggle that ensued, Byzantianism gained the day over Slavism, and identified itself with the military caste in order to keep a firm hold on the whole country. Clearly, then, if peace is to be restored to the Balkan peninsula, the question must be resolved into its true elements, and the fact be boldly faced, that the two great factors opposing each other are Byzantianism and Slavism. The rest is but incidental. The Turk at Stamboul, and the Greek at Athens, are but corollaries. Abolishing the Turk, and replacing him by the Athenian, would leave matters exactly where they are now, if Byzantianism were not abolished with him. The great difficulty in solving this question is, where to find the necessary administrative powers outside the ranks of Byzantianism, and to draw the limits separating Greek from Slav; and how to deal with Constantinople.

Herr Kanitz, speaking, in his work "Bulgaria," on the connection between Bulgaria and Byzantianism, or the Fanar, has but one opinion on the subject. He insists on the independence of Bulgaria, in the widest sense of the word, as the first step to a happier state of things. He gives a short but graphic description of the events which, after alternating successes, at last laid the Bulgarians prostrate under the Emperor Basilius Bulgaroctonus—"The Slayer of the Bulgarians." Henceforth, till the Mussulman invasion, and with the exception of the short rule of the Latin empire at Constantinople, the Bulgarians were politically and ecclesiastically subject to the Greeks of the empire. And when the Ottoman forces overran the country, after a short inglorious struggle, which has been invested by poets and romancists with a certain nimbus, the Byzantians espoused

the cause of the invader, and retained the power they possessed over the Bulgarians, who now had, in reality, two masters to support—the Sultan in all his luxury, and the Fanar in all its greed. This is what Herr Kanitz says of the Fanar:—"The ecclesiastical traffickers who haggled and bargained for the episcopal posts in Bulgaria, proceeded from the 'Fanar' (fenayer), the Greek quarter of Constantinople, in which the rotten remains of Byzantian corruption blended with Turkish and Asiatic elements. The bishoprics of Bulgaria were awarded to the highest bidder, and not according to the intelligence, piety, or personal qualities requisite in an ecclesiastical ruler." Such was the community at whose mercy the Bulgarians lay, not only ecclesiastically but also fiscally, and who, after satisfying their own greed, screwed down the unhappy peasantry to the last turn to meet the demands of the Porte. But, as Herr Kanitz continues, "even the greatest wealth has its limits. Such was also the experience of the descendants of the Prophet; for the luxury of the Sultans and the Pashas soon swallowed up the tribute and the accumulated riches of the country. In such frequent moments of financial exhaustion the Sultans sought help from that quarter of Constantinople, in whose filth the loathsome remains of Byzance's former pride had found a refuge. In the Fanar they were always able to count, not only upon the rich treasures of commerce, but also upon the enormous wealth sucked by the Greek patriarchs out of the marrow of their flocks; in the Fanar the most usurious traffic in ecclesiastical benefices was established, and the treasurers of the Porte can scarcely be blamed if, in their moments of necessity, they derived a profit out of the depravity of the Fanariote beneficemonger. In the first year of the Mussulman conquest, the price paid for the patriarchate, by Simeon, was 1,000 ducats. In the second year it was doubled; and in 1573 it had risen to 6,000; and by 1864 to 25,000." But an equal sum almost had to be paid away in bribery, in order to get this bid accepted, so many were the applications even at such a price, which restricted the competition to a few of the richest Fanariote families, who regarded the matter simply as a business affair, and a speculation, to carry out which the necessary sums were borrowed from members of the family and money-lenders at usurious interest. The profit had been derived from the sale of the bishoprics, which brought in, on an average, about 4,000 ducats a-year. The bishops, on their part, sold the various cures in their dioceses to the popes, some of the richest of whom would sometimes buy twenty or thirty, and resell them again at a profit. These popes, without education, ground down by the price they had to pay for their cures, were capable of performing nothing more than the barest ceremonies of the church. Marriages, christenings, and deaths were freqnently registered on a stick with the time-honoured notches, instead of in a book. The rest of their time was fully occupied in following the plough and feeding their pigs. All this led to a state of affairs which even the Turkish authorities considered too disgraceful to last, and they insisted that the Christian as well as the Mussulman communities must pay more attention to education, and erect the necessary schools. A beginning was made, but all progress was prevented by the Fanar. "What do you want with schools?" asked the Archbishop of Nisch; "do you want your children to become unbelieving heretics? Better by far devote the money to the building of churches. Great roomy temples to the honour of God are the best schools." Thus, instead of schools, great rambling churches were built, and the prices of the sinecures proportionately raised. Herr Kanitz relates how the new church at Nisch swallowed up all the funds of the community, and that when the new archbishop from the Fanar opened the church, it was found that he could not speak a word of Bulgarian; and when he received the notables of the congregation, he reprimanded them in Greek and Turkish for the address they intended sending to the grand vizier. "Not with complaints," he said, "but with thanksgivings for the unmerited benefits of Turkish rule, the rayah ought to approach the representative of the Sultan." This astounding piece of advice was heard by Herr Kanitz himself, and is in itself sufficient to characterise the system under which Bulgaria suffered for so long, till, owing in a great measure to the exertions of Hilarion, Paisija, and Asentije, Bulgaria was freed from the yoke of the Fanariote vampyre, and a commencement made to inaugurate a fresh epoch of struggling for independence and national life.

It was on such fruitful soil as this that

the seeds of rebellion were sown broadcast by Russian, Serb, and Montenegrin agents. Under these circumstances the irritation of the Turkish populations reached a pitch at which little was required to place the Christians in many parts of the empire in a position of the greatest jeopardy, whilst the unpopularity of the Sultan and of Mahmoud Pasha, coupled with the universal distress arising from the financial state of the country, gave rise to deep-seated and general discontent throughout the country.

The effect of the long-continued insurrection in Bosnia was felt by every class of the community, whether Christian or Mussulman; but the latter regarded themselves as sufferers from a Christian movement for supremacy countenanced by the Christian powers, which allowed every kind of assistance to be given to the insurgents, while the Porte was prevented from adopting the measures considered necessary to put it down by attacking it at its source. At the same time, the Salonica castastrophe increased the prevailing uneasiness; and throughout the country the tension was so great, that the least spark was sufficient to explode the pent-up panic of the Moslems and cause a massacre. An Englishman, employed by the Turks in one of the inland Bulgarian towns, stated that the fright was so great that the Christians were forbidden to walk in the streets, two or more together, under pain of imprisonment; and that before this edict was promulgated, a solitary Turk seeing three Bulgarians advancing towards him down the street, and none of his co-religionists near, without more ado shot one of them dead, and seriously wounded another. The third managed to escape. Now the curious part of this business is that the Turk in question was highly esteemed by the Bulgarian population of the place, so that our informant felt no hesitation in asking him why he had attacked the unfortunate men. The reply exactly represents the state of mind the Turks were in. "My God Almighty," he said, "I don't know. But when I saw them coming towards me, and there was no other in the street, a great lump stuck in my throat and stopped my breath, and I pulled out my pistol and fired at them in a frenzy. God is very great!" And such was the feeling throughout the land. Both parties, it may be said, were bursting with that sort of apprehension or fear that is as powerful as the most determined courage. Those who lived through the Indian mutiny will well be able to realise the feeling, ultimately resulting in the grim ferocity of despair. It was put in another shape by a Bulgarian correspondent—a timber merchant—who is well known in one of the continental towns. He wrote:—"We do not fear the Bashi-Bazouks and Circassians so much. They are a rough, brutal set, but on the whole they can be managed by humouring them and treating them well. They are, of course, a great plague; but the Moslem landowners dislike them just as much as we do, and would be glad to get rid of them, for a Tcherkess does not stop to ask if the turkey-cock he steals is a Christian or a Turk. But what we are afraid of more than anything else is the fear the Moslems have of our rising *en masse*, and massacring them all at some given signal. They are convinced that such is our intention, and never know when the sun rises whether they will see it set. The suspense is killing us both (*la crainte nous assomme tous les deux*)."

This accurately describes the condition of affairs in Bulgaria towards the end of April, 1876, when isolated cases of revolt convinced the Moslems that the moment for their massacre had arrived, and caused an excitement all through the country, that spread from day to day.

These revolts were treated as in 1867, when there was a strange invasion of Bulgaria that created immense local excitement, and no small alarm at Constantinople. A countless Russian host, not of soldiers, but of *rats*, generally supposed to have migrated from the Ural, swept over the province up to the Balkan. Day by day their movements were reported by telegraph to Constantinople, whence the most stringent orders were sent to the Vali of Rustchuk to exterminate the vermin forthwith. The Vali at once published a decree, *ad hoc*, calling upon the people to carry out this order, which, however, remained as usual a dead letter. Fresh and peremptory commands were again despatched from Stamboul; whereupon the Vali armed himself with a stick, armed his generals, Muftis, Mollahs, and Cadis with sticks, and, sallying forth from village to village, summoned the people to arm themselves likewise with sticks, and then proceed, *viribus unitis*, to prod the vermin out of their holes. Such an impulse did this example impart to the energy of the people, that within a few

days the luckless invaders were all irretrievably massacred.

This is no parable, but a sober fact, and exactly illustrates not only the method by which the Bulgarian revolt was stifled, but also that by which the Turkish forces were mobilised. The rank and file formed excellent material, and some of the superior officers were very good; but of the inferior officers and the administration at Stamboul it is hard to say which was the worst. The War-Office sent its orders to the Valis of the Asiatic and European provinces to collect as many men as they could, no matter from what source, and to unfurl the green flag. An immense multitude of rabble was thus assembled at various points in the empire. The scum of the towns, the dregs of the prisons (even those of Egypt, Tripoli, and Tunis were impressed), the poorer peasantry—in short, all who had nothing to lose and everything to gain, were distributed amongst the towns and through the districts denuded of regular troops. Here they were the terror of the population, and about as much under the control of the Valis and Mutesarifs as a wild elephant in the hands of a child.

Under such conditions it is not surprising, as Consul Dupuis states, that disturbances occurred at Karabounar, between Yamboli and Eski-sagra; at Kouleli Bourgas, and at Tatar-Bazardjik, where a complete panic seized the place, and the fears of a general massacre were so great that the whole of the Christian population betook themselves to their churches, where they passed the night, while the Turks were parading the streets fully armed. At Tatar-Bazardjik, an eye-witness, a Polish gentleman in the service of the Porte, said that, on reaching that place, he found it completely abandoned, all the shops and houses shut up, the inhabitants fled or hid away, and complete disorganisation among the railway servants, in consequence of the reprisals threatened for the massacre at Otloukeui of five zaptiehs and an *employé* of the konak by insurgents; for the local authorities, fearing an attack on Tatar-Bazardjik, collected together an armed force of the Mussulman inhabitants, and started in pursuit of the murderers, who immediately fled to the mountains.

But though the murderers had fled, the troops which had been gathered together in the manner already described—Circassians, Bashi-Bazouks, and general riffraff—were not to be balked of their revenge on the inhabitants of the village of Otloukeui, who, refusing to surrender, and taking refuge in a church or monastery, were bombarded by them under Hafous Pasha, and upwards of 300 men, women, and children slaughtered.

This was the signal for that series of massacres by Moslems and Christians of each other (in which it is true that the Christians were worsted), which created such intense excitement in England, where it was at once seized upon for a party cry, and gave rise to that agitation which has become so notorious as to need no further allusion to it.

But, for future guidance, it may be well to show on what the wholesale denunciation of the Turks was based, and who were the immediate perpetrators of the sickening outrages which thrilled all Europe.

We will take the reports of the journal which was so fortunate as to find a way, not only for purely political purposes, but to regain the 'vantage ground it had lost as the organ of dissent. Here we find Mr. MacGahan writing:—

"When the insurrection broke out, regular soldiers were at first sent to put it down. Turkish soldiers are always a rough, undisciplined lot; but they had to deal with men who were not very much better, and who were in rebellion. Leaving out of consideration the provocation and justification which the insurgents had for rebellion, the systematic oppression of years, the numerous cases of individual cruelties and hardships, the long imprisonment in the foul dungeons, which, out of the capital, serve as prisons of men unconvicted and untried, but suspected—it may be admitted that in any country a rebel takes his life in his hands, and has no great reason to complain if, when he fails, he has to pay the penalty of death. Mercy towards belligerents was never expected, and has certainly never been shown in Turkish warfare. But the atrocities complained of are *not* the work of soldiers, but of *Bashi-Bazouks*. It will be remembered that, in the Crimean war, the reputation of more than one Indian officer was destroyed, because it was found impossible by men even with Indian experience to keep order among these irregular troops. Military organisation or discipline they can scarcely be said to have. Composed of the dregs of the Turkish and *Circassian* population, with *Gipsies* and

gaol-birds let out for the purpose, and under no responsible command, they have been let loose upon a large portion of central Bulgaria to put down the insurrection in their own fashion. The result is what everybody acquainted with the materials composing such a force might expect—the plundering of all moveable property, the burning of the houses and villages of the peasantry, without the slightest regard to the question whether the occupants have taken part in the insurrection or not, and the almost indiscriminate slaughter of old men, women, and children."

In another report we read the following graphic description. Novo Selo, however, it must be remembered, is the name of every third village in the country, so that it is rather a vague description:—

"The village of Novo Selo was attacked by *Bashi-Bazouks* and *Circassians*. More than 400 women and children took to flight, and, worn out with fatigue, huddled themselves together in the open fields near Kalofer. They sent to the head men of the latter village for food. After some negotiations to obtain the permission of the neighbouring Mussulmans, they received permission to take refuge in the convent of the Holy Trinity. During the negotiations a band of 200 men burst in upon the poor wretches, took from them everything of value which the *Circassian* troops had left them, and carried off forty of the young women. These men, returning to their village with their captives, were met by the Turkish women, who objected to receive any giaours. They were thereupon driven to a neighbouring farm, and, after a scene which the *Courrier* describes, but an English paper dare not, they were shut up in a straw-loft and burnt. Other particulars are given by the *Courrier;* but these are enough. This horrible statement, I repeat, was not contradicted here by the government, nor was the newspaper suppressed professedly because of its publication. Had it been, and the accuracy of the statements challenged, the truth would have been made manifest."

This reasoning is classic. Because the paper was not suppressed by a government which habitually suppressed the truth, therefore the charge was true.

Again, a letter from Sliven, May 29th, states:—

"In the market the soldiers attacked Detcho, the tailor, while the Redifs fired upon him and killed him. The same band of soldiers killed, with their daggers, a boy sixteen years old, and mortally wounded Thodoraki Ahmakoff. Four men are lying in bed badly wounded; but those who are slightly wounded are without number. The *governor, in this case, showed a great deal of prudence and energy.* The moment he was informed of these troubles he hastened to the place, ordered that the corpses of the two killed should be taken away, pacified the people, accompanied himself some of the wealthier people to their houses, while others he sent accompanied by his men, and commanded the *Bashi-Bazouks* to lay down their arms. In spite of all these orders, however, the *Bashi-Bazouks* did not lay down their arms, and continued to walk about armed, so that the people, fearing lest their property should be sacked, did not open their shops. The governor, observing this, ordered, on the 13th (25th), the public criers to announce to the people to open their shops; but they opened only one door of their shops, being still afraid of the lawlessness of the *Bashi-Bazouks.* A short time after, the *Bashi-Bazouks* and the troops attacked the butchers' and bakers' shops, plundering all the meat, bread, and money they found, so that the shops were again closed. The governor again ordered the *Bashi-Bazouks* to lay down their arms, and the Turkish Muhtars and Imams to tell the Turks to attend to their business. Moreover, he appointed guards of soldiers to go round the city; and by these precautions tranquillity was established again. In the villages, however, the *Bashi-Bazouks* go about freely with their arms, and commit various outrages, so that no one dares to go out of the city."

In the same letter it is also stated—"Great numbers of Bulgarian children have been captured by the *Circassians,* and have been sold, or are now on sale as slaves. So large is the stock on hand, that I am informed, from a good source, that young girls may be bought for three or four liras each at Philippopolis. I have seen an official report from a consular agent in the district, who has apparently no sympathy whatever with the insurgents, in which the estimate of those killed—non-combatants, that is—is fixed at 12,000, including men, women, and children. He adds, that the country is full of armed marauders, who compel all the wealthy Christians to pay heavy penalties, under the threat of

being denounced as insurgents." It is worthy of note, that even at this early period it was acknowledged that some Christians, at least, were wealthy and able to pay heavy penalties.

Then we read again:—"Complete anarchy reigns throughout the towns and villages of this province (Philippopolis). The *governor seems to be the only one who has at heart the true interest of the government, and he is unable to restrain the fanaticism of the Turks.* The idea is current here among the Turks, either to annihilate or to materially weaken the Bulgarian element, so that they may rid themselves of every fear of European intervention. In the space of twenty days more than 100 villages have been burned in the province of Philippopolis and of Tatar-Bazardjik."

"Bashi-Bazouks, and Circassians and Gipsies:" such is the constant refrain. It was not the regular troops, nor even the Moslems as a class, who were guilty of the excesses; but only the scoundrels, for the most part, hounded into Turkey by Russia.

It was, of course, highly reprehensible to make use of these ruffians; but when a man thinks his neighbours are about to fall upon him, and massacre him and all his belongings, he does not inquire too nicely into the character of his instruments to defend himself. Besides this, the Moslems were better aware of the nature of the Bulgarian than were correspondents, whose only preparation for their task was the study of a cheap Turkish grammar, purchased at one of the second-hand bookstalls along the Seine during their journey down the Danube. What the Bulgarians would have done, had they not been forestalled, has been amply proved by subsequent events. That they had cause for fear is now but too plain. But it was well known even then what was preparing. It was known as far south as Salonica. Here we find Consul Blunt writing:—

"Some Servian emissaries, with about thirty insurgents, made an irruption into the mountainous district of Malish, burnt some Bulgarian houses, hoping thus to force the Bulgarians to rise, and massacred some Mahommedans; but they were dispersed, and I now hear that several of them have been apprehended.

"The governor-general of Salonica informs me that he continues to receive satisfactory accounts of the quiet disposition of the Bulgarian peasants in his province.

"I am also informed that the secret agents of the authorities have discovered traces of a 'Bulgarian Comité' in this town, under the direction of foreign influence, who employed emissaries to foment disturbances in the interior."

It was equally known in Rustchuk; and Consul Reade lost no opportunities of impressing the fact upon his superiors, but with little effect. He wrote on May 20th:—

"The state of things here has improved since my last report, and the *emissaries* who have entered the vilayet from abroad find it daily more difficult to stir up the Bulgarians of the province.

"The insurgents from the Balkans having *failed in getting the Bulgarians of Selvi to join them, threatened to come down and punish them.* Accordingly, the day before yesterday, I believe about 1,000 were collected at Ducheva, a spot about two hours from Selvi. The Selvi people immediately sent off to Tirnova and Plevna for assistance, and Nedjib Aga, governor of the latter place, at once hurried off with about 500 men of the reserve.

"On their arrival where the insurgents were, they attacked them so vigorously that they completely routed them in a very short time. The killed and wounded were about 200. Nedjib Aga lost two killed and nine wounded.

"I saw the governor-general yesterday just as he had received this intelligence. His excellency was in high spirits, and hoped that the disturbances here would soon cease, as the insurgents must now be convinced that they cannot do anything of importance. Indeed, I have myself heard, from other quarters, that the Bulgarians themselves say, that not having taken advantage of the moment when the Turks were taken up with the Herzegovina, it is now too late to hope for any success here.

"The so-called *Bulgarian Committee* of Bucharest, as I said before, are moving, but, as the people here, I am told, say, too late. A number of them (from 100 to 120) are on the opposite coast, between this and Widdin, waiting for opportunities to cross; but the Turks are so much on the alert, night and day, that as yet none have been able to come over.

"In this town several have been arrested

for going about endeavouring to stir up the Bulgarians to rise; but they have not succeeded in one single instance. *The affair altogether is contemptible, and I think we shall shortly hear the end of it.*"

This may not appear to have been a very fortunate prophecy; but it must be remembered that Consul Reade was speaking of the country north of the Balkans, where, as a matter of fact, scarcely any excesses took place. At the same time, he writes on the following day:—

"Many of the *revolutionary Bulgarians in Wallachia* are said to be entering this vilayet, and some have already been discovered and arrested.

"From all I see and hear, I am persuaded that there is nothing serious to fear for the moment, nor will there be if the government acts with promptitude on the occurrence of any disorder. The Porte, however, I think, would do well were it to grant the pasha more power, so as to enable him to make examples of some of the chiefs of the insurgents; for I am persuaded if this is not done the natives will think that the government is weak, and the disturbances, which at present are comparatively insignificant, are sure to increase; whereas, if a few examples were made of the chiefs, they would serve as salutary, and, I think, successful lessons to the rest."

It was thus clearly Mr. Reade's opinion that the disturbances were chiefly due to foreign agents; and in advising the adoption of severe measures, he had only these people in view, and not the Bulgarian population; for Mr. Reade is one of those men who refuse to see good in a Turk, as his subsequent despatches amply prove—especially the one that aroused Lord Beaconsfield's ire when he retorted upon Mr. Gladstone's "bag and baggage" with a contemptuous "coffee-house babble." Both phrases were equally unfortunate—the one because it conveyed a wrong impression, the other because it was true. The "babble" was a report from a Mussulman, who was sent by Mr. Reade to acquire information, and ran as follows:—

"This morning I went to a *café*, where a Mussulman was sitting, in company with several Mussulmans of Rustchuk. He was one of those sent against the insurgents, and this is what I heard him say:—

"When asked whether he could be called a Ghazi (champion of the Faith), he answered, 'I will not speak of what I have done; but when I tell you that even our schoolboys killed their five or six Bulgarians, what can you imagine that I did?'

"He praised the Circassians as having done great things, having as their motto, '*Giaur eulsun, vurunuz eulsun*' ('Let the Giaour die—strike him, let him perish').

"A Bimbashi (major) present asked him if they had taken rifles from those that were killed. He replied, that 'they had not even a hoe with them, much less rifles.'

"The Bimbashi then said that they must have killed innocent people. He replied, 'Yes, very few had arms.'

"Another present remarked that 5,000 or 6,000 must have perished innocently. He answered, 'If you had said 25,000 or 26,000 you would have been more correct.' He added, 'It is a great loss to the country, as most of them were tax-paying people.'

"He also said that at Plevna no Christian could go to his field or vineyard for fear of being robbed or maltreated; and that the people of Nicopoli and Shumla were preparing letters of thanks to their Kaïmacams for not having armed the Circassians in their districts."

Similar information poured in from all quarters, and it was all to the same effect. The burden of the song was ever that emissaries were forcing the people into revolt, and that Circassians and Bashi-Bazouks were employed against them. Yet, at this very period, General Ignatieff was the very man who pooh-poohed the movement, and stated that, according to his information, the disturbances arose simply from the turbulent behaviour of the Italian navvies on the railway-works, who were discontented because they had not received their pay. Naturally the wily general did not wish it to become known what dimensions the agitation and massacre were taking. All he cared was that the Bulgarian "question" should arise in addition to the Bosnian, Herzegovinian, and Montenegrin questions.

The summary measures, however, which the Moslems were obliged to adopt, would speedily have resulted in the suppression of the revolt. It had, in fact, been already quelled when, chiefly through Ignatieff's instrumentality, the massacres of Perustitza, Aorat, Alan, and Batak were made known to the world through Mr. MacGahan and Mr. Schuyler. He saw that the time had come for adding fresh fuel to the smouldering flame, and found the above gentlemen willing tools in his hands for the purpose

of creating an intense excitement throughout Europe; whilst, on the other hand, he proceeded to stir up the rebellion afresh: this time, by openly-avowed emissaries and foreigners—that is, by inciting the Serbs to declare war, and carry their arms, not into the districts for which alone they had hitherto expressed their sympathy—that is to say, into Bosnia and the Herzegovina, where the Christians had been battling for the last eighteen months, and were, undoubtedly, suffering—but into Bulgaria, where the most diabolical intrigues and devilish means had been adopted to force the people into rebellion.

A personal friend of Mr. Schuyler's was chosen to carry this plan out—a man who had enabled Mr. Schuyler to make his *début* as a sensation-reporter and atrocity-monger. This man was General Tchernaieff.

Tchernaieff was one of those restless spirits who are consumed by ambition and eaten up by vanity. He had commanded a Russian detachment in the first Central Asian expedition, under General Kauffmann, and had conquered Tashkend. This turned his brain. Henceforth he was known amongst his friends as the Mogul of Tashkend. General Kauffmann, however, did not attach the same importance to his subordinate, who thoroughly believed that to him, and him alone, the success of the whole expedition was due. This led to disputes between the two commanders; and General Kauffmann—who, some people say, is the Czar of Asiatic Russia, which includes the greater portion of the empire—succeeded in inducing the authorities at St. Petersburg to intimate to General Tchernaieff that it would be advisable for him to resign.

The whole affair is wrapped up in some mystery. Whether General Tchernaieff's dismissal was due to his having furnished Mr. Schuyler with the information regarding the atrocities committed by General Kauffmann and the Russian Bashi-Bazouks, or whether it was in consequence of his dismissal that he favoured Mr. Schuyler, is not quite clear. Certain it is that the publication of Mr. Schuyler's report on the Asian atrocities led to such strong representations on the part of the Russian government, that he was recalled from his post at the United States embassy, and ordered to Constantinople. Probably Mr. Schuyler suggested Constantinople himself, as likely, from information probably volunteered by General Tchernaieff, to prove a favourable spot for the preparation of a fresh atrocity report. Be this as it may, General Tchernaieff and Mr. Schuyler were fast friends in Russia; Tchernaieff was in disgrace in Court circles; Schuyler went to Constantinople, became an intimate acquaintance of General Ignatieff's; and shortly afterwards, almost simultaneously with the publication of the Bulgarian horrors, General Tchernaieff arrived in Belgrade.

This may all be a fortuitous concatenation of events. It is quite possible that for once fiction has been stranger than truth; but it will, at any rate, always remain a very remarkable concatenation, and psychologically enigmatical. What the general went to Servia for appears from a letter which he wrote to the *Russki Mir*, the journal of which he had become the proprietor since he had exchanged the sword for the pen:—

"I proceeded to Servia with the object of making myself acquainted with the real state of affairs in the Turkish territories, in order that, in communicating information to my own newspaper, I might be enabled to appreciate correctly the intelligence which is transmitted to Russia chiefly through the Austrian press, which is hostile to all Slavism generally. I chose the route by way of Kisheneff and the Danube, along the whole course of which, commencing from the Russian frontier to the Servian boundary, committees were formed, towards the end of last year, for organising the plans of the Bulgarians in their approaching struggle for independence.

"Commencing from Bolgrad (a Bulgarian colony which fell away from Russia and became incorporated with Roumania by virtue of the treaty of Paris), I everywhere heard the same thing, which was to the effect that all had been done that was possible by the people for the impending struggle. All the arms that could be found in Roumania had been bought up; many rifles, which had been distributed by the Turkish government among the Mussulman population, had been obtained by the Bulgarians, and that powder was being manufactured in many places by the people themselves. Considerable stores of provisions had been removed to the Balkans, and property secreted under ground.

"'We only expect,' I was told, 'a general signal for attacking the Turks, after first

removing our families and cattle to the mountains; we still, however, require leaders and unanimity. We are keeping the people back so as to avoid useless sacrifices by a premature rising!'

"I doubted the correctness of this information, and particularly as regards the enthusiasm of the committees being shared by the Bulgarian people across the Danube. The subsequent outbreak, however, confirmed the statements made to me. At the present moment, and now that a fortnight has elapsed since the first commencement of hostilities, the insurgent Bulgarians may, according to information possessed here, be numbered by thousands. Their movements are regulated by a fixed programme. The Bulgarian military organisation is based on a gradual scale, commencing from a desiatka (ten men); ten desiatkas form a cheta, ten chetas a voevodstvo; ten voevodstvos a head voevodstvo, the command over which will be intrusted to a commander-in-chief. Seniority among the commanders will be reckoned from the day of their taking part in the insurrection. Until the people are seasoned under fire, all the military movements will be confined to partisan attacks on the communications; consisting chiefly in the destruction of railways, telegraphs, interception of couriers, posts, &c.* *An attack of Turkish detachments will only be allowed under specially favourable circumstances, and under a considerable superiority of strength over the enemy. The first acts of the insurgents have been in strict accordance with this programme.*

"After quitting Bucharest I reached Belgrade, where I found that preparations for war were being pushed forward. As is known, the military force of the principalities consists of militiamen (of regular troops there are only 4,000 or 5,000), who can be all mustered in fourteen days. The Servians, relying on Russia, remained quiet for eleven months, enabling the Turks to concentrate along their extended frontier about 60,000 men, a considerable quantity of Krupp artillery, and to form several fortified camps. The justice of their complaints against diplomacy can thus be understood. You will readily perceive why my arrival excited such sympathy. Not only at Belgrade, but also during my excursion into the interior (which I undertook, with the sanction of Prince Milan, for the purpose of examining, amongst other things, the state of the fortresses), did I hear of the strong hopes which the Bulgarians placed in their Russian brethren. This feeling of sympathy, expressed, may be, with greater strength at the present critical moment, always exists in the hearts of the Servian people, as is proved by the presence, in every peasant's hut and wayside station, of the portraits of our emperors side by side with those of their esteemed princes of the House of Obronovitch. Wherever I passed the people shouted, 'Long life to our Russian brethren! Long life to our Orthodox Russian Tsar!'

"On my return to Belgrade a proposal was made that I should enter the ranks of the Servian army. All vacillation on my part would, of course, have been misplaced; a refusal would have been tantamount to a desire to avoid the danger which threatened a kindred country from all sides. After the survey made by me of the advanced positions, my departure from Servia would have been interpreted by the enemies of the Slavs, who are very numerous, in the sense that I had become convinced of the impossibility of the contemplated struggle. My examination, however, of the real state of matters, assured me of the contrary. Servia can muster 125,000 well-armed troops, with 200 rifled guns, and 24,000 horsemen for scout and outpost duties. In addition to this the country is able to command 100,000 armed men for the protection and defence of their families and dwellings.

"It may generally be said that Servia possesses many natural advantages for a successful struggle against the Turks. Victory, however, is in the hand of God. The nation is fervidly devoted to the Obronovitch dynasty, and to its present representative, Prince Milan. Everything that we hear in Russia about the Karageorgevitch party, which is secretly supported by Austria, proceeds from the Austrian press; and every true Servian regards the few partisans of that party, who are in the pay of Austria, with the greatest contempt.

"The communistic outbreak at Kragujevatz, which has been purposely magnified by the Austrian press, was a childish bid for notoriety by a few hair-brained young men thirsting for notoriety. I conclude this letter by expressing the hope that my

* The etc. probably means "casual massacres."

countrymen will not condemn my determination to place myself in the ranks of the Servians in the impending struggle for the emancipation of the *Balkan Christians* from the degrading and insupportable Turkish yoke."—These last words, the "Balkan Christians," left no doubt as to the general's intentions. Yet the very next day we find Consul White writing a pottering despatch, to the effect that, "after hearing most conflicting accounts during the day, it has hitherto been always possible, in the end, to ascertain that these reports are, at any rate, premature." Then follow a number of "probables" and "possibles," "likelys" and "unlikelys," varied with a few "said to be's," and winding up with the statement, "that an attempt will not improbably be made to open new centres of insurrection in Bosnia." Again, on June 12, he writes as though Bosnia were to be the scene of offensive operations, whilst every stable-boy in Belgrade knew perfectly well that Bulgaria was to be the scene of operations, and every cobbler that it was impossible for Servia to take any action in Bosnia for fear of Austrian intervention, which had been plainly threatened.

However, on Tchernaieff's return from Alexinatz, he accepted a commission in the Servian army without giving, as Mr. White wrote, time to the imperial government to raise any formal objection to this act on his part. Still Mr. White did express a "belief" that General Tchernaieff had been in negotiation with some parties in Belgrade with that view for some months, and that his opinion of the attitude that Russia would ultimately take in the question, had more to do with this bold act on his part than any excessive confidence in the military resources of the principality.

One of the parties here alluded to was M. Kartzoff, the Russian consul, who assured Mr. White "that this act of General Tchernaieff's took him quite by surprise, and that he considered this step on the part of the Servian government as wanting in proper deference to his own government."

But whatever M. Kartzoff may have considered, his government showed no signs of displeasure worthy of any attention, and simply contented itself with a formal denial that General Tchernaieff had received any military command in Servia. It was left to the *Agence Russe* to make this denial. This *Agence Russe* is a news and telegraph agency, supported by the government, in order to supply the foreign press with "authentic and reliable information on Russian affairs." What reliance is to be placed on the utterances of this agency appears very plainly in this matter of General Tchernaieff. The *Agence Russe* said (and its sayings were reported by Lord Loftus to his government with all the weight of authority), that they were "in a position to affirm that M. Tchernaieff, who was a retired general, had not received any kind of military command in Servia, and that he was only there in his character of newspaper correspondent, as was proved by the telegram from Belgrade, signed by himself, and which was copied from the *Monde Russe*, which is his paper. But what is true was, that this general and other retired Russian officers, influenced by their sympathies and by the prospect of impending conflagrations in Turkey, had left for Servia or Montenegro, and that probably they were not the only ones who had done so. These," the *Agence Russe* continued, "were all symptoms of very imminent danger, and which proved that not a moment must be lost if it was to be averted."

It was, however, never intended that the danger should be averted; and thus the Servian ministers and their newly-made friends went on with their military preparations with as much energy as ever.

Meantime events had been rapidly culminating in Constantinople to a crisis. For some time those who were behind the scenes had been aware that some movement was in progress which, from its depth and extent, was calculated to lead to important results. For some time the discontent felt by the subjects of the Sultan at the way in which they were misgoverned had been increasing in intensity, and was no longer confined to the Christians, but had extended to the Mussulmans themselves, until the matter was taken up most seriously by the Softas, who may best be described as the educated youths and the students belonging to the upper ranks of Moslem society, and may be regarded as, to a very great degree, representing the intelligent public opinion of the capital, if not of the empire. These Softas were animated by a determination to obtain the entire reform of the administration, which alone could save the empire from the total and speedy ruin with which it was threatened, especially in

consequence of the conduct of Mahmoud Pasha, who was looked upon as directly responsible for a large share in the desperate state of affairs. It was he, they said, who during his first administration encouraged the Sultan in all his caprices, being only anxious to retain his majesty's favour, and totally indifferent to the welfare of his country. Mahmoud, they said, must be removed; for the Sultan having once been taught to consult nothing but his own humour, no subsequent minister was able to restrain him; those who attempted it being invariably dismissed within a few weeks. Their first object, therefore, was to procure the dismissal of the obnoxious vizier, and the nomination of Midhat Pasha, who, as the champion of the reforming party, was the only man in whom much confidence was placed. The Old Turk party, however, preferred Mehemet Rushdi Pasha, who though enjoying general respect as an incorruptible and patriotic statesman, was not supposed to have the power to obtain from the Sultan the concessions and limitations of his authority that were considered necessary, and which might possibly still preserve his throne, if, indeed, this was not too late. With this idea, the word "Constitution" was in every mouth, without there being any well-defined understanding what it meant, except that it signified the establishment of some popular or national control over the purely arbitrary will of the sovereign.

The Softas, knowing themselves to be supported by the bulk of the nation, Christian as well as Mussulman, in calling for this control, determined not to desist in their efforts till they had obtained it, and texts from the Koran were circulated with a view of proving to the faithful that the form of government sanctioned by it is properly democratic, and that the absolute authority wielded by the sovereign was a usurpation of the rights of the people, and a contravention of the holy law. At the same time, both texts and precedents were appealed to, to show that allegiance is not due to the sovereign who neglects the interests of the State. These views met with general approbation; disaffection ran through every class, and no one thought of trying to conceal his opinion. Even among the porters in the streets, the boatmen on the Bosphorus, and pashas who had filled or were then filling the very highest posts, civil or military, the same language was held, and not a single quarter could be named in which the Sultan could with any confidence have looked for support against a well-organised attempt to depose him. So universal was the feeling against the government, as carried on by the Sultan and his favourites, that the highest officers in the army publicly declared that neither they nor their men would oppose the Softas in any movement they might make. And more significant than all was the understanding that existed between the Softas and the Christians; for when it became known that a vast conspiracy was being organised, the first thought of the Christians naturally was that it was to be directed against them: but the Softas at once declared that there was not the least intention to interfere with the Christians. On the contrary, they would only be too glad if the Christians would assist them in their plans, at least by not opposing them.

A painful period of suspense followed upon this action of the Softas, and the air, so to speak, was big with portentous events. At last the first blow was dealt. On May 10th a large assemblage of Softas met Prince Izeddin when on his way to the Seraskeriat in Stamboul, and stopping him, bade him return and inform the Sultan of their demands—viz., the dismissal of the Sheikh-ul-Islam and the Grand Vizier. His majesty, on receiving the message, at once sent his secretary to the mosque, where upwards of 2,000 were assembled, in order to ascertain more precisely what it was they wanted, and by the next day at noon both their wishes had been complied with, so great was the terror at the palace. But this was not all that the Softas required. They intended to require the Sultan to modify his prerogative altogether, and to grant a representative and constitutional form of government, so as to ensure an efficient control over the finances of the State; and at the same time, although Mehemet Rushdi Pasha, the new Grand Vizier, was universally respected, the appointment of Midhat Pasha was still to be insisted upon.

Had the Sultan known, or been able to gauge the character of the movement, he might have avoided what was to follow by complying with the plainly-expressed desires of the Softas, and appointing Midhat Pasha Grand Vizier, and calling upon him to frame a constitution in the sense demanded by all his subjects alike. But either, as is

most probable, he knew nothing at all about the matter, or, knowing it, he felt strong enough, in the possession of his ironclads and the army he had organised, to be able to defy his rebellious subjects. He did not know that neither his army nor his navy would fire a shot to save him.

Thus the catastrophe came. The Softas, led by Midhat Pasha, had learned their own strength. They had succeeded in intimidating their sovereign, and they had learned that their object was approved of by the nation at large; and now, seeing that the Sultan still refused to comply with their wishes, they determined to strike the final blow.

The arrangements for ensuring success, and for preventing the probability of disturbance, were made with consummate skill and foresight; but it is still a matter of wonder that a plot, of which so many were in the secret, and the existence of which was indeed generally, although vaguely, known to the public, should not have reached the Sultan or his immediate favourites. It can only be explained by the fact that in the capital there was hardly a man who did not desire his overthrow, nor a friend disposed to warn him of the dangers—not even Sir Henry Elliot, who was excellently informed upon the subject. But be this as it may, the Sheikh-ul-Islam, the highest authority that Mahommedans can appeal to, declared the lawfulness of deposing the sovereign. The two following questions were submitted to him by the Ulema:—

"If the first of the true believers gives signs of madness and of an ignorance of political matters; if he spends the public money on himself in excess of what the State or the nation can grant him, will he not thus become the cause of troubles and of the public ruin? Ought he not to be dethroned?"

To this the Sheikh-ul-Islam answered by a simple "Yes," and, signed by his name, "Hassan Hairoullah," the questions and the answer became a "fetva," of which the authority would be admitted by all true Mussulmans.

Having obtained this fetva, the Softas then proceeded to lay it before the Minister of War, Hussein Avni Pasha, and the Grand Vizier, Mehemet Rushdi Pasha, who at last gave his consent to the execution of the project, which it was immediately resolved to carry out at once.

By this decision Mehemet saved the country from the most imminent danger; for the public exasperation had arrived at such a height, that the Softas and the people would undoubtedly have attempted a revolution, which, in their hands, would have been attended by all the evils and dangers of a popular movement, but which, conducted by those in authority, might pass without disturbance or even uneasiness.

It is true that, when those who are entrusted by their sovereign with power, turn that power against him, there is in such conduct an appearance of treachery that must create a painful impression; but in the case of Mehemet Rushdi Pasha, his conduct was guided by no considerations but those of the purest patriotism, for there was not another Turkish pasha so universally regarded as incorruptible, and at the same time so free of all suspicion of being actuated by motives of personal ambition. Though he had long been convinced that the personal character of the Sultan rendered the utter ruin of the country inevitable, still he shrank from the act of violence to which he was at last driven, when, against his own wishes, he was placed in the high position which enabled him to secure the success of the plot. The Minister of War and Marine also acknowledged the authority of the fetva, and thus we have the singular spectacle of a despotic government overthrown by the law in accordance with the will of the people—by the people in accordance with the law.

Thus the consent of those having been gained who could have predicted the success of the plot, all possibility of resistance and risk of disturbance were prevented by precautions taken by the Porte. On May 30th, the palace was surrounded, on the land side, by troops before daybreak, and by boats from ships of war on the other. At the same time, the heir to the throne, Murad Effendi, was taken by some of the ministers to the War Office, and there proclaimed Sultan, whilst the announcement of his dethronement was made to Abdul Aziz by a pasha, who convinced him that resistance was useless; and in spite of his fury and despair, the Sultan was taken in a boat with his family to the old palace, which he was to leave no more alive.

At break of day, May 31st, the accession of Sultan Murad V. was joyously proclaimed amidst salvoes of artillery from the land batteries and the ships

of war. Throughout the empire the rejoicing was universal. The new Sultan was hailed as a model of perfection, and, assisted by Midhat Pasha and the good-will of the foreign powers, there is reason to believe that a real reform might have been brought about. But absolute tranquillity would have been necessary for this as well as a reorganisation of the finances, which some sanguine people imagined would have been considerably assisted by the money it was hoped would be found in the late Sultan's private coffers. But all that was found amounted to no more than about £100,000 in cash, £1,000,000 in jewelry, and £8,000,000 of Turkish bonds, representing a market value of about £320,000. As for Sultan Abdul Aziz, although the most explicit assurances were given as to his safety, and the Queen herself telegraphed to express her hopes that no violence would be done to him, there were few people who did not believe that his days were numbered. When, therefore, his decease was announced about a week after his deposition, but little surprise was expressed, except at the manner of his death —suicide. The news was received with incredulity, cases of suicide amongst Moslems being extremely rare. But an inquest was held by nineteen medical men, among whom were Dr. Dickson, physician to her majesty's embassy, the doctors of the Austrian and French embassy, and others of high standing, Turkish, Greek, and Armenian, who all certified unanimously that the death was the result of suicide, and that the deceased Sultan had opened the veins of his arms with a pair of pointed scissors. Dr. Dickson told Sir Henry Elliot that neither he nor any of his colleagues entertained a doubt that the act was voluntary. It was also proved that, since the Sultan's deposition, all arms and cutting instruments had been kept out of his reach, but that on June 4th he asked for a pair of scissors to cut off his beard. A small pair was given him, and he then turned his attendants out of the room and locked the door, which was broken open by his servants when his mother heard her son's groans, and he was found on the point of death. The next day he was buried in the mausoleum of his father, Sultan Mahmoud, with every mark of respect.

These startling events were very differently interpreted in various quarters. In England it was hoped that a new era had dawned for Turkey, and that Midhat Pasha would institute a series of reforms, and see that they were carried out with all the energy of which he was capable. On the other hand, the Russians were exasperated by what they considered a British intrigue, and followed out their plans with more energy than ever. In Constantinople itself the ferment was kept up, so that serious reforms were almost impossible. The terrible state of suspense in which the capital was held, was considerably increased by the assassination, a fortnight later, of Hussein Avni Pasha and Raschid Pasha.

A certain Hassan, a Circassian by birth, and who some years ago had left the military school with the rank of lieutenant, was appointed captain, to be sent to the army of Bagdad. For certain reasons he was retained at Constantinople, and employed in various posts; but when he was appointed to the rank of adjutant-major, and to a post in the said army, he advanced various excuses for deferring his departure: finally, he bluntly refused to obey, and was therefore imprisoned. Being released, with a view to his departure for his post, and having promised to set out for Bagdad the next day, he proceeded in the evening to the house of the Seraskier. Here he was informed that the latter was at a meeting of his colleagues at the residence of his highness Midhat Pasha, to which he at once proceeded. The sentries, believing him to be still an aide-de-camp, did not prevent his entrance into the council-chamber, where he fired point-blank at Hussein Avni Pasha with the revolver which he had in his pocket, and killed him on the spot. While the rest endeavoured to seize him, Raschid Pasha, Ahmed Agha, a servant of his highness Midhat Pasha, and a soldier, shared the same fate, whilst the Minister of Marine, as well as another soldier, were wounded, so desperate was the resistance of the murderer.

The terror in Constantinople at this sanguinary drama was intense; for that one man should have penetrated into a council of ministers, and killed seven persons and wounded eight others before he could be secured, is an act for which scarcely a parallel could be found. Everything proved that the intention of the assassin was to kill the Minister of War, and then to fight his way out and effect his escape, for which he had prepared the means by having a horse at hand to take him to the landing-

place, where he had left a boat. But finding, upon going to the Seraskier's house, that his highness had gone to the council, and as he was himself to be sent to join his corps at Bagdad the next day, his only chance of being able to carry out his design, was by endeavouring to force an entrance there, which he succeeded in doing. As for the unfortunate Raschid Pasha, he was present at the council by what may be called an accident or a fatality; for the ministers invited to attend this night council had been confined to those whose country-houses were in the neighbourhood, while his was at some distance. Hearing, however, that the Grand Vizier proposed to hold a council, and a part of his family being still in town, he determined to remain after office hours for the purpose of attending it; and by another fatality he took the seat immediately next to the Seraskier Pasha, Hussein Avni; and so sudden was the onslaught, so great the confusion, that the Grand Vizier could not say for certain whether he was shot immediately after his colleague, or whether it was after the Minister of Marine, who, displaying remarkable courage and energy for so old a man, had seized the assassin from behind, round the waist, and prevented his escape; for from that moment there was a scene of indescribable confusion. At first the ministers were under the impression that they were attacked by a band of conspirators, and tried to escape to the adjoining apartments, while the murderer, in a state of frenzy—and, as is thought, partial intoxication—was using the four revolvers with which he was armed, and his sword or yatagan, upon all who were within his reach. The Minister of Marine, who displayed such courage and energy, only received severe but not dangerous flesh-wounds from the assassin's dagger; but an aide-de-camp and an attendant who went to his assistance were shot dead; and when the soldiers, who arrived from a neighbouring guard-house, broke open the door of the room in which he had locked himself, they found he had set fire to the room, and before they could run him through with their bayonets, he had killed and wounded several of their number. The next day he was degraded, and hanged early in the morning in an open space near the Seraskeriat.

In the midst of these disturbances, the Prince of Servia, following the counsels given to him by his foreign advisers, addressed to the Grand Vizier a lengthy letter, dated June 22, in which, after having mentioned some unfounded complaints, and spoken of the concentration of troops on the frontier, he finished by declaring his resolution to co-operate, by the employment of the military forces of Servia, in the establishment of a state of things favourable to the common interests of the empire and the principality. At the same time he had the audacity to beg the Sublime Porte to facilitate his mission by giving to the imperial authorities the order to send home what he called bands of robbers (alluding to the irregulars), and to enjoin on the imperial troops not to oppose his efforts, so that he might proclaim loudly the principle of the integrity of the empire! Simultaneously, in a despatch addressed to the agent of the principality, M. Ristich invited him to propose to the Sublime Porte to confide to the government of the prince the administration of Bosnia in return for the annual payment of a fixed and invariable sum, in proportion to Bosnia's share of the public debt.

This cool proposal did not quite recommend itself to the Porte, which, however, proposed to reply to this letter of Prince Milan by refuting, one by one, the accusations which he had brought against them, when the news was received from the civil and military authorities of the vilayets of Bosnia and the Danube of the entry of Servian troops, with their artillery, on the 1st and 2nd of July, upon Ottoman territory at three different points, which caused the immediate advance against them of the imperial troops.

On the other hand, the Prince of Montenegro also addressed a long telegram to the Grand Vizier, and declared, for his part, that the equivocal situation must now yield to the more clearly defined position of declared hostilities. Thus the two principalities put an end to their equivocations, and openly declared war to the Porte.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SERVIAN WAR OF 1876.

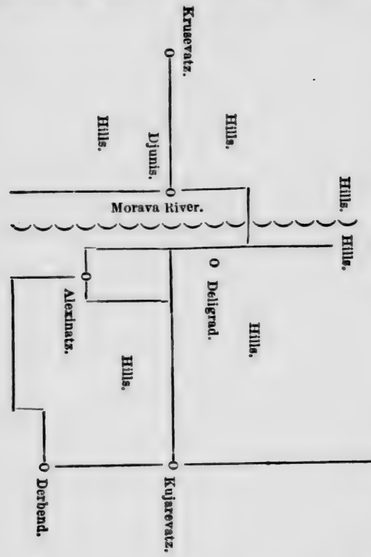
THE primary object of the war, as declared by Prince Milan, was to have been the emancipation of the Christian Serbs in Bosnia, and the establishment in that province of a new state of things, by means of an armed occupation. Following this plan, the Serb forces were to have entered Bosnia, and concentrated all their energies on this special object. But as soon as General Tchernaieff had acquired a footing in Belgrade, this plan was greatly modified —in fact abandoned—and the chief energies of the Servian commanders were directed against Bulgaria. The troops entered Turkish territory at three points; in the south under Tchernaieff himself, in the east under Leschyanin, and in the west under Alimpich. In the south, General Tchernaieff concentrated his principal forces about Nisch, where he kept them in comparative inactivity for nearly three weeks, with a great show of mystery; whilst the troops sent into Bosnia did not act anywhere in a sufficiently large body; they were scattered and disseminated from the commencement, and failed in penetrating in any direction so as to produce any encouragement on the unarmed rayahs, or any impression on the native Mahommedan population. No greater success attended the offensive movement on the eastern frontier, which soon had to be abandoned, a strong Turkish force having succeeded in pushing its way to Kujarevatz, when, after some hard fighting, the line of the Timok was given up, and Saitschar was evacuated by the Servian troops, by an order of the general, without any serious attempt to retain possession of that important line some days longer, which was thus left to the mercy of Osman Pasha, who, however, did not consider it worth while to occupy the place, or seize upon the abandoned line.

In the rear of this line, and between it and the Morava, the Servians continued in the possession of another and a much stronger mode of defence, in the shape of natural mountains, and of a few passes or defiles, which, if occupied by really good troops, might have rendered access to the Morava, to a hostile army and to its artillery, almost impossible. But within the short space of six weeks there was sufficient evidence, however, that the untrained ploughmen of Servia, although in appearance presenting an excellent material for forming soldiers, had not acquired hitherto the qualities indispensable to fight the battles of their country, and that in the field they thought much more of their homes and farms than of the glory to be achieved by prowess. Cases of self-mutilation were very frequent, and the novel effect of artillery upon them was greater than is known to have been exercised upon any other soldiery.

Thus, beyond having burned a few villages, such as Florentin on the Danube, and the occupation of the Babinaglava chain of mountains, on the road to Pirot and Sofia, the wonderful plans of General Tchernaieff came to nought. He could neither advance nor hold the positions he had occupied for want of an enemy to defend them, and as soon as the Turks advanced, though slowly—yavash, yavash —according to their phlegmatic habits, the Serbs fell back, beaten at all points from the positions they had occupied within Turkish territory, and took up defensive positions. Instead of invading Turkey, their great anxiety was, by the middle of August, to save their own country from invasion. The valour and genius of their soldiers and officers did not at all seem sufficient for the purpose to the prince's government, and they forthwith centred all their hopes upon foreign mediation, for which they abjectly clamoured, and entreated the powers to save them from the "unspeakable Turk," whose just wrath they had provoked. Shelled out of Saitschar by Osman Pasha, Leschyanin barred the road to Banya, which threatened the positions at Alexinatz in flank and rear; whilst Generals Zach and Tchernaieff held the heights of Alexinatz, where they made their first stand before falling back upon their second line at Djunis and Deligrad.

Alexinatz is a small town close to the frontier, some little distance from the right

bank of the river Morava, and is on the junction of two high-roads, one running from Nisch to Belgrade northwards, and the other eastwards to Kujarevatz and Saitschar. The following sketch clearly shows the position of these places:—



The opposition of the Servians to the advance of Ali Saib Pasha down the left bank of the Morava was very slight. Their intrenchments were insignificant, and their resistance apparently directed to ascertain the strength of the Turkish force in their front; the main expeditionary corps under Ahmed Eyoub Pasha being at hand on their flank. This corps having retraced its steps from Kujarevatz to Derbend, Osman Pasha keeping the forces at Saitschar well employed, had thence marched, halting two days on the way, across very difficult country, *viâ* Nisevatz, along the skirts of the frontier to Alexinatz, where it effected its junction with Ali Saib Pasha on Monday, the 21st August.

The strength of the united Turkish expeditionary force was 38,500 regular troops of all arms, with 188 field guns (including two mountain batteries of four guns each). That of the Servian army was estimated at from 30,000 to 50,000 men, who were distributed in a line reaching from Alexinatz to Deligrad, across the heights on the left bank of the Morava.

Though of course expecting the enemy to make a stand here, the Turkish commanders were hardly prepared for the formidable character of the fortifications they had in view, and which were only the outer defences on the southern face of a large intrenched camp, extending to a distance of six miles as far as Deligrad. Far worse troops than the Servians, and less ably commanded, should have been able to hold indefinitely such a position against any odds whatever; much more so against the Turkish army, unprovided, as it was, with engineer department, siege-train, bridge equipments, or other means and material generally requisite for conducting effectively the attack. The engineering was done by artillery officers, and was restricted to the construction of simple intrenchments with sunken batteries for field guns. Against a position naturally so strong and bristling with works, scientifically planned for mutual defence, a *coup de main* could hardly be successful without the intervention of accidents and contingencies of rare and exceptional occurrence in modern warfare. The greatest difficulty of the situation, and one with which the Turkish commanders were fully impressed, consisted, therefore, in the loss of time involved in regular approaches.

Thus, finding that the Servian works covering Alexinatz were unassailable by direct attack, Ahmed Eyoub Pasha determined to cross the Morava and unite his force with that of Ali Saib Pasha on the heights bordering the plain on the left bank of the river. The valley here is three miles wide, narrowing in a north-westerly direction to two miles opposite to Alexinatz. Thence it appears again to open out in the direction of Deligrad, and the course of the river throughout to approach the base of the heights on the right side of the valley.

The passage of the river occupied Tuesday and Wednesday, and was effected by means of a trestle-bridge, and a bridge of open wooden pontoons, with a deepish ford between them, without the slightest interruption from the enemy. Two days were occupied in re-examining the position of a Servian division strongly intrenched on heights parallel to those occupied by Ali Saib Pasha's corps, which corps the division in question had repeatedly assailed with sufficient effect to necessitate its being reinforced by seven battalions from Ahmed Eyoub Pasha's army.

The first important action consisted in turning the right flank of the Servian position, and involved a considerable *détour* round the head of the ravine (opening on the plain of the Morava Valley) which separated the combatants. It commenced at 8.30 A.M., and for four hours was restricted to an artillery engagement between the batteries, at a distance varying from 3,500 to 4,500 métres, the preponderance of metal being on the side of the Servians, and of number of pieces, three to one, on the side of the Turks. At a little after noon the infantry came into action; their assault was spirited and well sustained; but the resistance of the enemy, availing himself of the woods, and fighting behind intrenchments, or cover commanding open spaces, was sufficiently steady and persistent to protract the engagement until dark. It was 9 P.M. before firing ceased. The retreat of the enemy within the lines of Alexinatz was not molested. He lost one gun and three prisoners only. As to the artillery fire, though the Servian batteries appeared often to be temporarily silenced, one of their guns only was dismounted, while in the Turkish batteries hardly a man was wounded. The little effect produced by what, to observers, appeared to be excellent practice, more especially on the part of the Turks, is to be only accounted for by the fact that the fire being direct from batteries crowning heights, and the soil being black loam, the shells, armed with percussion, and not with time fuzes, instead of grazing, invariably imbedded themselves and burst innocuously.

The Turks commenced the action four hours too late. They made no effort to throw up batteries in advance as the day progressed. They omitted, as was perfectly practicable, to send forward guns with the infantry, operating to turn the right flank of the enemy's position, and no steps whatever were taken with their large available reserves to engage the enemy's supports in the plain, and cut off his line of retreat. Yet all these oversights had been anticipated in the plan of attack, proposed by the chief of the staff, which, had it been followed, must have compelled the enemy to retire by the upper road to Deligrad, and have issued probably in the loss of all his guns. As it was, the victory was barren of decisive results. The enemy was safely ensconced behind the lines of Alexinatz-Deligrad, with the Morava winding near the base of his position, and the Turkish army on the heights which bound the plain forming the valley of the Morava, on the left bank of the river, passed four days idly observing him.

Thus, after six weeks' hostilities, the two chief armies had been brought face to face, and each was apparently waiting for "something to turn up," which would give one an advantage over the other. Both were bivouacked in their respective lines, and while fine weather lasted they operated on equal terms; but if the defence were to be protracted, when the autumnal rains set in, the Servians would possess this advantage over the Turks—that while for the former shelter would be provided on the spot for their ambulances, ordinance stores, and provisions, &c., the latter would be dependent for hospital accommodation and commissariat of all kinds upon their depôt at Nisch, distant sixteen to eighteen miles, with no better means of transport than the bullock-carts of the country, ill suited for heavy traffic. Thus far the standing crops afforded an ample supply of forage for the whole army; but as the season advanced this supply failed, and the intervening country, not here only, but along the whole line of frontier, from six to eight miles on either side, so far as villages were concerned, may be described as a desert. This was owing to the Servians, who began the work of desolation on Turkish soil for the purpose as well of harrying the Mahommedan inhabitants, as of compelling the Christians to quit their fields and join the insurrection, whilst the Turks fully imitated the example with like effect on Servian territory.

During the latter part of August several minor engagements were fought, resulting in the gradual advance of the Turks to some two miles on the heights bordering the valley of the Morava to the west, thus bringing its left front opposite to the centre of the Servian position on the heights bordering the valley to the east. The intervening plain, well cultivated with grain and studded with oak plantations and copse, varied in width from three miles at Alexinatz, to five miles or more at Deligrad. The river, after leaving Alexinatz, approaches, in a very tortuous course, with short reaches and deep bends, the base of the Turkish heights, until, beyond the latitude of Deligrad, it turns westward to enter a defile of the mountains. The

Turkish heights partake of the character of parallel spurs, separated by deep ravines, which open into the valley of the Morava, whilst the Servian heights consist of a lower continuous range, extending in one uninterrupted line, like a huge glacis, sloping gently to the plain from Alexinatz to Deligrad.

Alexinatz itself lies in a hollow at the southern extremity of this range, and is covered southwards by a spur from the mountains in the rear, which gradually decreases in height until it abuts upon the river. This spur, strongly fortified and intrenched, formed the southern part of the Servian position, before which Ahmed Eyoub Pasha's force was bivouacked some days, but which was found to be unassailable. Deligrad is a mere hamlet, situated at the base of the range in question, at its northern extremity, where its crest becomes more elevated, and unites itself with the mountains beyond. The Turkish heights northward, in like manner, gradually rise into the mountains, which, at this point, appear to close the valley of the Morava.

The Servian heights on the right side of the valley, more especially towards and beyond Deligrad, were fortified with batteries and intrenchments. On the left side of the valley, too, a strong Servian division daily engaged the Turkish flank from batteries of position, constructed on a parallel and more commanding range of heights to cover the defile of the Morava as well as the road to Krusevatz. During the day these batteries were, here and there, supplemented by field-pieces pushed forward on prominent slopes and peaks in advance. The range across the ravine being, however, extreme, the Servian fire was not sufficiently effective to dislodge the Turkish brigade there posted, or to inflict upon it serious loss.

The Turkish plan of operation was to pierce the centre of the Alexinatz-Deligrad position. For this purpose they constructed a trestle-bridge, put together by Bulgarian carpenters, over a bend of the river, out of range of the enemy's guns, which thus enabled them to threaten either flank of the Servian position. The Servians soon became aware of what was intended, and made several fierce attacks, during which the Russian officers greatly distinguished themselves. They led their men to within 300 yards of the Turkish batteries; but here they were received by so fierce a fire, that they had to fall back with great loss.

The result of the war so boastfully begun was thus, so far, highly discouraging to the Serbs; and diplomacy was called in to save the prince's government from what his own men and his Russian friends could not save him by force of arms. The old plea was put forward—the barbarity of the Turk, and the disgrace to Christianity, if Servia should be left to be devastated by the inhuman enemy against whom she had undertaken her "holy mission."

Thus M. Ristich, on August 24th, appealed to the powers to mediate between Servia and Montenegro and the Porte, Prince Nikita joining in the appeal with him. He supported this appeal with sundry documents relating to the barbarities of the Turks, and forwarded a report from Colonel Horvatovich, giving an account of what he saw at Kujarevatz after the Turks had withdrawn to concentrate their operations in the valley of the Morava. Colonel Horvatovich wrote—

"On my return to the town of Kujarevatz, I have the honour to inform you of the following:—

"The whole town is burnt; hardly one house in fifty has escaped the flames; and amongst those which are still standing, it would be difficult to find one that has not been sacked in such a way as to have lost at least the half of its value.

"All Kujarevatz presents the most melancholy example of what vandal hands can do. A few chimneys and some blackened walls are left standing, but all the lightly-built houses have been completely destroyed.

"The enemy was not content with burning the church and the cabinet containing the images of the saints, but has broken the bells in pieces, some of which have been found at the other end of the town; carried the clock away, and fired shots through the roof and at the sacred pictures. Many of the latter have been found in the streets torn and soiled with filth. The flags which were in the church lie scattered in pieces in the streets. In a word, they have *profaned God's sanctuary* in a manner more horrible than it is possible to conceive.

"Everything that the hand of man could destroy during these few days has been destroyed with an energy and activity which must astonish every one.

"Bodies have been thrown into the wells, and wherever there was drinking-water.

"Every ten steps one comes across the *remains of a dead pig in a state of decomposition, and half consumed by worms and flies.* Close to the magazine, the burnt body of one of our captains, or of an aide-de-camp, known by the distinctive marks of his rank, which had remained intact, was discovered tied to a tree.

"In the street of Djonitch a body was found, recognised by his clothes as that of a citizen of the town. His legs were entirely flayed from the thighs to the feet.

"The body of a man, in like manner recognisable from his clothes as an inhabitant of the town, was found with a piece of iron in his body in the *café* of Mita Yanochevitch. An examination of the body, pierced in many places, shows that the Turks had tortured him, and killed him with a red-hot iron.

"Petko Vesselinovitch, of Kujarevatz, whose leg was broken before we left Kujarevatz, had remained at home. We found him killed. Govko Kaissio, also of Kujarevatz, was tortured and killed in his house by a red-hot iron. In the bakery of Ivrenka Constantivovitch was found the body of one of our soldiers, who must also have been tortured, for some iron spits were found near the corpse.

"In addition to the numerous bodies found in the town, some have been found in the maize fields: I am going, therefore, to have these traversed by skirmishers, who will bury the bodies.

"The smell of all these corpses is so great that, from fear of disease, I have not ventured to let my troops halt for a moment at Kujarevatz. What I have just related can only give you a faint idea of the reality. It is what I noticed at the first glance.

"I have taken measures that the citizens who have returned shall, with the help of a battalion, search through the town and neighbourhood, under the direction of a trustworthy person, Milan Atjimdvitch, bury the bodies, and draw up a procès-verbal, which will be sent to me.

"To judge from the stench, which has spread as far as half a league from the town, and the myriads of flies which fill the air in the neighbourhood of Kujarevatz, there must still remain a great number of human bodies, the identity of which cannot be determined.

"The state of decomposition of the bodies is already so advanced, that even when the head remains it is impossible to distinguish the features.

"All the houses in the neighbourhood, and especially the little houses built in the vineyards, have been burnt; and as these houses were generally surrounded by fruit-trees, or other kinds of trees, the flames have scorched them, and the surrounding country presents a most wretched appearance.

"In short, I am unable to give a true description of this afflicting sight; I can find no words to describe it.

"I will forward to you immediately the further information which may hereafter reach me."

These complaints came with an ill-grace from a government whose habits in peace were about the same as those of the Turks in war. When M. Ristich speaks about the "profanation of God's sanctuary," he should have remembered, first of all, that no more blame is to be attached to the Turks for despoiling a Servian church, than to Christian troops who loot a pagan temple, and sell its idols to the curiosity-dealers. Secondly, he should have remembered that the Servian government also "profanes God's sanctuary" for theatrical purposes, in direct contravention of the treaty concluded between it and the Porte. According to this treaty, when the Turks evacuated Belgrade, the mosques were to be respected, and kept in repair. But not only has this not been done, but one of the mosques has been turned into a gas-factory, to supply the theatre with gas. As for "the dead pigs half consumed by worms and flies," it speaks rather highly for the Turks, that, in spite of the meagreness of their rations, they should not have eaten them themselves, and preferred adhering to the tenets of their religion, which forbids them to eat the unclean animal—doubly unclean in Slavonic countries south of the Danube, where their styes are built under the closets—whenever such an institution exists, which, however, is the exception in Servia.

As for the charges of torture, &c., they were denied *in toto* by Sir Arnold Kemball, who testified repeatedly to the good discipline and good-nature of the Turkish troops. During the whole of his stay with

the army he saw no cases of cruelty, except on one occasion, when he found that some of the dead had been decapitated by Bashi-Bazouks.

However, the Servians having discovered that, instead of massacring the Turks, the Turks were in a fair way to massacre them, the application for mediation was made and acceded to by the powers, the result being a suspension of hostilities until September 25th.

This suspension of hostilities, granted in hopes of a peace, or, at least, a longer armistice being arranged, was used by the two principalities, at the instigation of Russia, as a sort of political and military see-saw. As soon as Servia had agreed to one thing, Montenegro objected; and when Montenegro accepted any condition, Servia refused. Meanwhile, Russian officers and men flocked to Servia by the hundred. Committees were formed in Moscow and other cities, and recruiting carried on openly, the Russian government professing to be unable to restrain the warlike ardour and the just anger and indignation of its subjects.

Thus Colonel Mansfield, the British consul at Bucharest, wrote, on September 8th, that the number of Russian volunteers passing through Roumania to the seat of war was daily on the increase; and that the movement was organised by committees in Russia, who had permanent agents at Bucharest, Galatz, and elsewhere, to receive the volunteers on their arrival, supply their wants, and forward them to their destination. Twice a day they arrived in batches varying from twenty to sixty—sometimes more, sometimes less; they appeared to be drawn from all classes, and very many, from their gait and appearance, had evidently passed through the ranks of the regular army, while some were clearly either retired officers or officers on leave. To promote this movement, the railway authorities in Roumania were asked by persons at Odessa, whether the railway would convey 300 Russian workmen to Servia at reduced fares—a device of which the object was thoroughly transparent. Yet Consul Mansfield wrote, that though it was reported to him that some of these volunteers crossed the frontier with Bulgarian Turkish passports, which had been taken from Bulgarian peasants, who flock to Southern Russia at this season as agricultural labourers, he was disinclined to believe that the Russian government authorities would relax the very strict system of passports and visas; and that, as there could be no objection to Russians entering this country when properly provided with passports, there would be no particular reason for such a device, except, indeed, for those who repair at once to Bulgaria. But as there was no insurrectionary movement to speak of in the latter (Bulgaria), he was disposed to look upon the story as a sensational rumour!

The extraordinary character of this opinion, however, is quite cast into the shade by the following remarkable despatch, addressed by Colonel Mansfield to Lord Derby on September 26th:—

"I have, early this morning, transmitted to your lordship a telegram as follows:—'Special train with 300 Russian volunteers passed yesterday; arms scarcely concealed; disorders at railway stations; Roumanian government much embarrassed. M. Bratiano asked my advice. I recommended prudence, and, if possible, to avoid collision.' And now I shall have the honour to relate the details to your lordship.

"Last night I was spending the evening with M. Debains, my French colleague, when, about half-past ten, M. Bratiano, President of the Council of Ministers, was announced.

"M. Bratiano told me that he had just been to my house, and expressed his pleasure in being able at the same time to consult both the French and English agents on a matter of no small importance.

"It appears that a special train, conveying 300 volunteers, arrived at the Roumanian frontier from Russia on the 18th instant. Many were in the possession of swords, and others did not conceal that they had revolvers in their pockets. One individual was spoken of as General Vasilieff, or some similar name; and others, although all in plain clothes, seemed to be recognised as officers. That there had been disorders at various stations, and notably that the train left Roman, where there had been a dispute with the station-master respecting the composition of the train, amidst the howls and hisses of the by-standers.

"M. Bratiano was extremely anxious respecting the incident, and appeared to be inclined to telegraph to the frontier at Turno-Severin and stop the exit of the whole party from Roumanian territory.

"After carefully examining every point, I indicated to M. Bratiano that, although, of course, the destination and object of the excursionists was, as it were, openly avowed, it was necessary to review the details calmly and *on technical grounds, so as to give little cause for remonstrances on the part of the Russian consul-general, should the matter arrive at that stage.*

"I pointed out that excursionists in all countries employ special trains, and that they even cross the frontiers of foreign countries; that excursionists are frequently under the direction of one or more individuals; that, although for the moment munitions of war cannot be imported, there is, according to the Roumanian regulations, nothing to prevent travellers being in possession of a pistol or a gun; while a sword is looked upon as part of a uniform, with which many persons are in the habit of travelling; that the baggage of these excursionists must have been examined at the frontier, and munitions of war would doubtless have been seized; that it would be competent to the government to issue an immediate order to prohibit travellers from introducing any arms, but that to telegraph that very evening to have these gentlemen searched, and their arms, if found on their persons, taken from them, would be a retrospective act, and likely to cause inconvenience; that, according to his own showing, the Roumanian force at Turno-Severin consists of a couple of companies of the regular army, a battalion of militia, and the custom-house officers, and that perhaps the officer commanding might be wanting in tact or judgment; that an attempt to prevent these volunteers leaving the frontier might cause a collision, in which the Roumanian force might be overpowered; that regrettable incidents and perhaps bloodshed must ensue.

"The next result would be, that there would be renewed disorders at the passage of Russians through this country, and there would spring up mutual bad feeling between the volunteers and the Roumanians at the different towns and stations.

"It was true that there had been disturbances at Roman, but at other stations there had been cheers for Roumania and the cause of the Eastern Christians.

"*To save appearances*, it would be well if these volunteers could leave Severin in small detachments, and not in a collective body.

"That I seriously deprecated any measures which might lead to collision and inevitable consequences of a deplorable character; adding, that it appeared to me most desirable at the present time, when the other powers were anxious for the cordial co-operation of Russia in restoring peace, and also at a moment of delicate negotiations, to aviod any cause of irritation or even comment.

"M. Bratiano urged that the Porte might possibly remonstrate; to which I answered that, if the matter was properly laid before the latter, the representations of the government of Prince Charles would doubtless be accepted in a dispassionate sense.

"He then expressed apprehension lest the guaranteeing powers, and especially her majesty's government, would be of opinion that this government had not been consistent in its professions of neutrality.

"M. Debains reassured him, as far as the Duc Decazes was concerned; and I replied that his (M. Bratiano's) evident anxiety on the subject, and the circumstance that he had come to consult M. Debains and myself, was no small earnest of the sincerity of the professions of the Roumanian government, adding that I ventured to think that your lordship would be disposed to make all just allowance for the position of extreme difficulty in which this government is placed.

"Before coming to see me, M. Bratiano called at the Russian agency; but Baron Stuart was absent, and the vice-consul in charge had expressed a hope that the *volunteers would be allowed to continue unmolested, and tried to explain that they differed in no other way from the other volunteers, except in respect of the special train.*

"M. Bratiano had also seen Count Alvensleben, the German consul-general, but could get no expression of opinion from him.

"The minister also informed me that, on the passports of the Russian volunteers in general, it is stated that they are Russians who have ceased to belong to the Russian nationality, but that he did not know whether the last batch had similar passports.

"I beg to direct your lordship's attention to the circumstance that, in ordinary times, no Russian is allowed to change his nationality without immediately passing to another nationality, and having the whole

transaction arranged with the greatest strictness; these volunteers would, therefore, appear to have no nationality, and the whole system is evidently conceived with a view to their disavowal by the Russian government if convenient.

"M. Bratiano left us at half-past 11, in order to telegraph to Severin that circumspection was to be observed on the arrival of the special train, which would be due at the latter place shortly after midnight.

"M. Bratiano also spoke at great length on the embarrassment of this country; on its position between great and powerful States; its weakness; the maintenance of neutrality; and the conscientious discharge of their duties to the suzerain power; but I hesitate to take up more of your lordship's time with these subjects.

"It was not without some anxiety that I felt myself called upon to offer counsel on so delicate a subject as the above: and I trust that your lordship will believe that, in the suggestions which I put before M. Bratiano, I have not spoken without the maturest reflection, and have been guided by the earnest wish to recommend what appeared to me to be most prudent under the circumstances."

Thus Colonel Mansfield's only care was lest the Russians should be offended. He seems to have been animated by a perfect terror on this head; unless, indeed, it was in consequence of orders from London, or from an idea of what was desired in London—*i.e.*, to precipitate the catastrophe. This is the more likely solution when we consider that it was the same line adopted by Consul White in Belgrade. Anyhow, this despatch fully shows that the Roumanians were abandoned to Russia by all the powers; and it seems, therefore, tolerably certain that none of the powers really desired to prevent the dispute from being worked out to the bitter end.

It was therefore evident that the appeal for mediation and the suspension of hostilities had been made only to acquire fresh assistance from Russia. From all sides the proofs that this was the case came pouring in, whilst the Russian committees continued to pay their attention to the relief of the military wants of Servia. The deficiency in the number of officers was entirely remedied after the 1st of September, at which date there were already 479 Russian officers in the Servian army. Tchernaieff then turned the attention of the committees to the fact that they were in urgent want of educated non-commissioned officers; and by the first week in September, the number of Russian non-commissioned officers in the Morava army alone amounted to 592, half of whom received the medal for "bravery."

The next gap to be filled up was in the cavalry. Accordingly, 1,800 Cossacks arrived within the same period, some of them splendidly mounted, and quite equal to the Turkish cavalry, even to the notorious Circassians.

Lastly, the artillery was taken into consideration; for, though it was well worked during the war, the Servian guns were found to be too small to be of much use. This deficiency was also partially remedied. Two batteries of mitrailleuses and two batteries of heavy guns arrived from Moscow, and were despatched to Deligrad, where they were worked by Russian artillerymen. A heavy battery was also sent off to the Ibar army, in charge of two Russian officers.

The Russian Lieutenant Mussin Puschkin, a relation of the celebrated Russian poet Puschkin, who had greatly distinguished himself by blowing up a bridge which had been thrown over the Morava by the Turks, received his appointment as a captain in reward for his services, and was also appointed commandant of the sotnia of Cossacks, who formed the prince's body-guard at head-quarters. At the same time, Count Lewackoff received the command of the cavalry in the Drina army. Very large quantities of ammunition were sent through Roumania. Even during the formal suspension of hostilities, twelve cases of swords and 22,000 muskets were sent in the same way.

Thus reinforced, the Russo-Servian leaders thought themselves sufficiently prepared to renew the conflict; and when the first week of the suspension of hostilities had terminated (on the 25th of September), hostilities recommenced on the Morava Valley on the next day, by a general attack on the part of General Tchernaieff's army. There was considerable slaughter; but on the 29th the Turks resumed the offensive, and there was heavy fighting on both occasions; but both parties retained all their fortified positions, so that the only result of these consecutive engagements was a large and wanton loss of life on both sides.

The attacks, on the 28th, of the Servians and their Russian allies were prosecuted with unusual resolution, Horvatovich commanded the Servian forces. His right wing, which was opposed to the Turkish right rear, defended by the division of Adyl Pasha, was led by Tcholak Antich; and his left wing, opposed to the division of Suleyman Pasha, and more directly to the brigade of Hafiz Pasha, was led by Strikovich. General Tchernaieff himself visited the ground the previous day on each occasion, but returned to Deligrad before the advance commenced.

The ground over which the Servians made their attack was the same precisely (distant four miles from the original Turkish position on the heights) as that on which they had themselves made their last stand in the battle of the 1st of September. Then the combatants on both sides had ceased to be supported by their artillery respectively; now the superior *élan* of the Turks was effectually seconded by the well-sustained fire of their batteries on commanding positions; whilst a counter-demonstration made by the Turks in the plain between Alexinatz and the trestle-bridge, more than answered its purpose in recalling to their lines the four Servian battalions, with twelve guns, which had been pushed forward on the high road. The Turkish force, consisting of three battalions, six guns, and 1,000 horse, had reached the river, and were on the point of crossing it, with the certain prospect of seizing the Servian batteries in the plain, as well as the batteries covering Alexinatz, which were almost denuded of their garrisons, when Ahmed Eyoub Pasha stopped the movement.

His motive for foregoing his advantage was the same as that alleged by him for abandoning the crest which had been wrested from the enemy once before—viz., deference to the orders of the Porte against assuming the offensive; though by his generals it was attributed to the want of enterprise and excess of caution, which had already deprived him of the fruits of his victories.

In a false attack along the right bank of the Morava during the battle, some Servian troops, having incautiously passed over the stream, were very severely handled by the Turkish detachments, consisting largely of cavalry, which had been posted under cover to watch them; the number of Servians killed and abandoned on the ground exceeding 300 men.

Thus, in spite of all that Tchernaieff and his colleagues could do, the Servians steadily lost ground; and at last the Turkish commander decided to pay no more attention to politics, but to endeavour to seize the Servian stronghold. Broadly speaking, the Servian lines still reached from Alexinatz to Deligrad, with strong works and outposts in front of Djunis. Alexinatz, as already said, could not be taken from the east, west, or south, without extensive mining and siege operations. The position at Deligrad could, however, be turned by the capture of Djunis and the repulse of the Servians across the Morava. This done, Deligrad could be taken in the rear. To obtain this object, Ahmed Eyoub Pasha gave the order to advance.

The attack commenced at daylight on the morning of the 19th instant, by a general advance of the Turkish brigades which had hitherto faced the Servian position in the Turkish rear, when considering the Turkish army as facing Alexinatz, but which, from the change of the point of attack from Alexinatz to Djunis, really formed the Turkish front line; and so completely was the enemy taken by surprise, that his advanced defences, consisting of numerous well-constructed batteries and redoubts, which constituted the main strength of his position, were successively abandoned after a feeble struggle. So persistent was the assault of the Turkish forces, that before 3 P.M. they had carried the whole range of heights opposed to them, except only the crest of a long spur on the right, running down towards the river, where the Servians maintained their defence until night put an end to offensive operations. The occupation of this crest, defended as it was by a redoubt, and commanded by a battery on the adjoining range, being essential to a further advance, the whole of the following day (20th) was spent by the right brigade in the attempt to carry it; but by this time, the Servians having obtained reinforcements, the repeated efforts of the Turkish troops were unavailing. Nevertheless, the progress made by them both along the ridge and on its southern slope having rendered it untenable against a further attack in the morning, and the Turks continuing to hold the ground they had gained, it was abandoned by the Servians during the night.

On the 21st, the general attack was resumed with scarcely more opposition than on the 19th. The Servians were supported only during the later part of the day by the artillery of the distant batteries on their last line of heights on the northern side of the valley of the Djuniska, and the Turks only by the mountain guns attached to their several brigades. The result was, that the Servians were completely driven off the intermediate spurs and crests up to the base of the said line, and left the large villages of Kavnik and Veliki Siljegovatz, beside other minor villages, at the mercy of the Turks.

Owing to the character of the country, which consisted of successive ranges of heights, varying from 300 to 500 feet, covered with forest trees, the inferior Servian troops were enabled to offer a more protracted resistance than without such shelter could certainly have been expected of them; for wherever open spaces afforded a glimpse of the combat, their retirement before the Turks bore rather the appearance of a stampede than a regular retreat. As usual, the Servians succeeded, by their rapid movements, in carrying off all their guns, which, after these had been withdrawn from the shelter of the batteries, were not again employed; nor, indeed, did the nature of the ground admit of their being easily brought into action. The advanced redoubts were protected by mines at a distance of about 200 yards on the line of approach, which was here further defended by *chevaux de frise* and felled trees. The road also was mined between Kavnik and Siljegovatz; but, owing to want of time or to miscalculation, these mines were not sprung at all, or exploded inopportunely, the wires connecting them with the electric batteries, in the former case, being afterwards discovered and cut by the Turks.

The principal feature of the battle undoubtedly consisted in the advance of the right and centre divisions of the Turkish line of attack, along the two crests leading to the superior heights, which formed the main and last position of the Servians on the left side of the valley of the Morava, overhanging Deligrad. These crests were fortified by three batteries and numerous intrenchments, and might be regarded as the outworks of the *enciente* behind. On the crest to the right, while the Turks were employed in climbing the slopes, the Servians were enabled to deliver their fire almost unmolested; but no sooner had the former approached within a distance of 200 yards, than the latter abandoned their intrenchments with the utmost precipitation, and, in lieu of retiring to their main works, they fled down the opposite slopes, and across the plain, on their way to the bridges over the Morava. For once, Nedjib Pasha, chief of the Turkish staff, who commanded this division (for the day), brought up his guns to support the attack of his infantry, and so materially contributed to the result above described. The further advance of the two right divisions was characterised throughout by the same cowardice of the Servians. Their retreat was a stampede, and, before 2 P.M., they had abandoned the whole of their works, with eleven guns (seven field and four mountain guns) into the hands of the Turks. The left and left-centre divisions having to recover the ground from which they had withdrawn on the night of the 21st instant, and also to traverse a considerable tract of wooded country to the left of the valley of the Djuniska before they could gain the base of the Servians' position, had scarcely reached the parallel of Djunis on the heights beyond, when the success of the right division put an end to the contest, and, by cutting off the retreat of the Servian right towards Deligrad, necessarily compelled it to fall back precipitately upon Krusevatz by the only road left open to it. The Servian loss was chiefly inflicted by the fire to which they were exposed during their retreat from post to post. A very considerable number also fell under the sabres of cavalry posted in the valley of the Djuniska to intercept their flight. The loss of the Turks was estimated at between 30 and 40 killed, and 300 wounded only. The attacking force was between 15,000 and 18,000 strong, including the reserves. The Serbs had the same number of men, but lost four times as many as the Turks.

Thus, by October 30th, the Turks had succeeded, with immense dash and valour, in carrying the strongest positions, and held all the country between the valleys of the Morava and the Djuniska, as well as the heights commanding the high road to Krusevatz. Of course, the line having been turned, Alexinatz was abandoned by the Servians, and occupied the same day by the Turks. Tchernaieff fell back with all his troops upon Deligrad—the last stronghold—and, from a military point of view,

there was nothing to prevent the Turks from marching to Belgrade.

But at this moment the Czar stepped in. Official Russia came to support unofficial Russia when it found unofficial Russia getting the worst of it. The "Divine Figure of the North," though absorbed in the contemplation of the evanescence of even imperial flesh, judged it opportune to throw off at least part of his mask. On October 30th, Lord Loftus received a note from Prince Gortschakoff, to inform him that the emperor was unable to receive him that day, in consequence of its being the anniversary of the death of the late empress.

Lord Loftus had met Prince Gortschakoff the same day, and inquired whether his highness had received any satisfactory intelligence from Constantinople. His highness replied that he had intelligence to communicate, but he preferred that the emperor should communicate it to him at an audience, which was then fixed for the 30th. However, Lord Loftus received later from St. Petersburg the official declaration published in the *Journal de St. Pétersbourg*, announcing that General Ignatieff had been instructed to declare to the Sublime Porte, that if, within a delay of two days, it did not accept an armistice of six weeks or two months, and if it did not give immediate orders to arrest military operations, the ambassador would leave Constantinople with all the members of the embassy, and that diplomatic relations would be broken off. This was the intelligence which Prince Gortschakoff preferred should be communicated to Lord Loftus directly by the emperor!

The Sultan, Abdul Hamid, who had succeeded his brother Murad, deposed on account of his "madness," acceded to General Ignatieff's demands without more ado, and agreed to a five months' armistice.

Thus, for the second time, the Turks were balked of the fruits of their victory by Muscovite diplomacy. The Servian war was thus at an end. Beaten at all points, Tchernaieff, Russians, and Servians were obliged to abandon force and arms, and resort to their more accustomed weapons—the pen and falsehood.

CHAPTER X.

LIVADIA.

Good faith, truth and honesty, as has been seen, have not characterised Russian diplomacy since—let us say—1870. There was, however, a popular idea that there was one man in Russia whose word was as good as his bond, whose honour was untarnished, who was the essence of integrity, nobility, generosity, and all the other virtues combined. His only fault was, that he was the Czar of all the Russias, and even that was his misfortune rather than his fault. It was with this model of all the virtues, that one bleak, cold day in November, on the 2nd, Lord Loftus had a special interview at Livadia, when his majesty was pleased to receive the British ambassador "with his customary kindness and cordiality." After some gracious inquiries after his lordship's family, the Czar at once opened on the Eastern question, and stated that he had that morning received a telegram from Constantinople, announcing the probable acceptance of the armistice, and another telegram reporting that orders had already been sent by the Porte to their commanders to suspend military operations. This, the Czar observed, was very satisfactory.

On Lord Loftus observing on the sudden change which had taken place between the Sunday, when he had seen the chancellor, and the following day, when the *ultimatum* was despatched to General Ignatieff, the Czar said that this had been caused by the intelligence he had received of the complete discomfiture of the Servian army, and his fear that it might be followed by similar atrocities as those which had occurred in Bulgaria. He had, therefore, decided on addressing an *ultimatum* in order to prevent a further unnecessary effusion of blood; and he observed that

no one was more astonished to receive this instruction than General Ignatieff himself.

This is worthy of especial note. By the word of the Czar himself, those are convicted of falsehood or culpable ignorance, who contend that General Ignatieff had overstepped his instructions, and was responsible for the subsequent complications.

The bare idea, however, of any Russian statesman or general overstepping his orders, or acting in any way on his own unsupported responsibility, whether an Ignatieff, or a Kauffman, or a Schouvaloff, is too ridiculous to be entertained for one moment. Serfage, amongst the nobility or peasantry, may have been theoretically abolished; practically, it flourishes as much as ever.

The emperor then expressed very earnestly his wish that a conference should meet with the least delay, and that instructions should be immediately sent by the several governments to enable the ambassadors at Constantinople to deliberate at once on the necessary preliminaries of peace between Servia and Turkey, taking as the basis the proposals which had been submitted by Lord Derby. Continuing in this strain, the emperor entered on a retrospective view of the past negotiations. He stated that he had given every proof of his desire for peace, and that he had done everything in his power to aid in arriving at a pacific solution of the existing complications. He even pretended that he had supported Lord Derby's previous demand for an armistice of six weeks, which was refused by the Porte, and was followed by a mere suspension of hostilities for ten days, which proved wholly illusory. This was true; but the emperor did not state that it was illusory on account of the bad faith of the Servians and their Russian accomplices! On the contrary, his majesty considered that this refusal of the Porte to a collective appeal of Europe was a "slap in the face" given to the powers. He had patiently submitted from a wish not to separate from the European concert, and had assented to the proposals to serve as a basis for peace proposed by Lord Derby, and which had been equally agreed to by the other powers.

To these proposals, however, the Porte had replied evasively, declining to convey its acceptance in the form of a protocol, and notifying that a wholesale measure of reform was under consideration, which would be applied indiscriminately to the empire at large, and which even went beyond the demands of the powers. The Czar then observed that, on this refusal, Lord Derby had, simultaneously with a similar proposal from himself, addressed to the Porte a demand for an armistice of not less than a month, for the purpose of enabling the powers to deliberate on the conditions of peace. He had supported this demand in conjunction with the other powers; and to this the Porte had replied by a counter-proposal, offering an armistice of five months, which, under the circumstances, and for the reasons given by his government, could not be supported or recommended to the belligerent parties.

"Thus," said the Czar, "the Porte, by a series of manœuvres, had rendered ineffectual all the attempts of collective Europe for arresting the war, and for securing a general pacification; and that if Europe was willing to receive these repeated rebuffs from the Porte, he could no longer consider it as consistent either with the honour, the dignity, or the interests of Russia."

At the same time, the Czar pretended to be anxious not to separate from the European concert; but the present state of things was intolerable, and could no longer be allowed to continue; and unless Europe was prepared to act with firmness and energy, he should be obliged to act alone.

At this point the Czar referred more especially to his relations with England. He said he regretted to see that there still existed in England an "inveterate" suspicion of Russian policy, and a continual fear of Russian aggression and conquest. He had on several occasions given the most solemn assurances that he desired no conquest; that he aimed at no aggrandisement, and that he had not the smallest wish or intention to be possessed of Constantinople. All that had been said or written about a will of Peter the Great and the aims of Catherine the Second were illusions and phantoms; they never existed in reality, and he considered that the acquisition of Constantinople would be a misfortune for Russia. There was no question of it, nor had it ever been entertained by his late father, who had given a proof of it in 1828, when his victorious army was within four days' march of the Turkish capital. But he carefully abstained from saying that the state of the Russian army

at that time was such that Constantinople was very much to them what the sour grapes were to the fox.

However, to avoid all further misapprehension, the Czar "pledged his sacred word of honour, in the most earnest and solemn manner, that he had no intention of acquiring Constantinople, and that if necessity should oblige him to occupy a portion of Bulgaria, it would only be provisionally, and until peace and the safety of the Christian population were secured."

Continuing the line of argument, the emperor then reverted to the proposal addressed to her majesty's government for the occupation of Bosnia by Austria, of Bulgaria by Russia, and of a naval demonstration at Constantinople, where, he said, her majesty's fleet would have been the dominant power. This, the emperor thought, ought to be a sufficient proof that Russia entertained no intention of occupying that capital. True it might have been, had it been understood where Bulgaria began, and where it left off. But, as subsequent events proved, Russia looked upon Turkey as nearly all of it Bulgarian!

However, the Czar said that he could not understand, when both countries had a common object—namely, the maintenance of peace and the amelioration of the condition of the Christians, and when he had given every proof that he had no desire for conquest or aggrandisement—why there should not be a perfect understanding between England and Russia—an understanding based on a policy of peace, which would be equally beneficial to their mutual interests, and to those of Europe at large.

"Intentions," he said, "are attributed to Russia of a future conquest of India and of the possession of Constantinople. Can anything be more absurd? With regard to the former it is a perfect impossibility; and, as regards the latter, I repeat again the most solemn assurances that I entertain neither the wish nor the intention." He might have added, "nor the power."

Then, reverting to his relations with England, he deeply deplored the distrust of his policy which was manifested in England, and the evil effects it produced; and he earnestly requested Lord Loftus to do his utmost to dispel this cloud of suspicion and distrust of Russia, and charged him to convey to her majesty's government the solemn assurances he had repeated to him.

Lord Loftus assured the emperor that her majesty's government were perfectly cognizant of, and fully appreciated, the Czar's pacific intentions. He observed that the proposed occupation of the Turkish territory had worked a change in the public opinion of England, and had produced alarm.

Lord Loftus then expressed a hope that the acceptance of the armistice would enable the powers to bring about a satisfactory pacification, and that it was of essential importance that the European concert should be maintained. At the same time, he remarked that the question of autonomy appeared to him as likely to offer the chief difficulty; and that as it more directly affected Austrian interests, care should be taken not to exceed those limits which could be accepted by Austria. Continuing in this strain, Lord Loftus then referred to the reported pretensions of Servia and Roumania to be erected into independent kingdoms. Such a measure, Lord Loftus remarked, would be the first step towards a dissolution of the Turkish empire in Europe. History, he somewhat maliciously remarked, recorded the existence, in former times, of a kingdom of Bohemia, a kingdom of Servia, and a kingdom of Poland: they had all disappeared, and their dissolution had been chiefly caused by internal dissensions. If the pretensions of Servia and Roumania should be now admitted, it would be the creation of so many small Polands, which very probably would drift into republics—a state of affairs which would not conduce either to the peace or security of the neighbouring States.

Hereupon the emperor said that there was no question of establishing kingdoms of Servia and Roumania, and that it would be a folly to do so. As for the proclamation of Prince Milan, as King of Servia, by the Servian army, at the instigation of General Tchernaieff, the emperor thoroughly disapproved of it, and that, in consequence, he had advised the prince not to visit the head-quarters.

Lord Loftus, however, was not surprised to hear that the Czar had received a telegram from the prince, excusing himself for not obeying his majesty's advice, on the grounds that "duty to his country obliged him to go to his army under the present adverse circumstances."

The Czar then made a passing allusion to the exaggerated reports as to the number of Russian volunteers in the Servian ranks; to which Lord Loftus replied by

observing that the presence of these men had been very instrumental in producing the feverish excitement in Russia.

To this the Czar replied that he had *permitted the officers to go, provided they left the Russian service*, "and that he had hoped by so doing to calm the agitation (*de jeter de l'eau froide*)." But, continued his majesty, a great many Russian officers had fallen, and the enthusiasm for the Servians had also very much calmed down.

The emperor then summed up his observations under three heads:—

1. The armistice.
2. The immediate meeting of a conference to decide upon the reforms to be introduced into Turkey.
3. That the Porte should give effective guarantees for the execution of these reforms.

These personal expressions of opinions, views, intentions, and principles were followed up by a despatch from Prince Gortschakoff to Count Schouvaloff; in which, to save time—for every minute is wasted that is spent upon the document—we interpolate our glosses in parentheses. He wrote:—

"I see with profound surprise, by your last letter, that ideas of our coveting Constantinople and of the will of Peter the Great continue to haunt the minds of some people in England. I confess I thought these absurdities were out of date, and had been dismissed, together with the conquest of India by Russia, to the domain of political mythology." (Unfortunately, these absurdities are nowhere more believed in than in Russia.)

"How often have not the Russian emperors publicly asserted that no territorial annexation enters into their policy (quite true—hundreds of times; and they kept their word by annexing Poland, the Caucasus, Khiva, Khokand, and parts of Persia); that they would be much embarrassed by it (also true; for instance, in Poland in 1832 and-'63; in the Caucasus and in Georgia); and that the maintenance of the *status quo* of the East was the best combination (against Russia). In our form of government, the word of the sovereign is not, like a parliamentary declaration, revocable at the will of a majority (which is to be deeply deplored). Their personal loyalty (which is worth nothing) is at stake. How many times, moreover, have not facts confirmed this! (Innumerable times, as above.) If Russia had these desires she would do what annexing powers do. She would quietly make her preparations, and act on the first favourable occasion. (Yes; but other powers do not hypocritically proclaim to the world that they have "no intentions," and "pledge sacred words of honour" they have not!) Had she not such an opportunity in 1829, in 1848, and 1870, when the attention and the forces of Europe were engaged elsewhere? (No; she had not. In 1829, it was a case of sour grapes; in 1848 she had enough to do at home; in 1870 she entered into a bargain with Prussia, and took what she could get—*i.e.*, the abrogation of the Black Sea treaty. She could do no more, for she had Austria, and would have had England and Turkey against her.) What proofs, then, is it necessary to give English ministers of a disinterestedness, founded, not on political virtue (of course not!), but on reason and good sense. If they would just forget for one moment that they are English (which they certainly will not do), and place themselves at a Russian point of view (which is impossible), we would ask them whether, conscientiously, they would advise the imperial government to seek the possession of Constantinople. (Decidedly they would if the Russian government could get it and keep it! It is notorious that Constantinople is coveted by all who have interests in the East. Its possession would be invaluable to Russia.) There can be no doubt as to the reply. Why deny us the practical good sense they themselves have? (As we have shown, they do not.)

"The only rational combination for Russian interests is to leave the keys of the Black Sea in hands feeble enough not to close to Russia that commercial outlet, nor to menace her security. The Turkish rule fulfilled this programme. Is it our fault if the Turks have taken advantage of it to render their sway intolerable to their Christian subjects? (Yes, decidedly.) Has not the English policy contributed to the abuse by exciting the suspicions of the Porte against Russia through her own rivalry, and in assisting her to make force the sole basis of her power? (No; it is false.)

"It is really painful to see two great States, which together (if their principles were at all similar!) might regulate European questions for their mutual advantage and the benefit of all, excite themselves and the world by an antagonism founded on prejudices or misunderstanding. (Say, justified distrust.)

"The results are obvious. English public opinion itself has been aroused (it always is against tyranny and barbarity); and much more so, and more naturally, the national and Christian sentiment of Russia (as exemplified by the persecution of the Uvicts!); for we are too near to these countries, and have too many relations with them, to confine ourselves to merely theoretical sympathies. (Very true; Tchernaieff.)

"This imposes on the emperor duties from which his majesty cannot shrink. (On the contrary!) But these duties are shared by all civilised Europe. What prevents England from fulfilling her part by joining with us for the protection of the Christians, and sharing with us their gratitude and sympathy? (Because England does not believe in Russian civilisation or good faith.) The Eastern question is not only a Russian question: it involves the repose of Europe, peace and general prosperity, humanity and Christian civilisation. (Just for that reason England refuses to leave it to Russia.)

"Surely the space is large enough for England to place herself side by side with Russia? (It is not; not as long as Russia is what she is.) Have we not invited her there (where?) by inviting in the Straits the presence of her squadrons? (By what right does Russia invite England into Turkey? One man does not invite his friend to another man's house without his permission.) What further pledge are we to give of our having no pretension to the exclusive possession of Constantinople? (By not going there!)

"The emperor has just expressed himself in this sense to Lord A. Loftus with the precision and loyalty of his sovereign words. (Pie-crust to wise men; and caviare to the multitude!) The English ambassador will most certainly report them.

"If this assurance requires to be repeated, do so, my dear count, in the most emphatic terms. You will be certain to interpret faithfully the intentions of our august master." (That is much to be doubted.)

These assurances made by the Czar at Livadia, and repeated to Count Schouvaloff in London by Prince Gortschakoff, were of course hailed by the peace-at-any-price party as eminently satisfactory; and, owing to diplomatic usage, they had to be accepted—at least for what they were worth.

But the Russian after-thought was not long in making its appearance. The British government made the following proposals for the basis on which to call a conference at Constantinople:—

"1. The independence and territorial integrity of the Ottoman empire.

"2. A declaration that the powers do not seek for territorial advantages, exclusive influence, or commercial concessions, as in the protocols of Sept. 17, 1840, and of August, 1860.

"3. The terms proposed to the Porte by Sir Henry Elliot in accordance with the Earl of Derby's instructions of September 21st, 1876."

Prince Gortschakoff at once objected to the words "territorial integrity." He stated that the imperial government could not accept that term, as it would exclude the possibility of a provisional occupation, which, in the interest of the Ottoman empire itself, he considered would still be necessary for the security of the Christian population, and for the maintenance of peace and order during the introduction of the administrative reforms. He added, that there was still great agitation in Bulgaria as well as in Bosnia, and that excesses, with loss of life, were still being perpetrated, and that nothing but material force would restore peace and tranquillity. But, he repeated, there was no question of disturbing the integrity of the empire. He stated most positively that Russia did not covet an inch of Turkish territory. If an occupation became necessary, it would be provisional, and would only continue until the administration was placed on a regular and peaceable footing. Ultimately, however, and on considering that one quibble more or less was of no importance, he yielded, and accepted the invitation.

A few days later, on Nov. 15, the emperor held a review of the imperial guards and of the adjacent garrisons in the Champ de Mars. On the termination of it, his majesty addressed the Grand Duke Nicholas Nicolaievich, his staff, and the officer of his guard, and referring to the mobilisation of a portion of his army, expressed a hope that it would not be necessary to mobilise his guards. He expressed his thanks to the Grand Duke Nicholas for the efficient state of the guards, and announced the appointment of his imperial highness to command the active army; adding, that his imperial highness carried with him the best wishes

of all for his success. This speech was received by the troops, and a vast concourse of eager spectators who were present at the review, with the greatest enthusiasm and delight.

Two days later, the Czar gave orders for the immediate mobilisation of 160,000 men and 648 guns. Thus, whatever the peace-at-any-price party may think of Lord Beaconsfield mobilising one army corps to go into congress with, the world in general will remember that Russia set the example when she mobilised six to go into conference with!

CHAPTER XI.

THE CONSTANTINOPLE CONFERENCE.

NEVER was a conference intended to lead to peace—at least ostensibly intended to restore peace—ushered in with such remarkable demonstrations as the Constantinople conference of 1876-'77. The Russians, as we have seen, prepared for peace by arming to the teeth; Servia was in a state between peace and war; Montenegro was in a state of inactive but open hostility against the Porte; and the Turks themselves were quietly but steadily preparing for what every one, who had any intimate acquaintance with the question, knew would be the result.

But to this political chaos the powers sent their representatives.—Turkey was represented by Safvet Pasha and Edhem Pasha, the former of whom occupied the position of president, the conference being held in the Turkish capital. The French delegates were Comte François de Bourgoing, the resident ambassador, and the Comte de Chaudordy. Germany had but one representative, Baron Werther. Austria sent Count Zichy, the resident ambassador, and Baron Calice, consul-general in Roumania; Count Corti represented Italy, and General Ignatieff was deputed by Russia; whilst the representatives of Great Britain were Lord Salisbury and Sir Henry Elliot.

These gentlemen were accompanied by a numerous suite of *attachés* and secretaries, amongst whom, as is the custom of the species, there was much delight at the prospect of a visit to Constantinople. Mr. Philip Currie was appointed secretary to Lord Salisbury's "Special Embassy," although he was already Lord Salisbury's secretary, and, as such, in receipt of a handsome salary. Besides Mr. Currie, Mr. Henry S. Northcote, a pleasant-faced, good-natured boy, Mr. H. A. Lee, and Mr. J. H. C. Hozier, were also appointed to assist in settling the ever-momentous Eastern question, and to look after the luggage—of course by proxy.

This was very satisfactory indeed to all these gentlemen, when it suddenly struck somebody that a journey zig-zag through Europe, from London to Constantinople, would probably cost a good deal of money. The young gentlemen drew rather long faces at this, and hints were made to their "chiefs" that a holiday without pocket-money could scarcely be regarded as an unmixed pleasure. The scion of the House of Cecil and the daughter of the Aldersons agreed with this view; but they also agreed that the House of Cecil could not be expected to furnish this necessary pocket-money; and as the voyage was to be undertaken for the nation's weal, it was but just that the nation should pay for it. Even Lord Derby saw the force of this argument, and on November 20th, after he had made the appointment of these gentlemen in a letter to the Marquis of Salisbury, he indited a second, to the effect that all the "travelling and other expenses" of the journey and stay in Constantinople should be paid by the public. This was eminently satisfactory, and the young gentlemen were highly delighted, and set about arranging their outfit. Their colleagues greatly envied them, and one of them—Mr. Marwood Tucker—gave expression to his discontent, and lamented that he, too, had not been included in the holiday party; and as Mr. Marwood Tucker was much

liked by his friends, pressure was brought to bear upon the Marquis of Salisbury, to whom it was represented that too much work would seriously diminish the pleasure of a holiday trip, even with unlimited pocket-money, and that Mr. Marwood Tucker, mindful of his friends' comfort, would be very glad to assist in the work to be done. The soft-hearted marquis agreed, and proposed Mr. Marwood Tucker as an additional private secretary. To this Lord Derby assented; but the value of his consent was much diminished by his statement that Mr. Marwood Tucker, though he would be considered as attached to the embassy, would receive no remuneration, and that his expenses would not be borne by the public. This was not satisfactory to the noble marquis at all; still less satisfaction was there at the receipt of a reminder from Lord Derby, that, as there was such a large staff, it was but fair that some work should be done, and that they should address to him (Lord Derby) a series of despatches, properly numbered and docketed, during the course of the mission. Mr. Marwood Tucker, however, had gained his point. It is true, some bilious critics aver that Mr. Marwood Tucker was appointed to do all the work, and take it off his colleagues' hands, and that it was on that understanding that he was allowed to form one of the party. But that may be as it may; we have only to deal with facts; and these facts, as they appear in the Blue-Book in their native simplicity, will be found to run as follows:—

No. 3.

The Earl of Derby to the Marquis of Salisbury.

"Foreign Office, November 20, 1876.

"My Lord,—I have to inform your Excellency that the Queen has been pleased to signify her commands that Mr. Philip Currie, of this Office, should be appointed secretary to your Excellency's special embassy, and that Mr. H. S. Northcote, Mr. H. A. Lee, and Mr. J. H. C. Hozier, of this Office, should be officially attached to your Excellency in your character of special ambassador. Your Excellency will accordingly consider these gentlemen as forming part of your diplomatic establishment, and you will employ them in the business of the embassy in whatever way you may deem most beneficial for her majesty's service.

"I am, &c.,
(Signed) "DERBY."

No. 4.

The Earl of Derby to the Marquis of Salisbury.

"Foreign Office, November 20, 1876.

"My Lord,—I have to inform your Excellency that the travelling and other expenses of your Excellency's embassy will be paid by the public, and that Mr. Currie has been instructed to keep and render the accounts in accordance with the usual forms.

"I am, &c.,
(Signed) "DERBY."

No. 5.

The Earl of Derby to the Marquis of Salisbury.

"Foreign Office, November 20, 1876.

"My Lord,—I have to inform your Excellency that Mr. Marwood Tucker has been appointed additional private secretary to your Excellency in your character of special ambassador about to proceed to Constantinople. Mr. Tucker will be considered as attached to the embassy, but he will receive no remuneration, and his expenses will not be borne by the public.

"I am, &c.,
(Signed) "DERBY."

No. 6.

The Earl of Derby to the Marquis of Salisbury.

"Foreign Office, November 20, 1876.

"My Lord,—I have to request your Excellency to correspond with this Office, while employed on the service of your special embassy, in a series of despatches, numbered and docketed, and addressed to her majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

"I am, &c.,
(Signed) "DERBY."

Everything being thus satisfactorily settled, and a proposal by Mr. Thomas Cook to "personally conduct" the party declined with thanks, the excursion left England on November 20th, after Lord Salisbury had received his instructions in a lengthy document, of which the following was the gist:—

"1. The independence and the territorial integrity of the Ottoman empire.

"2. A declaration that the powers do not intend to seek for, and will not seek for, any territorial advantage, any exclusive influence, or any concession with regard to the commerce of their subjects which those of every other nation may not equally obtain.

"Such a declaration was made on the 17th of September, 1840, in the protocol for the pacification of the Levant; and again on the 3rd of August, 1860, in regard to the pacification of Syria.

"3. The basis of pacification proposed to the Porte on the 25th of September, viz.:—

"(*a.*) The *status quo*, speaking roughly, both as regards Servia and Montenegro.

"(*b.*) That the Porte should simultaneously undertake, in a protocol to be signed at Constantinople with the representatives of the mediating powers, to grant to Bosnia and Herzegovina a system of local or administrative autonomy, by which is to be understood a system of local institutions which shall give the population some control over their own local affairs, and guarantees against the exercise of arbitrary authority. There is to be no question of a tributary State.

"Guarantees of a similar kind to be also provided against maladministration in Bulgaria."

Admirable as were these demands, they lost much of their value from the absence of any provision to enforce their execution upon the Porte, which had promised to fulfil such and similar demands time after time. But no material guarantees were to be exacted from the Porte; and thus the whole document, as set up by Lord Derby, could not be seriously considered as more than a comedy, except under one condition. That condition was the supposition that the government intended, and determined to insist on the independence and territorial integrity of the Turkish empire. That was a policy intelligible to all. It does not signify what the value of that policy was, nor how it would be regarded by a portion of the public. It was at any rate a clear and definite programme; and coming from a Conservative ministry, whose "platform" was the sanctity of treaties and the re-establishment of British influence abroad, it was but natural to believe that it was a programme which would be carried out to the letter, as far as lay in the country's power.

Lord Derby, however, as well, it must be presumed, as the rest of the cabinet, judged it advisable that the Marquis of Salisbury should take the sense of the great powers on this programme before entering the conference. Thus it was decided that he should call, on his way to Constantinople, on the French, German, and Austrian ministers and their masters. Thus there ensued that remarkable journey which created so much hilarity on the continent. The spectacle of a British minister knocking at the doors of all the chief cabinets in order to ascertain the opinion entertained of the British programme was unprecedented. And it was as senseless as it was undignified. For, supposing that the governments, especially those belonging to the Triple Alliance, should demur to the policy advocated by the British government, there would have been but little use in proposing the conference.

However, Lord Salisbury arrived safely in Paris on the 20th of November, and had an interview with the Duc Decazes and Marshal MacMahon on the following day. At this interview the British programme was generally approved of; but stipulations were made, that, at the conference, no mention should be made of Egypt or Syria, and that no proposals touching these countries should be discussed. At the same time, the Duc Decazes asked the marquis what course the British government would adopt in case the Porte refused to comply with the demands which the conference might judge fit to make.

To this question, as we are able to state on special information, Lord Salisbury replied, that the British government would not be prepared to adopt any coercive measures whatever towards the Porte, and would confine itself to a declaration that the Porte, in such case, could not expect any assistance whatever from Great Britain. "*Bon; je comprends!*" replied the duke. "I understand!"

The same night, the marquis left Paris

en route for Berlin; and on November 23rd, he had an audience of the Emperor William, after he had several interviews with Prince Bismarck and other persons of note. The emperor expressed earnest hopes for the preservation of peace, and said that he had used, and would continue to use, his utmost personal influence with the Emperor of Russia for that purpose; but he could not but acknowledge that the course taken by the Emperor Alexander was imposed upon him by circumstances, and by the oppression to which those of his own religion had been subjected under Turkish rule. He trusted, however, that by the concession of reasonable reforms in the administration of the Turkish provinces, *combined with guarantees for their execution*, the necessity for an occupation of Turkish territory might be avoided. At the same time, however, the emperor considered that it was impossible for Europe any longer to accept the mere promises of the Porte, and that it was *indispensable that satisfactory guarantees against the continuance of the evils under which the Christians in Turkey were suffering should be arranged.*

In reply, Lord Salisbury stated that it was the full intention of the British government to insist on the provision of adequate guarantees; but, at the same time, he said he feared that an occupation of Turkish territory would lead to war, and that the limits of such a war could not be foreseen.

Thus the marquis received a plain check from the old emperor. Unlike the Duc Decazes, he refused to "understand" that the conference should be allowed to end in a farce, and gave the marquis plainly to understand that he, for one, did not intend to support the British policy against his nephew's.

At Vienna the marquis was scarcely less unsuccessful, though, owing to the very nature of the case, he met with no such decided repulse as at Berlin. He found both the emperor and Count Andrassy on the horns of a dilemma, and unable to choose between them. In fact, they were neither of them clear in their own minds as to what they did want; all that they positively knew was that matters looked very gloomy; but, at the same time, it was sufficiently evident that Austria would have no objection to changes in the Turkish empire as long as those changes did not threaten Austria, and she were allowed to take compensation for them, though they might not prejudice her. At this Lord Salisbury became slightly uneasy, and, in reply to the emperor's remarks, that the difficulties in the way of a settlement were almost insuperable, he could only repeat the old stock-in-trade assurance, that peace could only be seriously menaced if an occupation of Turkish territory were insisted on.

What claim to statesmanship has an individual of the House of Cecil, or any other house, who could make such a statement as that at the end of the year 1876?

These were terrible blows to the noble marquis; but the most cruel blow of all awaited him in Rome. Here, although Signor Melegari objected to a Russian occupation of any portion of the Ottoman empire, he insisted that the action of the powers ought not to be derived from, or limited by the treaty of Paris, but that their functions were rather those of mediators, deriving their title simply from the events of the war and the acceptance of the conference by the Porte. They ought, he considered, to be unrestricted in their search for a solution of the questions to be submitted to the conference by any obligations imposed by that treaty, and he was *not prepared to admit that the Porte would be at liberty to reject any decision to which the conference might come.*

That is to say, even Signor Melegari was also of opinion that effective guarantees should be demanded from the Porte, and the decisions of the conference be enforced by the powers, should the Porte refuse to obey. Thus in Berlin, Vienna, and Rome, Lord Salisbury met with the same reply—that the British proposals were admirable in their way, but that no means had been provided to enforce their execution.

In short, the negotiations from which Lord Salisbury, and those who did not know the limited scope of his mind, expected so much, resulted in nothing. He was rebuffed on all sides, except in Paris, where, however, assistance of a practical nature could not be expected. And nowhere was the amusement at the noble lord's political peregrinations greater than at St. Petersburg and Constantinople, where he arrived with his suite on board the Austrian and Lloyd's steamer *Aurora* on December 5th.

Negotiations were first commenced in a

series of preliminary meetings, when, as was to be foreseen, the chief difficulty was the question of guarantee for the execution of the decisions which the conference might arrive at.

Two methods to achieve this end were proposed. The first was a combined naval demonstration by all the signatory powers before Constantinople; the second was the occupation of the revolted provinces by a foreign force belonging to some minor State. On this head, General Ignatieff, unconditionally dwelling upon the prevalence of insecurity and danger of massacre, stated that it was the immovable determination of his government to have some sufficient material force as security for the Christians during the introduction of the reforms, and for the commission which would have to be appointed to watch over the execution of the reforms. Russia would furnish this force if no other was forthcoming, but did not desire to do so. Thereupon Lord Salisbury stated that the British consuls did not believe in the danger; whereupon the ambassadors of each of the four other powers stated that the reports from their consuls were in the opposite sense. Beaten on this point, Lord Salisbury then urged upon the ambassadors that Turkish regular troops would be sufficient, and Sir H. Elliot pressed the point upon them. They objected, however, that the regulars took part in the massacres, and could not be trusted. The question of employing Roumanian troops was raised; but it was thought that this would be intolerable to the Porte, and their efficiency was doubtful. Besides that, Lord Salisbury stated that his instructions formally forbade him to accept any military occupation; that any employment of Russian soldiers was so likely to lead to bloodshed that it was absolutely out of the question; but that if the conference would accept English soldiers, he would recommend that solution.

To this the Russian ambassador took strong objection; and the German ambassador said that no troops belonging to guaranteeing powers could be accepted. At the same time all protested against the idea of occupation; but said that an escort of 3,000 to 5,000 men, as a nucleus for a *gendarmerie*, could not be considered an occupation.

A Belgian force of this size was then proposed, and it was stated that the proposal had the assent of the Belgian government; but to this solution Lord Salisbury objected, that he could give no opinion on the part of England, as such a suggestion had not been contemplated in his instructions. He, however, accepted it *ad referendum*, and recommended its adoption earnestly, because he did not believe that the conference would give way on this, and because no possible political danger could result from it, although the Turks would probably oppose; but as this objection would apply to all suggestions of reform, he craved a speedy answer from the government at home, as the further continuance of negotiations depended upon this point. In reply to Lord Salisbury's inquiries on the subject, Lord Derby informed him that the government were ready to assent in principle to the plan proposed by the preliminary conference—viz., local reforms, with a commission of supervision for one year, and such commission to be supported by an escort not exceeding 6,000 men at the utmost, to be drawn from some minor State, such as Belgium. But, at the same time, he said that the government would reserve absolutely the question of steps to be taken in the event of refusal by the Porte; and furthermore, he said, that it would be advisable to present the proposal as emanating from the Porte itself; and, also, that it should be accompanied by a withdrawal of the Russian forces concentrated on the frontier.

Interrogated the next day (Dec. 22), as to what measures were to be taken in case the Porte refused to comply with this demand, or the other decisions of the conference, Lord Derby roundly declared that the government would not assist in coercive measures, military or naval, against the Porte; and that, in case of the Porte's refusal, Lord Salisbury was simply to leave Constantinople, as well as Sir Henry Elliot, and inform the Porte that it could expect no assistance from Great Britain whatever.

From this declaration the Turks argued that England was resolved not to act against them; it would only be necessary for them to let things come to the worst, and a declaration of war, in order to secure the alliance of Great Britain as heretofore. Possibly, this assistance would not be given at once, but that it would be ultimately forthcoming they entertained no doubt whatever.

To nobody was this more evident than

to General Ignatieff. He was convinced that the Porte would refuse any series of concessions imposed upon them by the conference; and he knew that war would ensue in consequence. He also knew that the conditions to be imposed upon the Porte, after a successful war, would exceed in severity those proposed by the conference by a hundred-fold; and, consequently, knowing all this, he felt perfectly safe in making any concessions, on the part of Russia, which might be demanded by the conference.

He therefore yielded one point after another. So great were his concessions as to cause universal surprise. He even abandoned the idea of an occupation by Belgian or other troops to look after the execution of the reforms. But all was in vain. The Porte, strong in its conviction that it would not be abandoned by England, took little heed of the negotiations during the preliminary meetings, and, under Midhat Pasha, calmly set about framing a constitution after its own fashion.

This constitution, Midhat Pasha's pet project, was announced in a most dramatic manner. At the very first sitting of the conference, under the presidency of Safvet Pasha, the plenipotentiaries assembled were suddenly startled by repeated salvoes of artillery. Some of the plenipotentiaries turned pale; all looked inquiringly at each other, and then at Safvet Pasha, who, evidently enjoying the discomposure of the ambassadors, kept silence for a moment, and then declared that these salvoes announced the promulgation of the Ottoman constitution.

"A great act," he said, "which is at this moment being accomplished, has just changed a form of government which has lasted 600 years. The constitution with which his majesty the Sultan has endowed his empire is promulgated. It inaugurates a new era for the happiness and prosperity of his people."

Having somewhat recovered their composure, the ambassadors gave expression to their opinion on the matter, and Count Chaudordy pointed out that peace was absolutely necessary, in order that the constitution might produce the results expected of it, and that the agreement of all the powers in the conference was the essential condition for the efficacy of this solemn act. The Marquis of Salisbury was equally glad to record that the conference had met to secure peace, which Safvet Pasha declared was ardently desired by Turkey, with the object of realising as soon as possible the benefits of the constitution. To this General Ignatieff drily replied that the manner of application of the new institutions would be the real test of their value, and that, moreover, peace must be secured before they could be put into execution.

In order to attain this much-desired object, as he declared, General Ignatieff continued to make one concession after another until the proposals had reached a minimum, and were embodied in a protocol which was handed to the Porte for acceptance. It was divided into four heads, and contained the irreducible *ultimatum* of the six powers assembled in conference. It ran:—

Montenegro.

"The rectification of the frontiers of Montenegro, together with the annexation of the Baniani, Piva with Nichsich, Drobniak, a part of Goranzi, the district of Kolachin, the Kutchi-Drekalovitchi, the Kutchi-Kraïni, the Vassoïevitchi from the Zievna to the Lim, the Mali and Veli-Brdo, Spouz, and Jabliak.

"An international commission of delimitation *ad hoc*.

"Freedom of navigation, and the neutralisation of the forts on the Boyana."

Servia.

"*Status quo ante bellum* for Servia, together with the settlement of the difficulties concerning the boundaries on the Bosnian side by a commission of arbitration in conformity with the Hatti-Chérif of 1833.

"For the two principalities: Evacuation by the Ottoman troops and the troops of the principalities of the territories beyond certain fixed boundaries, exchange of prisoners of war, and amnesty to subjects in the service of the enemy."

Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Bulgaria.

"The governors-general of the provinces to be appointed for the first five years by the Porte, with the previous agreement ('agrément préalable') of the powers.

"The sub-division of the provinces into sandjaks, with Mutessarifs appointed by the Porte, on the nomination of the Valis,

for a fixed period, and into cantons (nahiés, mudirliks) of 5,000 to 10,000 inhabitants, with the cantonal authorities freely elected by the population in each commune, and competent to deal with all questions affecting the interests of the canton.

"Provincial assemblies, elected for a period of four years by the cantonal councils, in accordance with the system notified. They are to fix the budget and appoint the provincial administrative councils, which the Valis should consult in cases exceeding the pure and simple execution of the legal and administrative arrangements, and on which they may report to the Sublime Porte.

"Improvement in assessment of taxes: The provincial assemblies and the cantonal councils to have the apportionment and collection of the taxes, with the exception of the customs, the posts and telegraphs, the taxes on tobacco and spirits, and the 'régie.' The complete abolition of the system of tax-farming. Remission of arrears in taxes. The drawing up, every five years, of the budget of the provinces according to the average revenue. A part to be applied to paying off the public debt and to the requirements of the central government, and the remainder to those of the provinces.

"Readjustment of justice with a view to the greater independence of the magistracy; the appointment of judges of the civil and criminal courts by the Valis, with the consent of the administrative council, and of the members of the Court of Appeal by the Porte, upon the recommendation of the Valis. Sittings and judicial inquiries to be public. Exclusive jurisdiction for ecclesiastical authorities over special cases of different creeds.

"Entire religious liberty. Maintenance by the communities of the clergy and of public religious and educational establishments. Guarantees against forced conversions.

"The language of the country to be used on an equal footing with Turkish in the courts and administration.

"Complete prohibition of the employment of irregular troops. Formation of a Christian and Mussulman militia and police in proportion to the population, the subaltern officers to be appointed by the governors-general.

"Interdiction of colonisation by Circassians. A general amnesty to Christians sentenced for political offences.

"Improvement of the condition of the husbandmen and farmers in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Facilities for the acquisition of State land, and for the repatriation of emigrants.

"These regulations to come into force within a fixed period of three months."

Commissions of Control.

"Two commissions of control shall be named by the powers to watch over the execution of the regulations, and to aid the local authorities in different measures affecting order and public security, and they shall receive special instructions."

Now here was a fine opportunity for the Western powers to gain a signal diplomatic victory over the Russian government, by uniting to coerce the Porte into accepting these conditions, which represented the minimum which Europe demanded, and which, in themselves, were the least that the justice of the case demanded, and were, moreover, the least that could be expected from Turkey, even had Great Britain agreed to assist her in any war against Russia.

But the powers could not agree, and thus the opportunity to take Russia at her word when she proposed these minimised conditions passed away for ever. The Turks made a counter-proposal scarcely differing from one which had already been declared unacceptable by the powers, and this proposal was equally declined. The ambassadors decided to sign the above protocol, and fixed January 21st for the ceremony. On that day all the plenipotentiaries assembled at the Austrian embassy, except the Turkish delegates. They had promised to come, but did not, and did not even send an excuse for not keeping their promise.

In this contemptuous manner the Porte practically dismissed the conference; and on the following day, Lord Salisbury embarked in the Austrian Lloyd's steamer *Ceres*, to return to London *viâ* Athens and Brindisi.

The other ambassadors also left Constantinople; the embassies being left in charge of a secretary only; and thus diplomatic relations with the Porte were broken off as far as the representation of the powers at Constantinople was concerned.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PROTOCOL AND THE MANIFESTO.

THE Porte, having now got rid of the troublesome ambassadors, began to be anxious to conclude peace with Servia and Montenegro. Exhausted as Servia was by the recent war, and more or less in disgrace at St. Petersburg in consequence of her failure to obtain any successes against the Turks, there were no great obstacles in the way of coming to an arrangement, the more so as the terms accorded by the Porte were generous in the extreme, when all the facts of the case are taken into consideration. Peace was, therefore, concluded on the basis of the *status quo ante;* that is to say, of the relations between the Porte and the principality before the outbreak of the war which ended so disastrously for Servia.

With Montenegro, however, the case was different. Though the Turkish armies had traversed the country north and south, they had not been able to seize the capital, or to capture the Montenegrin armies; and, practically, the country was as unsubdued as ever. A tremendously mountainous country, a revolt there could only be suppressed by the occupation-force of the chief cities for an indefinite period, thus forcing the Montenegrin bands to keep to the mountain-passes and fastnesses; but to accomplish this, more troops were necessary than the object to be gained was worth. Advice was, of course, freely tendered to the prince by the powers; but Russia favoured his policy of procrastination and evasion, and supported him in his demands for independence to be formally recognised by the Porte. In fact, Prince Nikita was charged with the task of keeping the question open.

Under these circumstances, and the conference having come to nothing, Prince Gortschakoff addressed a circular to the powers, in which he stated, that, though the refusal opposed by the Porte to the wishes of Europe having involved the Eastern crisis in a new phase, he still considered the question as an European one, which should not and could not be solved but by the unanimous agreement of the great powers. As a matter of fact, all exclusive and personal considerations were disclaimed by all the cabinets, and the difficulty resolved itself into inducing the government of Turkey to govern the Christian subjects of the Sultan in a just and humane manner, so as not to expose Europe to permanent crises which were revolting to its conscience, and endangered its tranquillity.

It was, therefore, a question of common unanimity and interest, which the imperial cabinet was accordingly endeavouring to solve by bringing about an European concert. With this object Russia had come to an agreement with the Austro-Hungarian government, as the one most immediately interested, in order to submit to the European cabinets propositions which might serve as a basis for a general understanding and common action, and which, set forth in Count Andrassy's despatch of the $\frac{18}{30}$th December, 1875, had obtained the adhesion of all the great powers, and also of the Porte. The want of executive sanction having, however, rendered this agreement abortive, the cabinets, with the exception of the British cabinet, were placed, by the Berlin memorandum, in a position to pronounce on the principle of an eventual concert, having in view more effectual measures for realising their mutual aim. This agreement, however, not having proved unanimous, and diplomatic action being thus interrupted, the cabinets recommended negotiations in consequence of the aggravation of the crisis by the massacres in Bulgaria, the revolution in Constantinople, and the war with Servia and Montenegro. Thereupon, through the initiative of the English government a basis was agreed upon, and guarantees of pacification were proposed to be discussed at a conference to be held at Constantinople. This conference arrived, during its preliminary meetings, at a complete understanding, both as to the conditions of peace and as to the reforms to be introduced. The result was communicated to the Porte as the fixed and unanimous wish of Europe, and met with an obstinate refusal.

"Thus," continued the prince, "after more than a year of diplomatic efforts at-

testing the importance attached by the great powers to the pacification of the East, the right which they had, in view of the common welfare, to assure that pacification, and their firm determination to bring it about, the cabinets again found themselves in the same position as at the commencement of the crisis, which had been moreover aggravated by bloodshed, heated passions, accumulated ruin, and the prospect of an indefinite prolongation of the deplorable state of things which hung over Europe, and justly preoccupied the attention of both peoples and governments. Still, in spite of all this, the Porte made light of her former engagements, of her duty as a member of the European system, and of the unanimous wishes of the great powers. Far from having advanced one step towards a satisfactory solution, the Eastern question had become aggravated, and was at that moment a standing menace to the peace of Europe, the sentiments of humanity, and the conscience of Christian nations."

Under these circumstances, and before determining on the steps which he might think proper to take, the Emperor of Russia was desirous of knowing the limits within which the cabinets with whom he had till then endeavoured, and still desired so far as might be possible to proceed in common, were willing to act. He pointed out that the object held in view by the great powers was clearly defined by the proceedings of the conference, and that the refusal of the Turkish government threatened both the dignity and the tranquillity of Europe. It was thus absolutely necessary for Russia to know what the cabinets proposed to do with a view of meeting this refusal, and insuring the execution of their wishes.

With this object in view, Count Schouvaloff had an interview with Lord Derby on Feb. 21. He said that the Russian government were in a position of considerable difficulty; and that the expense and inconvenience of keeping up their armaments on a war footing was very great, and could not be continued indefinitely. On the other hand, unless public opinion could be satisfied by the announcement of some specific advantage that had been gained by the armament, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to proceed to demobilise the forces which had been placed on a war footing; and even the Minister of Finance, who was necessarily most alive to the disadvantages of the situation, would prefer a speedy campaign to the alternative of disarmament, with the possible necessity of a fresh mobilisation next year.

Count Schouvaloff then spoke of the proposal made by Midhat Pasha to Sir H. Elliot, that a fixed time—say a year—should be granted to the Porte for carrying out the reforms, and that if at the end of that period it were found that fair progress had not been made, the Turkish government would be ready to submit to the appointment of an international commission, or such other form of control as might be held desirable. Of this idea, Count Schouvaloff seemed to think favourably, and to believe that in some arrangement of this kind the groundwork for a settlement might be found, and even added that he did not consider it necessary that in the reply to be given to the circular of Prince Gortschakoff there should be any indication of an intention to resort eventually to united measures of coercion against the Porte. It would, in his opinion, he said, be sufficient that the reply should be so conceived as not to imply that Russia was to be left to herself to secure what advantages she deemed necessary for the Christian populations of Turkey.

This expression of opinion on the part of Count Schouvaloff, inaugurated what may be called the "Golden Bridge" period in the Anglo-Russian negotiations. It was assumed—most erroneously assumed—that Russia did not mean to go to war, but had determined simply to make a great military demonstration for the purpose of intimidating the Turks. This view, contrary to the opinion of those competent to judge, was industriously propagated; and the idea was also much encouraged by the Russian government as calculated to increase the disinclination of the Porte to yield, and thus offered the Russian government an additional excuse to proceed to extremities.

At the same time, however, Prince Gortschakoff pressed the British government for a reply to his circular and a declaration of their policy. He declared to Lord Loftus that the position of affairs was extremely prejudicial to Russia; that the mobilisation of the army cost 13,000,000 roubles monthly; and that a prolonged delay in ascertaining the decision of the European powers imposed on Russia a

costly sacrifice. Lord Loftus replied, that he must admit that any precipitate action on the part of Europe would be most unwise and ill-judged at that moment; for if peace were happily concluded between the Porte, Servia, and Montenegro, one of the objects of the European conference would be attained. In regard to the question of reforms, it could not be expected that the Porte could put them into execution in twenty-four hours. The greater portion of the reforms recommended by the conference had been accepted by the Porte, and harmonised with the constitution which had been proclaimed, and it was but reasonable, therefore, for Europe to grant a certain respite to the Porte to enable it to prove its sincerity in the assurances given. A period of twelve months would enable the Porte to give evidence of its determination to carry out the proposed reforms. Prince Gortschakoff, however, replied that Russia could not wait for twelve, or even six months, with the military cost she was now incurring. The reforms, he observed, could be perfectly inaugurated within two months; and, on March 11, he instructed Count Schouvaloff to present to the British government the draft of a protocol proposed by the Russian government for the signature of the six powers.

This draft was brought to Paris by General Ignatieff, who had been making a tour through Europe "to obtain medical advice for an affection which he was suffering from," and which was popularly supposed to be "Constantinople in his eye." But the diplomatic nature of his journey was avowed by Count Schouvaloff, who stated that the object of the general's journey had been to furnish explanations as to the real views of the cabinet of St. Petersburg, and to facilitate a pacific solution. He said, that after the sacrifices which Russia had imposed upon herself, the stagnation of her industry and of her commerce, and the enormous expenditure incurred by the mobilisation of 500,000 men, she could not retire nor send back her troops without having obtained some tangible result as regards the improvement of the condition of the Christian populations of Turkey. The emperor was sincerely desirous of peace, but not of peace at any price, and anxiously awaited the replies of the other powers to the Russian circular. The Russian government would not express any opinion by anticipation on these replies, but they foresaw in them the possibility of a great danger. For if the replies were not identical, what would be the position of the imperial cabinet? The agreement of the powers, so fortunately established at the conference, might be broken up in consequence of the shades of opinion manifested in the replies of the several cabinets: would not that be a determining cause to induce her to seek for a solution, either by means of a direct understanding with the Porte, or by force of arms?

Under these circumstances, the count declared, it seemed to the Russian government that the most practical solution, and the one best fitted to secure the maintenance of general peace, would be the signature by the powers of a protocol which should, so to speak, terminate the incident, and which might be signed in London by the representatives of the great powers, and under the direct inspiration of the cabinet of St. James's. It need contain no more than the principles upon which the several governments would have based their reply to the Russian circular. It would be desirable that it should affirm that the present state of affairs was one which concerned the whole of Europe, and should place on record that the improvement of the condition of the Christian population of Turkey would continue to be an object of interest to all the powers, whilst the Porte having repeatedly declared that it engaged to introduce reforms, it would be desirable to enumerate them on the basis of Safvet Pasha's circular. In this way there could be no subsequent misunderstanding as to the promises made by Turkey.

As a period of some months would not be sufficient to accomplish these reforms, it would be preferable not to fix any precise limit of time. It would rest with all the powers to determine, by general agreement, whether Turkey was progressing in a satisfactory manner in her work of regeneration; but, at the same time, the protocol should mention that Europe would continue to watch the progressive execution of the reforms by means of their diplomatic representatives.

If the hopes of the powers should once more be disappointed, and the condition of the Christian subjects of the Sultan should not be improved, the powers would reserve to themselves to consider in common the action which they would deem indispensable to secure the well-being of the Christian

population of Turkey, and the interests of the general peace.

In reply to this proposal, Lord Derby requested Count Schouvaloff to mention to his government the three following provisos, to which the assent of her majesty's government to the protocol must be held to be subject:—

1. That some formal pledge must be given of the intention of Russia to disarm if this protocol were signed.

2. That it be understood that the Porte would not be asked to sign the protocol: and,

3. That the agreement of the other powers would of course be necessary before the terms of the document could be considered as settled.

To these conditions Count Schouvaloff agreed, and matters for the moment appeared to be taking a favourable turn.

But in the meantime a cabinet council was held, and at this council it was evidently determined to make a cardinal question of the first condition, and to refuse to sign the protocol until Russia had given a formal assurance to demobilise: for, three days later, on March 17th, Lord Derby wrote to Lord Lyons, saying that he had communicated privately to the French ambassador a copy of the draft protocol on the affairs of Turkey, as settled between Count Schouvaloff and himself, and accepted by the count *ad referendum* to his government.

He also stated in the private note forwarding the draft, that it was understood that the Turkish government would not be asked to sign the protocol; that its acceptance by her majesty's government was subject to the assent of the other four powers; and further, that her majesty's government could only agree to become parties to it on the condition of receiving a formal assurance in writing from the Russian government that they would demobilise their forces.

Meantime, General Ignatieff came to London, and, with Count Schouvaloff, contended in the first place that the bargain as offered by Lord Derby was not a fair one. Turkey, not being required to sign the protocol, was in no way pledged to disarm; the recommendation to do so, addressed to her by the powers, being merely in the nature of advice. It was unreasonable, they argued, that Russia should bind herself to disarm as a condition of the British government signing a document which left Turkey free on that point. They objected, secondly, that the state of war still continued between Turkey and Montenegro; that if the Montenegrin State were to be attacked and invaded, Russia would be bound in honour to interfere for its protection, the fulfilment of which duty would be rendered impossible to her by a promise of demobilisation. Thirdly, they argued, that as a question of dignity it was unsuitable that Russia should be called upon to disarm before any similar appeal was addressed to Turkey.

Thus it was the Porte, they said, which ought to take the initiative, inasmuch as it was not before Russia alone, but before all Europe, that she was called upon to lay down her arms. They observed, further, that the condition of the two armies was essentially different—the Russian army being composed of regular troops, subject to strict military discipline; whereas the Turkish forces were to a large extent composed of irregulars, whose remaining under arms was a perpetual source of danger to the surrounding population.

In continuation of this argument, they pointed out that the demobilisation of the Russian forces could be accomplished in eight days; that the Turkish troops, on the other hand, could not be sent back to their homes under a period of many weeks, or perhaps months; and it was only reasonable, therefore, that the latter should be the first to begin the process. In connection with this subject, General Ignatieff observed, that so large a part of the male population of Asiatic Turkey had been withdrawn from the cultivation of the soil for the purpose of being placed under arms, that unless they were speedily sent home, famine would be the inevitable result. Lord Derby then asked whether they could give him any statement as to the conditions under which the Russian government would undertake to demobilise, supposing always that they were ready to give such assurances on any conditions and in any form. In reply, Count Schouvaloff said that he was not authorised to speak officially on the subject; but he expressed it as his opinion, in which General Ignatieff also concurred, that the emperor would be willing to disarm on three conditions;—

1. That the Porte should take the initiative.

2. That peace should be concluded

with Montenegro as it had been with Servia.

3. That the Turkish reforms should be seriously taken in hand.

And he added a further proviso, that it must be understood that demobilisation would be stopped at once in the event of fresh massacres being perpetrated on the Christian populations.

Lord Derby, however, remained firm until Count Schouvaloff, on behalf of his government, proposed that if the Porte should accept the advice of the powers as contained in the protocol, the Sultan should send a special envoy to St. Petersburg to treat on the question of mutual disarmament, to which the emperor, on his part, would consent.

On this condition Lord Derby consented to sign the protocol in the amended form agreed to by the various powers as follows:—

"The powers who have undertaken in common the pacification of the East, and have with that view taken part in the conference of Constantinople, recognise that the surest means of attaining the object which they have proposed to themselves, is before all to maintain the agreement so happily established between them, and jointly to affirm afresh the common interest which they take in the improvement of the condition of the Christian populations of Turkey, and in the reforms to be introduced in Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Bulgaria, which the Porte has accepted on condition of itself carrying them into execution.

"They take cognizance of the conclusion of peace with Servia.

"As regards Montenegro, the powers consider the rectification of the frontiers and the free navigation of the Boïana to be desirable in the interest of a solid and durable arrangement.

"The powers consider the arrangements concluded, or to be concluded, between the Porte and the two principalities, as a step accomplished towards the pacification which is the object of their common wishes.

"They invite the Porte to consolidate it by replacing its armies on a peace footing, excepting the number of troops indispensable for the maintenance of order, and by putting in hand, with the least possible delay, the reforms necessary for the tranquillity and well-being of the provinces, the condition of which was discussed at the conference. They recognise that the Porte has declared itself ready to realise an important portion of them.

"They take cognizance specially of the circular of the Porte of the 13th of February, 1876, and of the declarations made by the Ottoman government during the conference and since, through its representatives.

"In view of these good intentions on the part of the Porte, and of its evident interest to carry them immediately into effect, the powers believe that they have grounds for hoping that the Porte will profit by the present lull to apply energetically such measures as will cause that effective improvement in the condition of the Christian populations which is unanimously called for as indispensable to the tranquillity of Europe, and that having once entered on this path, it will understand that it concerns its honour as well as its interests to persevere in it loyally and efficaciously.

"The powers propose to watch carefully, by means of their representatives at Constantinople and their local agents, the manner in which the promises of the Ottoman government are carried into effect.

"If their hopes should once more be disappointed, and if the condition of the Christian subjects of the Sultan should not be improved in a manner to prevent the return of the complications which periodically disturb the peace of the East, they think it right to declare that such a state of affairs would be incompatible with their interests and those of Europe in general. In such case they reserve to themselves to consider, in common, as to the means which they may deem best fitted to secure the well-being of the Christian populations, and the interests of the general peace."

This protocol was signed, on March 31, by the representatives of the six powers, and was accompanied by an annexe, to the effect that if the disarmament should not take place, the instrument was to be considered null and void. This declaration, which was supposed to be kept secret, was communicated to the Porte together with the protocol, to which they were requested to give immediate attention. It soon became evident that the Porte was disinclined to yield an inch; and Prince Gortschakoff informed Lord Loftus, on April 6, that, in regard to the intentions of the Porte, the intelligence received from the Russian

TURKEY in EUROPE



THE BOSPHORUS AND CONSTANTINOPLE



ALI PASHA



GREEK CALOYER

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chargé d'affaires was not satisfactory. The Porte had received information of the protocol, as also of the declarations annexed to it. He regretted that Lord Derby's declaration should have been known to the Porte, as he feared that it might encourage its resistance to the protocol, and thus neutralise the good effect which it might otherwise have produced. He then added, in an earnest and decided tone, that if the Porte should reply verbally or in unsatisfactory or evasive language, the imperial government would consider the period of negotiations as closed, and the time for military action arrived. It was impossible, said the prince, for Russia to incur any longer the heavy pecuniary sacrifices which she was now bearing. The mobilisation cost her 750,000 roubles daily, and it had continued for several months. Russia would not, therefore, consent to renew the thread of negotiations, which might be dragged on for months, to end only in a profitless result. Finally, he concluded, they had arrived at the eleventh hour, that it was a question of days, and that a decision one way or the other must be taken by the 13th of April. He stated that the emperor could make no further concessions, and that his majesty would not recede from the position he had taken. The answer, therefore, of the Porte was of the most vital importance, as on it would depend the question of peace or war.

This answer came on April 9th, in the shape of a long despatch, which was summed up as follows:—

"Strong in the justice of her cause, and with confidence in God, Turkey declares that she ignores what may have been decided without her and against her. Determined to keep the place which Providence has destined her for, she will not cease to oppose to the attacks which are directed against her, the general principles of international right, and the authority of a great European compact which binds the honour of the signatory powers of the protocol of the 31st of March, which last document has no legal validity in her eyes. She appeals to the conscience of the cabinets, which she is justified in considering as animated towards her with the same sentiments of equity and friendship as in the past."

All hopes of peace disappeared with this reply, and, on April 23rd, the Czar, after reviewing his troops at Kishineff, addressed to them the following words:—

"I have done everything in my power to avoid war and bloodshed. Nobody can say that we have not been patient, or that the war is of our seeking. We have practised patience to the last degree; but there comes a time when even patience must end."

On the next day, April 24th, a manifesto was published, of which the following is a reproduction:—

"Our faithful and beloved subjects know the strong interest which we have constantly felt in the destinies of the oppressed Christian population of Turkey. Our desire to ameliorate and assure their lot has been shared by the whole Russian nation, which now shows itself ready to bear fresh sacrifices to alleviate the position of the Christians of the Balkan Peninsula. The blood and the property of our faithful subjects have always been dear to us, and our whole reign attests our constant solicitude to preserve to Russia the benefits of peace. This solicitude never failed to actuate us during the deplorable events which occurred in Herzegovina, Bosnia, and Bulgaria. Our object before all was to effect an amelioration in the position of the Christians in the East; but having now exhausted our pacific efforts, we are compelled, by the haughty obstinacy of the Porte, to proceed to more decisive acts. A feeling of equity and of our own dignity enjoins it. By her refusal Turkey places us under the necessity of having recourse to arms. Profoundly convinced of the justice of our cause, and humbly committing ourselves to the grace and help of the Most High, we make known to our faithful subjects that the moment foreseen, when we pronounced words to which all Russia responded with such complete unanimity, has now arrived. We expressed the intention to act independently when we should deem it necessary, and when Russia's honour should demand it. In now invoking the blessing of God upon our valiant armies, we give the order to cross the Turkish frontier."

War was thus declared, and with that step the treaty of Paris and the result of the Crimean war openly overthrown by Russia. Such was the end of the Constantinople conference; such the result of the vacillating, invertebrate policy of the British cabinet. They would neither actively intervene to insist upon peace being preserved, neither would they engage in war to enforce the observance of a treaty which had been imposed upon Russia twenty years before.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MARCH ON THE DANUBE.

ALMOST until the Russian troops had crossed the frontier, there was a very prevalent opinion that the Czar had no intention of really proceeding to extremities. It was thought in many circles that the Russian commanders merely intended to make a demonstration, and to endeavour to overawe the Turks into compliance with the demands made at the Constantinople conference.

But military men, and above all those who had been at Kishineff, and had an opportunity of seeing to what an extent the Russian preparations had been carried out, were fully convinced that Russia, from the very first, fully intended to carry out her programme by force of arms.

Least of all taken by surprise was Roumania. This country certainly was in a peculiar position. Lying between the two hostile armies, it had the choice of remaining neutral or of joining the ranks of one of the two combatants. As to the international duty of the country, it was perfectly plain. By the convention of August 19th, 1858, at the conference of Paris, which had clearly defined the position of Moldavia and Wallachia, Roumania was placed under the supremacy of the Porte, and formed a portion of the Turkish empire. But the Turkish government had completely alienated the Roumanians in consequence of the impediments which had been always opposed to the free development of the country, by the refusal to allow Roumania to conclude commercial treaties, and by vexatious frontier legislation for the benefit of the Turkish pashas in Bulgaria, who managed to get the laws passed by their friends in Constantinople in order to gain bakshish by allowing them to be evaded by those who paid for the privilege. There was thus no love for the Turks; and, besides, if they allied themselves with the Porte, they would have Russia for an enemy, Roumania would become the battle-field for the hostile armies, and, whether Turkey won or lost, there would have been nothing for Roumania to gain. On the other hand, by allying themselves with Russia, the battle-field would be transferred into Bulgaria—in itself no small advantage—and there was no doubt that, at the least, their independence would be the smallest reward for their help. Neutrality would probably have been the best course to adopt; for, in case of any territorial changes on the Danube, it was certain that Roumania would not be forgotten by the powers at the conclusion of peace; and the country would have been spared much odium by refusing to join in the bull-baiting to which Turkey was being subjected on all sides.

It soon became clear, however, that Roumania did not intend to observe any real neutrality. Opportunity was at once taken to protest against Roumania being subjected to the new constitution which had been promulgated in Turkey, and according to which all the subjects of the Porte were to be henceforth known as "Ottomans." After much deliberation and negotiation, the Porte at last declared that the new constitution did not apply to Roumania, the relations of which to the Porte remained the same as heretofore.

Under these circumstances there was no valid reason for Roumania openly to declare war against Turkey by an offensive and defensive alliance with Russia; and thus, on April 16th, 1877, the Roumanian minister, Cogalniceanu, addressed a circular to the powers, in which he asserted the intention of Roumania to observe strict neutrality, to preserve peace, and injure no national interest whatever.

On the same day, however, the Russo-Roumanian convention was concluded. The Russian armies were to be allowed free transit through the country; the railways, rivers, roads, post, telegraph, and all the material resources of the country to be placed at the disposal of the Russian commanders, who were also to have the right to establish reserves at any point, except Bucharest, in the rear of the active army; and to take all necessary measures to ensure their communications with their basis of operations east of the Pruth.

This convention, though scarcely amounting technically to an alliance, would certainly be regarded as such by the Turks;

and measures had therefore to be taken to provide against a *coup-de-main* on the part of the Turkish commanders on the Danube. Consequently, two days later, on April 18th, 10,000 men were called out to concentrate at Bucharest, which is only a few miles from the Danube; and on April 20th, Prince Charles issued a decree for the immediate mobilisation of the standing army, the militia, and the reserves. At the same time a considerable portion of the army and eighty cannon were sent to Kalafat, opposite Widdin, where the Russians had received so disastrous a check during the Crimean war.

These military preparations, of course, led to inquiries by the Porte as to their object; and at the same time Safvet Pasha called upon Prince Charles to take up arms and concert measures with the Turkish commanders to repel the impending invasion of the Russians. To this Cogalniceanu replied, that the decision of the question, whether Roumania should take part in the war or remain neutral, was for the chamber to pronounce; but that, in any case, the entry of Turkish troops would be opposed.

On April 26th, Prince Charles opened the chamber, and said that, as all his endeavours to induce the powers to acknowledge the right of Roumania to remain neutral had been fruitless, all that he could now do was to prevent Roumania from becoming the seat of war. The powers had not protested against the entry of the Russian troops, and thus Roumania had to look after her own interests. Hereupon the convention with Russia was ratified by the chamber with seventy-nine votes against twenty-five, and in the senate with forty-one against ten.

Roumania thus practically declared war to Turkey, and Prince Charles himself took the command-in-chief of the army, which consisted of 38,000 infantry, 8,200 cavalry, and 120 cannon. The condition of the army was excellent; the infantry was well armed, and the artillery consisted entirely of Krupp guns. The army was divided into two army corps, each consisting of two divisions. The chief of the general staff was General Slaniceanu; the commander of the first corps, General Lupu, and of the second, General Radovici. Abandoning the eastern portion of the country to the Russian army, the Roumanian troops occupied the western portion between Krajova and Kalafat, where they remained on the defensive until the beginning of September.

Meantime, on April 24th, the same day that war was declared, the Russian army crossed the frontier. Six *corps d'armée*, the 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th, had been collected on the Pruth under Generals Prince Barclay de Tolly, Radetzki, Krüdener, Prince Woronzoff, Prince Schahkoffskoi, and Wanoffski. Commander-in-chief was the Grand Duke Nicholas, who had chosen General Niepokoitschitzki for his chief of the staff, assisted by General Levitzki.

General Niepokoitschitzki was a short, square-set, but active-looking man, hale and hearty, and, in spite of his seventy years, looked as fit to make a campaign as if he were twenty years younger. Of German extraction, his original name, *Unruh*, was translated into its Polish equivalent, signifying "restlessness"—a name, by the way, singularly inappropriate, for General Niepokoitschitzski was a man of the most placid manner, and the equanimity of his temper proverbial among the officers who had served under him. A classical captain asserted that he very felicitously combined the *suaviter in modo* with the *fortiter in re*. His hair, whiskers, and moustache were snow-white; but there was a flush of hale colour on his cheek; his eye was not dim, neither was his natural force abated. He wore a simple undress uniform, with the aiguillettes which distinguish the staff officer, and his only decoration was the cross of St. George.

The general had seen more service than most of the Russian leaders, and his experience of staff duty in particular had been long and continuous. He joined the army as an infantry officer, and first saw active service in the Caucasus, where his merit was so conspicuous that he speedily received a staff appointment. He held an important and responsible office on the general staff in the army which Russia sent to co-operate with Austria in quelling the Austrian insurrection of 1849; and in the Crimean war, or rather in the war which we know conventionally by that name, he was chief of staff to one of the corps composing the army with which Gortschakoff occupied the principalities, and took part, under Paskiewitch, in the memorable siege of Silistria. Since 1855 he had seen no active service, but had been continually in military employment of one sort or other,

and was chosen chief of the staff of the army of the south, because of his acquaintance with the region of the Danubian valley, derived from his experience in the campaign of 1854.

General Levitzki had seen no active service, and was a professor at the military academy; so that both he and his superior were but little more than theorists as far as the science of war since 1856—'58 was concerned—a drawback which was destined to make itself most conspicuous.

Of the men who had seen active service in all its phases, there were few who had had the experience of General Skobeloff, a tall, handsome man, with a lithe, slender, active figure, a clear blue eye, and a large, prominent, but straight, well-shaped nose, the kind of nose it is said Napoleon used to look for among his officers when he wished to find a general, and a face young enough for a second lieutenant although he was a general—the youngest in the Russian army. He made his name famous in Khiva, under General Kauffmann, when he was only a colonel. It will be remembered that, of the five columns which marched on Khiva, only four arrived, and that one (that of Colonel Markosoff) was obliged to turn back in the middle of the desert for want of water. Kauffmann wished to know whether it would be possible for Markosoff to reach Khiva by that route; but the Turkomans with whom he had been fighting had all fled in that direction, and to have explored the route in question with safety, it would have been necessary to employ a strong column, which Kauffmann did not think the matter justified. The only other alternative was for a small party to make the attempt at the risk of falling into the hands of the Turkomans. This Colonel Skobeloff volunteered to do. Taking three friendly Turkomans with him, and disguising himself also as a Turkoman, he started on his perilous journey. He did not return for ten days, when he suddenly turned up at Khiva the day before Kauffmann evacuated the town, after having explored the way to the point at which Markosoff had turned back, measured the depth of the wells, ascertained the amount of water they could supply, and proved that the route was practicable. But Skobeloff's most daring feat was his attack upon the Khokandians, some 7,000 to 8,000 strong, when they were following the Russians, after they had evacuated Namagan. The Russian column numbered only 800 men, with about 400 Cossacks; they had still three days' march to the frontier, and had only fifteen cartridges per man for the infantry, and three cartridges a head for the Cossacks. Under these circumstances General Trotski decided to venture a night attack, and confided his plan to Skobeloff, who was his chief of the staff. Skobeloff at once caught eagerly at the idea, and offered to lead the attack himself; but going on the principle that a night attack should rather be intended to terrify the enemy than to inflict much material harm, he decided to take only 150 Cossacks for the attack. Skobeloff having reconnoitred the ground, perceived that the Khokandians had encamped within a mile and a-half of the Russians, in an open plain, which gave every facility for the manœuvring of cavalry. At midnight he took his 150 Cossacks, divided them into three parties, and cautiously surrounded the enemy's camp. The party led by Skobeloff himself managed to pass the enemy's outposts, who were sound asleep. Then he gave the signal for the attack by firing his pistol, and, followed by his 150 Cossacks, he rode headlong into the enemy's camp of six or seven thousand men, shouting and yelling like fiends, and cutting down everything in their passage.

The effect was tremendous. For a quarter of an hour the plain resounded with shrieks and yells, shots, the trampling of horses, shouts, and groans, and all the uproar of battle. Then all was silence. Skobeloff assembled his Cossacks, and when morning came he found that the whole army of the enemy had disappeared, leaving on the field about 40 dead, 37 standards, 2,000 turbans, 2,000 or 3,000 muskets and sabres, all their camp material and baggage. But what was his astonishment, on calling the roll, to discover that he had not lost a man either killed or wounded. For a small affair it was one of the most brilliant feats ever recorded, for it inflicted a most disastrous defeat on the enemy, saved the Russian detachment, and enabled it to reach the frontier and its base in safety. These kinds of exploits obtained for Skobeloff the reputation, even among the Russians, of being a kind of madman, who would fling away his own life, and those of his troops, without the slightest regard to consequences. General Skobeloff felt rather indignant at this view of his character, and it did him a great injustice, for there was

method in his madness, or rather what at first appeared madness. For instance, attacking 7,000 men with 150 was, as he said, not only not madness, but a reasonable, well-conceived plan, with the requisite number of chances on the side of the attacking party, and one that must have had the approval of all military men. His explanation was as follows:—Irregular troops, even of the very bravest and best, are peculiarly subject to panics when attacked unexpectedly or from an unlooked-for quarter. Now, anybody who has experienced it knows that a night attack is a most terrible and nerve-shaking thing for the army attacked, even when composed of regular troops. For irregular troops it is certain destruction and defeat, if the attacking party can penetrate their lines before they have time to get fairly awake, as in the present case. As to the small number of troops taken by Skobeloff for this attack, he says that the object of his attack was not so much the hope of cutting the enemy to pieces, as to strike terror among them and create a panic; and for this purpose 150 Cossacks in the night, when their number could not be seen, were quite sufficient, as they could make as much noise and produce as great an effect as ten times their number; while a small party was less liable to confusion, and to the danger of killing each other—the great danger of a night attack for the attacking party; and finally, if they did not succeed, and should all be killed, an eventuality also to be taken into account, the loss would be small, and such as not to seriously weaken the detachment. It will be seen, therefore, it was not such a mad business after all; and the result proved Skobeloff had really calculated the chances as any prudent general would do, and simply found that they were on his side. Although the new Khan of Khokand, after this campaign, agreed to sign a new treaty of peace, the Russians had no sooner withdrawn from the country than he again opened hostilities, and Kauffmann found himself under the necessity of obtaining permission to conquer and annex the country; and this task he entrusted to Colonel Skobeloff, who, as commander of an independent army, was promoted to the rank of general. The task was accomplished with rapidity and skill, as may be readily understood when it is stated that when the khan surrendered to General Skobeloff, after a three months' campaign, nearly his first words were, "Before we begin to talk, let me sleep, for I have not had a night's rest nor a sound sleep for more than a month."

Of the other generals on the Danube, Dragomiroff, an accomplished strategist and tactician, and General Gourko, a dashing cavalry officer, were the only men who enjoyed a modern reputation. The order to cross the frontier having been given, it was carried out with apparent celerity at first. The various corps had been in position for weeks, and had only to lay their hands on the points in the immediate vicinity where all had been well prepared and there was no enemy to encounter. But the march on the Danube was executed with a delay and dilatoriness which soon cancelled the favourable impression caused by the promptitude with which the first movements were executed.

From Bessarabia there was but one single line of railway between Ungheni to Jassy, whence it turns southwards to Bucharest, *viâ* Barboschi, where it crosses the Sereth. In consequence of the rains, this railway, constructed originally in a very flimsy fashion, was not safe at many points, and the roads were also in a very bad state. These impediments might have been considerably increased by the Turks had they destroyed the bridge over the Sereth at Barboschi before the arrival of the Russian troops. The despatch of a few of the monitors of the Turkish Danube flotilla would have amply sufficed to overpower the Roumanian garrison at Galatz, and to have completely destroyed the bridge, which was only thirty kilometres distant from Matchin, where the Turkish flotilla was stationed. The Turks, however, acting upon their old traditions, and refusing to believe that they had in a very large measure forfeited the sympathies of Europe, still reckoned upon these sympathies, and imagined that by strictly confining themselves to defensive measures, they would still further secure these sympathies and cast still more odium upon the aggressive policy of Russia. Acting on this principle throughout, and feeling certain that, sooner or later, they would succeed in gaining the assistance of one or more of the Western powers, they neglected, on hundreds of occasions, to make use of the opportunities literally thrown at their feet.

The Russians, however, were unfettered by any such considerations, and let no scru-

ples stand in their way. Thus General Skobeloff, with his cavalry, accomplished the march in one day from the frontier to Barboschi, where he immediately seized the bridge, and held it until the infantry and artillery came up, and definitely secured this most important point. This being accomplished, the Russian troops slowly, but deliberately, began to spread themselves out along the Danube without any hurry or confusion, without any molestation from the Turks. This behaviour of the Turkish commanders is below criticism. They had a powerful fleet in the Black Sea, and a strong flotilla on the Danube; whilst the Russian naval force in the Black Sea was still in embryo, and the Baltic fleet was useless, as it could not force the Dardanelles. Yet, in spite of all this, the Turkish fleet accomplished nothing, and did little more than common transport service, which could have been done cheaper and quicker by ordinary merchant vessels. As for the Danube flotilla, the men and officers seemed panic-stricken by the energy with which the Russian commanders erected batteries and laid torpedoes in the river, at Reni, below Galatz, and at the entrance of the arm of the Danube, between Braila and Matchin, where the Turkish fleet rode at anchor, and, by this operation, was literally caught in a trap. On May 11th, one of these vessels, the *Lutfi Djelil*, an ironclad monitor with five guns, steamed out from Matchin, followed by two gun-boats, and at half-past three was stationary under cover of the wooded end of the island, with its three masts visible above the trees. The Russian gunners from the batteries close to Braila, below the Roumanian barracks, opened fire from their light guns, the range being about four kilometres, but without effect. The general officer present then gave directions for two eight-inch guns of position, mounted in the battery, to come into action. The first shot had no effect. The second shot, fired at a high elevation with a low charge, dropped on the deck of the turret-ship, and crushed down into the powder magazine. Immediately a tremendous flash and glare shot up from the interior of the doomed craft, followed by a heavy white smoke which hung like a pall. Through this white cloud there shot up to a great height a spurt of black fragments of all shapes and sizes. When the smoke drifted away, all that was visible of the turret-ship was her stern, with the mizen-mast standing, whence still fluttered the Turkish flag. The ship had gone down by the head in shallow water. The fore and main masts were blown out at once. Two Russian steam-launches put off from Braila, boarded the wreck, gained the flag, gathered some of the *débris*, and picked up only two men, the fireman and the engineer, both severely injured, out of a crew of 200 men, under the command of Kezim Bey. Fragments of the wreckage were picked up down the stream at Galatz. The Russian enthusiasm in the battery was intense, and the officers embraced each other, whilst the Turkish gun-boats hurried away abruptly on the explosion of the turret-ship; but returned an hour later, and fired on the Russian launches engaged in looting the ship as much as possible.

This was a severe blow to the efficiency of the Turkish fleet; but the Turks and their friends consoled themselves with the assertion, or belief, that the destruction of so powerful a vessel was due to accident. But a fortnight later they experienced a second disaster. The naval officers and sailors who had been sent down to the Danube from the Baltic were fired by the ambition to outdo their comrades of the line, and make an attack on the Turkish vessels with their torpedoes. With this object an expedition was arranged, consisting of four small steam-launches, two of which were to make the attack, and the two others to hold themselves in readiness to render assistance in case, as was probable, of an accident to either of the attacking ones. The two launches which were to make the attack were commanded by Lieutenants Dubasoff and Shestakoff, and manned, one by fourteen, the other by nine men. The crews were protected by an iron screen or awning, which covered the boat completely over from stem to stern, and which was sufficiently thick to stop a bullet. This screen, as well as the boat, was painted black, so as to be scarcely distinguishable at night, and the crew were thus protected against the fire of small arms, except the man at the wheel, who directed the movements of the boat, and who was necessarily exposed. The crews embarked in the boats a little after twelve o'clock on Friday night, May 25th, at a distance of about seven miles from where the Turkish monitors were lying. The night was dark and rainy, and the clouds completely obscured the moon, which nevertheless prevented the night

from being one of complete pitchy darkness. There was just enough light to enable them to distinguish the dark masses of the Turkish gun-boats without themselves being easily seen. After an hour's steaming they came within the immediate neighbourhood of the enemy's flotilla. The engines of the launches were so constructed as to make very little noise, and when they were slowed down all the sound they made was a low dull kind of throbbing noise that was almost drowned by the continual croaking of the frogs, which are very large and very numerous along the marshes of the Danube. Nevertheless, the quick ear of a Turkish sentinel caught the unusual sound, and he cried out, "Who goes there?" in Turkish. The boats advanced without replying The sentinel again called out, and again remained without an answer. He called out the third time, and as it was becoming evident that the ship would be alarmed, Lieutenant Dubasoff replied, in Turkish, "Friends!" and continued to advance. The sentinel, however, was by no means satisfied, and after calling out again two or three times, he finally fired. Then the Russians, who were by that time very near the doomed monitor, heard a noise in the ship. There was a scuffling of feet, the rushing about of sailors, cries and shouts, and the voice of an officer commanding them to prepare the guns for action. They heard the order given for the gun in the bow to be fired. They heard it given three times, and three times they heard the click of the hammer, showing that an attempt had been made to fire, and that the gun had refused to go off. Finally, the third time the order was given, a globe of flame leaped over the side of the gun-boat, and a shell went whistling over their heads. They were evidently seen by the Turks. One of the boats, that of Shestakoff, then drew off, while that of Dubasoff continued to advance. Each boat was armed with two torpedoes, attached to the end of a long spar that projected from the bow. These spars were arranged to move on pivots, and could be swung round so as to describe a half-circle. The torpedoes were so placed that they could be detached from the spars at any moment; and, in addition to this, long light chains were attached to them by which they were to be tied on any projecting part of the attacked ship, and they were connected with the boat by a fine flexible wire about 100 yards long. The officer in command manipulated a small electric battery, carried in the boat. A lively fusilade had by this time been opened upon the boat by the Turks; but in spite of this, the launch of Dubasoff shot under the bow of the monitor, the chain which was fastened to the torpedo was flung round a chain or rope that was hanging from the bow of the ship, the torpedo was dropped from the spar, and the current of the river carried it against the bottom of the ship. The launch then shot away again until the full length of the electric wire had been reached. The officer applied it to the battery in the boat, and at the same instant a huge volume of water rose up into the air, which half filled and nearly swamped Dubasoff's launch, and a fearful explosion was heard, which completely drowned the shouts and cries and firing of the Turks. In the meantime the other monitors became alarmed, and, without knowing the cause, fired at random, and a fearful scene of terror and confusion ensued. They not only fired on the Russian launches, that still kept dodging about like mosquitoes, but in their panic and confusion fired into each other. The bullets rattled over the iron awnings of the launches, but did them no harm. They were not once struck, although the bow of one was pierced by a piece of a shell that exploded near it. The two launches were now on opposite sides of the doomed ship. Dubasoff perceived that the monitor was sinking down by the head, but very slowly; while the Turks continued to fire away blindly, but incessantly, both with small arms and cannon. Dubasoff cried out to Shestakoff to try and place another torpedo in order to make sure of the ship, and the latter slipped in under the stern and put down another torpedo in the same manner as the previous one. He then shot off until he was at a safe distance, applied the electric battery in the same manner, and a still more terrible explosion followed. Parts of the ship were blown into the air, as was very soon perceived when a large plank a few seconds later came down endways, driving its way through the iron screen into the boat, between two of the sailors who were back to back close to each other, without injuring either of them. Then the monitor sank rapidly, and after a few moments nothing but her masts were visible above water. The crew had all either been drowned or had escaped by swimming. Day now began to break, and

the position of the two little launches within the near range of two other Turkish monitors became very critical. To add to the danger of the situation, the screw of one of them got fouled, and the boat became unmanageable; while they perceived a Turkish launch from one of the other monitors bearing down on them. They opened a fire of small arms on the Turkish launch, which veered off and showed no disposition to come any closer. One of the sailors got out into the water, and after several minutes' exertion succeeded in clearing the screw, and the two launches, having accomplished their mission of destruction, darted off, passed under the fire of the two other Turkish gun-boats, escaped unharmed, and, rejoining their two consorts, returned in triumph to their place of starting. The grand duke received the news within two or three hours after, and the rejoicing among the Russians was very great; the two officers and the crews of the two boats all receiving the Cross of St. George in reward for their daring exploit.

Within a month, therefore, the Russians had accomplished all that it was possible to do. They had seized the Lower Danube, and imprisoned and partially destroyed the Turkish flotilla in the river, which was still sixteen feet above its normal height, and prevented the construction of bridges between the two banks. This is a fact which must be well borne in mind when judging the campaign. It was generally lost sight of during the commencement of hostilities—an error which gave rise to the unfounded belief that the Russians were unprepared, and had neglected many important precautions. Anybody who knows the course of the Lower Danube, with its stretches of muddy, swampy banks, especially on the Roumanian side, will not be surprised that the unusual height of the river, and its long duration, materially impeded operations.

In the meantime the Russian troops were being placed in position, and on June 6th, when everything was reported to be in readiness for the passage of the river, the Czar, accompanied by Prince Gortschakoff and a numerous suite, arrived at Ploesti, north of Bucharest, where the Grand Duke Nicholas had taken up his quarters, where, on May 8th, he issued orders for the mobilisation of three more army corps, thus bringing up the total in Europe to nine corps. Of these nine corps, seven were set up on the Danube; whilst two, the 7th and 10th, occupied the coast between Odessa and the Crimea. By the middle of June, the disposition of the troops was as follows:—The 14th corps occupied the line between Galatz and Braila; the 11th was concentrated at Oltenitza and Giurgevo; the 8th at Zimnitza; the 9th at Turn-Magurelli; whilst the 12th, 13th, and 14th formed the second line at Saleasa, Alexandria, and Bucharest.

This disposition of the troops, which was quite well known to the Turks, pointed to an intention to effect the passage of the river between Zimnitza and Turn-Magurelli; and that being the case, the general plan of the Russian advance was easily foreseen, especially when the position of the Roumanian troops was also taken into account.

It was clear that the invading armies had been so disposed that Prince Charles and the Roumanians were to form the right wing of the advance; that the 8th corps, under General Radetzki, and the 9th, under General Krüdener, were to form the centre; and the 14th corps, under General Zimmermann, formed the left wing.

The object of this disposition was to allow the two wings to engage the enemy so as to leave the passage free for the centre to push on to the Balkans, spreading out right and left till it was able to take the Turks between it and the two wings.

The 8th and 9th corps were to lead the attack; the 12th was to protect the right flank of the advance, in conjunction with the Roumanians, against Osman Pasha at Widdin; and the 4th, acting with the 12th, was to protect the left flank of the advance, whilst the 14th harassed the rear of the Turkish positions in the Quadrilateral—at Rustzuk, Schumla, Silistria, and Varna. Strictly carried out, and barring any great mistakes, this plan had everything to recommend it, and most military men predicted for it a complete success, unless the Turks should take a vigorous offensive. Had the Turkish commanders been able to do this—had they thrown their armies across the Danube on either flank of the Russian armies, the course of the war might have been materially altered. Such action might have afforded them some chances of success; and, at any rate, they would have gained an additional line of defence—the Danube—which, as matters stood, was really no line of defence at all, but, on the contrary, a source of weakness.

But Abdul Kerim Pasha, who was entrusted with the command-in-chief of the armies in Bulgaria, distinguished himself only by endless faults of omission rather than commission, but which, in the face of an enemy like the Russians, could not but end disastrously; for though he might entail serious losses upon them, still, as they had practically an inexhaustible supply to draw from, the loss of a few thousand men, more or less, could have no lasting influence on the course of the campaign.

His mistake in allowing the Russians to seize the Barboschi bridge we have already alluded to. From Hirsova, or Matchin, he could easily have so destroyed the railway, and harassed the Russian communications with Kishineff, as to have materially hindered their operations. Operating from Widdin, he could easily have taken Kalafat, and left to Osman Pasha the task of advancing to the Aluta, as Omar Pasha did in 1853. Servia was then not in a state to take any decisive action, and might well have been disregarded. But for all this Abdul Kerim did nothing, though he was repeatedly warned by Blum Pasha, a Prussian engineer in the service of the Porte. To all counsellors he replied that he had a "secret plan," an infallible plan, and that if the Russians should attempt to cross the Danube, they would be *ecrasés*—crushed.

Doubtless, Abdul Kerim's wonderful plan was simply to allow the Russian centre to cross the Danube, and, trusting to Widdin and the Quadrilateral to cover the rear of his own and Osman Pasha's armies, to fold up the Russians with them, and drive them back across the river. Had the Turkish armies possessed any mobility worth speaking of, this plan might have succeeded; but without any of the appliances necessary for the rapid movements of an army, it was predoomed to failure. As it was, the Turks were concentrated in three centres—at Schumla and in the Quadrilateral with about 80,000 men; at Widdin with about 40,000; and south of the Balkans with about 30,000 men. These were regulars. In addition there were a number of irregulars attached to the regulars, of whom there are not even now any reliable figures to be had. But the total of men which the Turks had to oppose to the Russians may be put down in round figures at about 160,000. They were all well-armed and well supplied with ammunition.

Everything was ready, on the Russian side, for the advance by June 6th; and so confident were the Russian leaders of gaining a speedy victory, that on the 8th Count Schouvaloff had an interview with Lord Derby to arrange matters in case the Russians should force their way across the Balkans, and to provide, in that case, for a basis of peace. The answer to this was that England would be obliged to consult her own interests should Constantinople be threatened by the Russian armies; and he also refused to tender any advice to the Porte to the effect that they should yield at the last moment to the demands of the Constantinople conference, as about to be enforced by Russia, and under pressure of the Russian armies.

All hopes of a peaceful solution were herewith destroyed. Diplomacy had arrived at the end of its task, and the future was left to the decision of arms.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FIRST PASSAGE OF THE DANUBE.

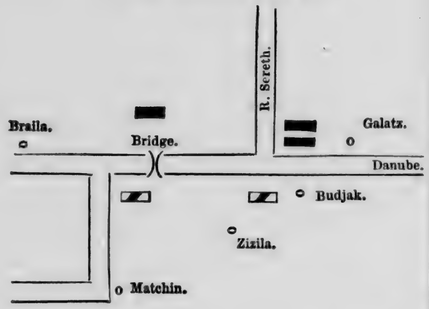
As soon as the Danube had sufficiently fallen, General Zimmermann received orders to cross the river. The *gros* of his troops lay between Braila and the mouth of the river Sereth, where a bridge had been constructed across the river, with the exception of the finishing trestle portion across the muddy flats left bare by the receding waters. This bridge had been constructed in full view of the Turkish garrison and troops at Matchin without any serious molestation, and it was universally assumed—and with reason—that by this bridge the Russians would pass over into the Dobrudja.

On June 20th, however, General Zimmermann proceeded to Galatz, and brought down two regiments to a point between

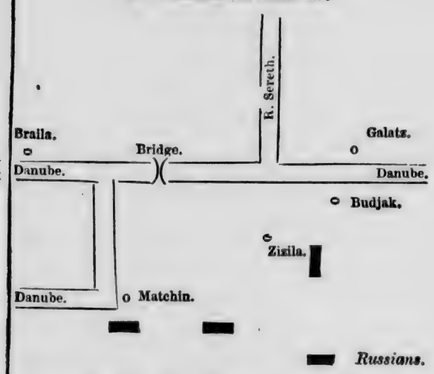
Galatz and the mouth of the Sereth, opposite the Turkish village of Budjak, where, on the neighbouring heights, the Turks had taken up a position in small numbers.

The position on June 20th was as is shown in the annexed sketch A.

A—*Position on June* 20.



B—*Position on June* 28.



The *gros* of the 14th corps was concentrated near Braila, at the head of the bridge; two regiments were between Galatz and the Sereth; whilst the Turks had taken up a position in force and in ambush near the Turkish head of the bridge, on the road leading to Matchin; and a small force occupied the heights of Budjak.

During the night of June 21st to June 22nd, General Zimmermann ordered the Rjasan regiment (Count Moltke's regiment) to cross the river in open boats. This was done, and, after several hours' fighting, the Turks were obliged to evacuate the heights and fall back upon Matchin. The next day, June 22nd, the second regiment crossed the river, whereby the Turkish position at Matchin was turned, and occupied on June 23rd by General Zimmermann, who then had the bridge completed, and brought the rest of his troops across without further opposition. By June 28th the position was as is shown in the annexed sketch B.

With these sketches before him, the reader will be able fully to understand the detailed account of the passages.

The news that the Russians had already crossed the river arrived at Braila at 5 A.M., when the inhabitants were already on the alert, gathering in crowds on the river bank, to watch the fight that was going on at the other side of the valley, which could be followed very distinctly by the smoke and the firing. The scene was a most interesting and animated one. The left bank of the Danube, at Braila, is thirty or forty feet high. Below lay the river gleaming brightly in the sunshine, covered with boats, ships, steamers, and barges, which were unable to escape during the time of grace that was allowed to them after the declaration of war, and which the Russians seized and turned to account for military operations. Further down was the bridge, lying low upon the water, stretching far across the wide, swiftly rolling stream, and losing itself apparently among the marshes and reeds on the other side; beyond were marshes, trees, brushwood, tall grass, waving reeds, and rushes, through which could be seen everywhere the gleam of water, showing that the whole valley was still submerged; still further in the distance, and nearly ten miles away, was the town of Matchin, lying at the foot of a mountain slope, with a confused mass of houses, and two tall white minarets rising from amongst them, and clearly defined against the low range of mountains beyond. Down the river, the water, growing broader and wider and deeper, spread over the entire valley, until it seemed to take the dimensions of a lake, where, in the far-off distance, lay Galatz, dim and indistinct in a luminous haze, looking like a mirage city in a mirage ocean. On that range of mountains running down from Matchin, in the direction of Galatz, puffs and long lines of white smoke rose up from the mountain side, and were borne away on the air in thin fleecy clouds. The dull, booming, heavy sound of cannon, a distant roar of artillery, and the continued and rattling crash of small

arms were borne towards Braila in a softened kind of roll on the still, sunny air. It was there that the battle was going on; the Russians were already on the other side, and were attacking the Turks.

General Zimmermann, as we have already said, had gone to Galatz, where he had collected a sufficient number of boats to carry over about 1,800 men at a time, and at daybreak on Friday, June 21st, that number of troops was embarked and started across on the perilous adventure. The distance to be traversed in boats was nearly three miles, and when land was finally reached it was not terra-firma at all, for the ground on the edge of the water was a mere marsh overgrown with reeds and rushes, with the water all over it, too shallow for boats, but deep enough to make the further progress most difficult on foot. It had been hoped that the boats might manage to cross two or three times before the Turks received warning; but the latter apparently had received correct information of the projected movement, and when the first boat-load of Russians arrived they met with a warm reception.

A glance at the sketches will show the Danube running in two separate channels from Hirsova to Braila. The old channel, the one on the right, makes a sharp turn just opposite Braila at Matchin, and runs at right angles with its former course, until it rejoins what is now the main stream, three or four hundred yards below Braila. It was just below the point where the two streams unite that the bridge had been constructed; the road from Matchin, running along the lower banks of the old channel, reaches the river at this point; and, in fact, the bridge had been built on the spot where the crossing is usually effected by means of a ferry. The whole valley of the Danube here, as well as this road, was still for the most part under water. Behind Matchin, supposing the observer to be standing at Braila, will be seen the range of mountains or hills extending from Matchin in the direction of Galatz, opposite which place they diminish to a low narrow point, or promontory, which, rising out of the water, appears to be considerably higher than it really is. It was just opposite this point that the Russians landed; and here the Turks were posted on the narrow range of hills, in front of the very spot which the Russians had chosen, and as soon as they came within range the Turks opened upon them a well-directed fire. They had only two pieces of artillery, however, and the Russians were sufficiently well protected by thick plank bulwarks that had been constructed on the side of the boats; and it was not until they began to disembark, and wade through the water knee-deep, that the fire of the Turks commenced to tell. Then the fight became a close and desperate one. The first 1,800 Russians who arrived were obliged to maintain themselves against a very superior number of Turks until the return of the boats with a second lot, by taking shelter wherever they could find it, by advancing part of the way up the heights and taking cover behind rocks, and otherwise availing themselves of every advantage which the ground offered. It is difficult to account for the fact that this inferior force of Russians was not overpowered and driven back into the water by the superior numbers of the Turks; but the fact is that they managed to hold their ground until they were reinforced by the return of the boats.

The hardest part of the fighting, and the greatest loss of the Russians, occurred at this time, and their position was a most critical and trying one, as they had absolutely no means of retreat; they had either to fight or to surrender. The Turks charged them with the bayonet, and the fight became a close and a hot one, though the small number engaged on both sides accounts for the small loss suffered by the Russians. Several Russians were killed and wounded by bayonets, and even the two or three hundred Turkish cavalry charged, or attempted to charge them, and some of the wounded had sabre-cuts, to show how close had been the contact with the daring Turkish horsemen. These latter were Circassians, and fought like tigers. They succeeded in isolating and surrounding an advanced detachment of some fifteen or twenty Russians, and cutting them off to the last man; and in spite of a fire that was poured in upon them, and which caused them very severe losses, they got down from their horses, the better to follow the enemy in the marshy ground. Even the Russians said that the Turks behaved with the utmost bravery and resolution; but as soon as the boats arrived with a second lot the tide of battle began to turn, and the Turks, from acting upon the offensive, were soon obliged to defend themselves. Altogether, two regiments, or about 6,000 Russians, crossed over in the morning with four pieces of

artillery, and the Turks began soon to give way. The Russian artillery, however, proved to be useless, owing to the nature of the ground, which was so marshy that it was impossible to bring the cannon into action until it was no longer needed. As soon as the two regiments had landed they began to push the Turks hard, and, climbing up the heights on both sides, soon succeeded in carrying them. But the Turks only retreated to the next hill, and again made a stand till they were pursued by the Russians, who, after driving them from hill to hill, at last gained the heights above Zizila, where the combat ceased, the Russians having lost 200 men in killed and wounded.

The Turks had only 3,000 men, with half a battery of artillery, and about 300 cavalry. The Russians advanced no further than Zizila on Friday; but it soon became evident that as soon as they wished to advance to Matchin they would meet with little or no resistance. About three o'clock the Turkish cavalry and artillery fell back from the last position, opposite the heights of Zizila, down the hill-side towards Matchin, at full gallop, and in the night, people coming over from that town informed the Russians that the Turks had abandoned the place, and during the night the Cossacks entered and took possession. Matchin was in the hands of the Russians, and the passage of the two army corps stationed about Braila was thus secured. Nothing further of any interest occurred during the night at Braila. The *cafés* and the restaurants, and the *café* concerts—for there is a *café* concert in every hotel—were full of people, Russian officers and inhabitants of the town, all discussing the events of the day. The streets were alive with people, the tread of troops marching through the town, on their way to the bridge, to begin the crossing as soon as the bridge was ready for the operation. There was, however, a good deal to be done before it could be made safe for the passage of large bodies of men or of heavy war materials; and in the meantime General Zimmermann, on his return from Galatz, took with him three steamers from Braila loaded with men, each steamer towing two barges, which were lashed one on each side of it. These barges were protected on the side opposite the steamer by huge wooden bulwarks, built up to the height of a man, with loopholes through them, quite thick and strong enough for protection against a bullet. But a shell striking them would have made sorry havoc among the men on board. Besides these three steamers and six barges, there were any number of small rowing-boats which had started some hours before. In all, General Zimmermann took over on this expedition about 2,000 men, with four pieces of artillery. No caution was used in coming up to the place, as Matchin was already full of Russian troops, and Russian sentinels were overlooking the town and the river, where only twenty hours before had been seen the Turks. As soon as the inhabitants saw the boats coming they formed into a procession, and came down to the shore to meet them with banners, holy pictures taken from the churches, and various other religious emblems. They were led by three priests and some other church dignitaries in full canonical robes, and chanting a hymn. General Zimmermann took off his cap and kissed the little wooden cross that was presented to him, while with a bunch of green leaves they splashed any amount of holy water over his head, and in fact almost drenched him. Each of those who followed were treated with the same copious shower-bath; and as the day was hot, and all were in a terrible perspiration, the ordeal was by no means an unpleasant one. The people then greeted their new friends with loud hurrahs, and marched after them, manifesting the most extravagant joy, especially the boys, whose delight was as unbounded as it was troublesome. Nevertheless, in spite of something that was grotesque about it, all this reception of the conquerors by the conquered, of the invaders by the invaded, had a profound political significance. These people, instead of looking upon the Russians as enemies, and conquerors, and invaders, and oppressors, hailed them with delight and satisfaction as their deliverers from a degrading and terrible bondage, which Europe had condoned and sustained too long. These same people would have hailed Englishmen with the same delight as the Russians, had English help but come in time.

The inhabitants remaining in Matchin were all Christians; the Turkish population, who were in a small minority, fled soon after the declaration of war, carrying away all their worldly goods. A great part of the inhabitants, too, were Russians,

of the sect known as the Old Believers, who emigrated from their own country, and settled here on the banks of the Danube more than a hundred years ago. They still speak Russian, and wear the costume of the Russian peasant; but they were by no means delighted at the arrival of their countrymen. The rest of the inhabitants were Bulgarians and Wallachians. The town had a strange, lonely, deserted, dilapidated look, partly owing to the fact that the houses formerly occupied by the Turkish population were quite untenanted, that the shops had not yet been opened after the previous day's scare, and partly because a Turkish town always has this dreary, tumble-down, unkempt appearance. Looking into the windows of many of the Turkish houses, one saw the empty, abandoned rooms which had so lately been inhabited, and which looked all the sadder and more melancholy because of the thought that came unconsciously into one's mind, that their owners would never come back again. The doors of the mosque were wide open as usual; but the floors, strewn with dirty matting, dust, and litter, showed that it had not been used for many weeks. The verses of the Koran were still written on bits of board or paper, and hung round the walls as though they were expecting the Mussulman worshippers of Allah back again; but high up in the minaret beside it, whence the mullah was wont to call all good Mohammedans to prayer, stood a Russian sentinel.

The Konak, the residence of the Kaimakan of Matchin, was rather a large, fine, well-looking house; but not a stick of furniture of any kind had been left; all had been carried off in the hurried flight of the Turks. The floor of nearly every room was almost a foot deep with papers written in Turkish, torn to pieces and trampled about on the floor. They were the archives of Matchin, the records of titles and deeds of probably all the property in the district. The Turks, it is well known, keep their archives and records on scraps of paper in bags that are hung on nails around the walls, and these papers had been emptied out here on the floor and destroyed for the sake of getting the bags in which they were contained. Everything, in fact, about the place looked as though the Turks themselves had gone away never expecting to come back again.

The Russian soldiers, however, found something which pleased them mightily. This was a room filled half-way up to the ceiling with tobacco, old, musty, and partly rotten, which they carried off in armfuls, like hay, with the greatest glee and satisfaction.

By June 26th, the bridge was completed. It was a fine piece of work, strong enough to carry over the heaviest artillery, and was evidently made to last a long time. The first 1,600 feet from the Roumanian shore was trestle-work, built along over the railway, which before the inundation ran down to the edge of the river, where it was met by the ferry-boat. Part of the railway had been swept away, and even that which remained was still under water, and the bridge some five feet higher than the railway track under it. The bridge was made of immense wooden trestles on benches, exceedingly strong and solid, put down on sleepers which lay along on the ground. Over this was laid a roadway of planks wide enough for one waggon or cannon to pass. At the end of this trestle-work came the bridge proper, not constructed on pontoons, but on immense rafts. The length of this part of the bridge was 1,750 feet, and there were fifty rafts in all. These rafts were composed of long pieces of beautiful timber, whole trunks of trees from 60 to 80 feet long and from 15 to 20 inches in diameter at the large end. Each raft was composed of eight to ten pieces solidly bolted and fastened together, and anchored with strong hemp cables to heavy iron anchors dropped in the bottom of the river. The roadway was laid over this, as over the trestles. At the Turkish end was formerly the village of Getchet, which is a village no more. It was a place of twenty-five or fifty houses, not one of which is left standing. It was first demolished by the Russian batteries to drive away the Turkish outpost that was stationed there; and when Captain Klemenka, the builder of the bridge, began his work, he found it necessary to continue the roadway to the other end, which was for the most part under water, in the best way he could. He simply used the *débris* and rubbish of these houses and walls to make a road, which was built right over the foundation of the houses. In no other way could he get a sufficiently solid foundation on which to build. The road, therefore, went zig-zagging about from house to house, with a piece of bridge here and a piece of trestle-

work there, pieced into the chaussée in the most curious manner. Altogether it was a most creditable piece of work so far, and did Captain Klemenka great honour. Across this bridge, then, General Zimmermann led the 14th corps into the Dobrudja, the Turks falling back as the Russians advanced without offering any serious resistance, and abandoning to them the towns of Isaktcha, Tuldscha, Babadagh, and Hirsova, until they had gained the line of Czernavoda-Kustendji and Trajan's Wall, which, however, they also surrendered after a short resistance, and abandoned it to General Zimmermann.

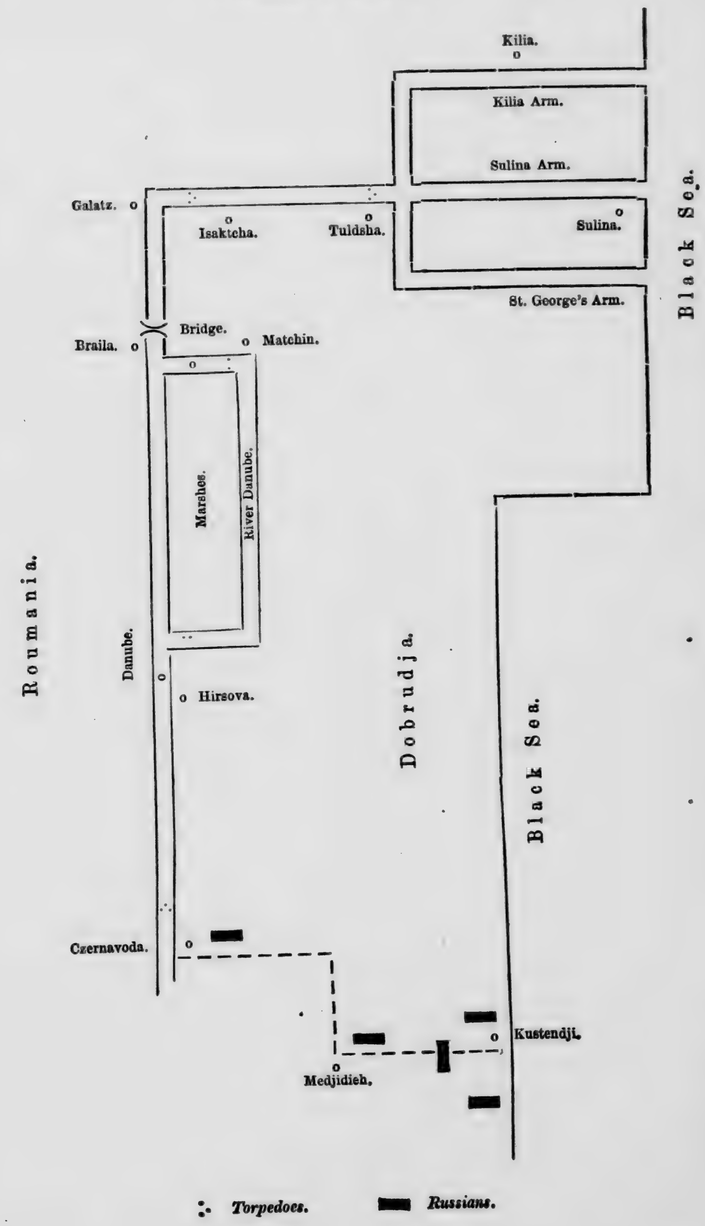
By this operation nearly the whole of the Dobrudja was in the hands of the Russians by July 19th, and the Turks effectually prevented from pouring in troops or ammunition by way of the Danube or Kustendji, had they even tried to do so; which, however, they did not, preferring to follow the example of Omar Pasha during the Crimean war, and endeavour to effect a diversion in the rear of the Russian army in the Caucasus and Asia Minor. This endeavour was as abortive as that of Omar Pasha's, and from similar causes. A reference to the following sketch C shows the position of the 14th corps under General Zimmermann on July 19. Trajan's Wall, Czernavoda, and Medjidieh, were in his hands, and Kustendji was effectually blockaded. Not only that, but the troops in the Quadrilateral were also prevented from advancing against the Russians before Rustzuk and on the Lom; so that although General Zimmermann was unable to acquire much glory on the field, he contributed in no small degree to the success of the Russian arms further west. To the operations in this direction we must now turn our attention, and show how the second and most important passage of the Danube was effected.

CHAPTER XV.

THE SECOND PASSAGE OF THE DANUBE.

WHILST General Zimmermann was successfully carrying out the plan of campaign in the extreme eastern portion of the field of war, the arrival of the Czar in Roumania, and the increased stir and bustle amongst the troops echelonned along the line of the Danube, showed that an attempt to effect the passage of the river by the *gros* of the army might be expected at any moment. The question was, where? At a distance from the spot, and taking into consideration the length of the line occupied, it might at first sight appear almost impossible to have fixed upon the spots at which the attempt would perforce have to be made. But on the spot, and knowing the peculiarities of the river; and, besides this, knowing at which points the Russians had collected their pontooning material, it was not difficult to say with absolute certainty that the passage would have to be effected at one or two of half-a-dozen points. Still, though this was known, though everybody who had followed the setting up of the Russian troops knew that the passage would have to be effected within a certain distance of Rahova, Nicopoli, or Sistova, it was yet impossible to say at which of these three points the real passage would be undertaken. Owing to the way in which the Russian and Roumanian troops were distributed, and owing, also, to the large numbers of men at the disposal of the Russian generals, an imposing feint might be made at one or two of the above-named points, whilst the real passage was effected at the third. Herein lay the source of weakness in so long a line of defence as the Danube—a weakness which could not be remedied except by the employment of as large a number of men as possessed by the enemy, or the possession of a series of fortresses commanding the intervening spaces—as, for instance along the line from Varna to Rustzuk, with its strong positions at Schumla, Rasgrad, and Silistria. But none of these advantages were enjoyed by the Turks. They neither had the men, nor had they the strong places. The fortresses which they did possess, Widdin and Belgradjik in the west, and the Quadrilateral strongholds in the east, were separated from each other by a wide expanse of difficult

C—*Position on July* 19.



and practically roadless territory, liable to be broken into at any of the points already mentioned. Yet had there but been any tolerable means of communication between these two groups of fortresses, had the Turkish army possessed any degree of mobility, and had there been a sufficient number of men—say 120,000 good troops, besides the garrisons—the Russians might safely have been left to cross at any of the points between Rustzuk and Widdin, whilst the Turkish field army held a central position midway between the two points of support at Widdin and in the Quadrilateral. Or, premising the degree of mobility necessary, Abdul Kerim Pasha's plan of concentrating his army partly in the Quadrilateral and partly at Widdin, in order to march on either flank of the invading army, was not badly conceived. In fact, it was the natural defence; but without sufficient material, no commissariat worthy of the name, scarcely any means of transport beyond bullock-carts, the ultimate result was but too evident, however much, in isolated and unforeseen cases, the onward march of the Russians might be impeded.

Theoretically, Abdul Kerim Pasha's plan was as excellent as it was transparent. It was too simple to bear out the "mystery" with which he enveloped it. His centre was south of the Balkans. Here the Balkan army was supposed to be lying in wait for the Russian army, which, as soon as it was engaged in the mountains, was to be attacked by it in front, whilst Osman Pasha fell upon the Russian right and the Quadrilateral forces upon the Russian left.

Against so transparent a plan it was easy for the Russians to make their dispositions. All they had to do was to protect their right and left with sufficient forces, and send forward their offensive army across the Balkans in sufficient strength to overpower the resistance of the Balkan army.

This resistance might have been rendered most formidable, and could have been effected in one of two ways. Which would have been the better, depended upon the number of men and the material at the disposal of the Turks. What this was, is not even yet known, and in all probability never will be. But the alternatives remain the same; and the blame for not adopting one of these two alternative modes of defence—without which Abdul Kerim Pasha's plan had no sense—also remains the same, no matter on whom the blame may rest.

The one mode was to occupy the passes of the Balkans at all the chief points where the passage of an army with its baggage was possible, and to fortify each one, from the entrance of the pass to its debouchment in the plains beyond, with a series of earthworks, trenches, and redoubts in successive lines, upon which the defending force could fall back, step by step, as the invading tide rolled on. By this means a comparatively small number of men might hold a far greater number at bay for a long time, and inflict tremendous losses on the enemy, who would gradually become entangled in the mountains, and run considerable danger from attacks on either flank; and, if these flank attacks were successful, from an attack in his rear.

This plan would in any case recommend itself, unless, indeed, the defending army were to be in such force, and so well provided, that it would be no risk to stake the fortunes of the campaign on a single battle.

In this case the other alternative might have been adopted. This was, to allow the enemy to traverse the passes, virtually unmolested, until he began to debouch with his van-guard into the plains, and then attack in force whilst his rear-guard was still entangled in the mountains. This is certainly the most effective way of defending the barrier formed by a chain of mountains, if the defending force is large enough and warlike enough to engage large bodies of men. The defenders enjoy all the advantage offered by a position in the plain, whilst the enemy is still struggling with the difficulties of the ground he is traversing. Whilst laboriously descending from the heights, and forced more or less to confine himself to one definite road, the defenders can concentrate their forces on any point, and throw them upon the more or less confused mass of infantry, provided the cavalry forming the advanced guard has been effectually thrown back or cut off. But if the defending force is not present in sufficient numbers, and properly handled, then, of course, the disaster is complete, and a strong line of defence lost for ever.

With a small body of men such as the Turks possessed, they should have adopted the first plan of defence, and have contested the passage of the Balkans at every step. Even then they would not have been in a much worse plight than they found themselves after the Russians had gained the crest of the mountains, and they would

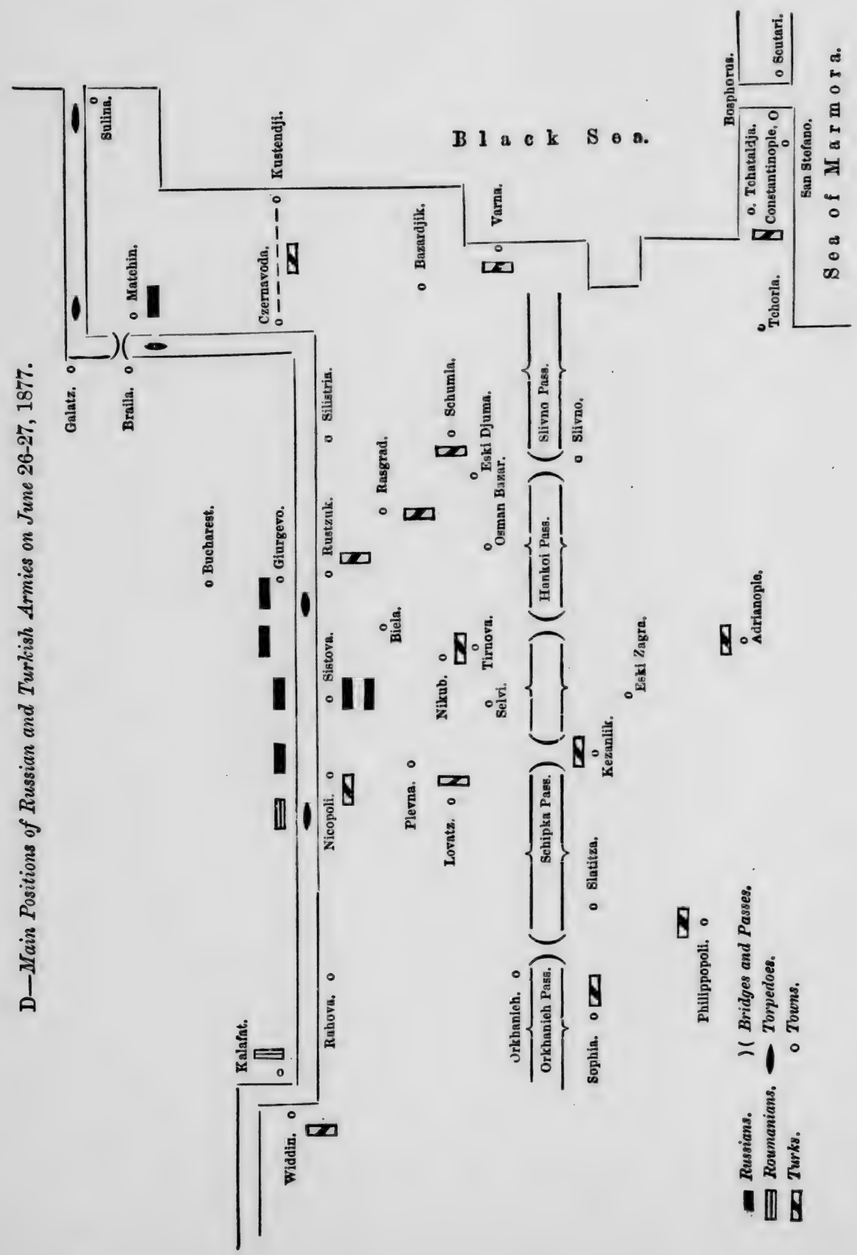
have inflicted far greater losses on the enemy.

And, even with a far larger body of troops, they would have done better to adopt this step-by-step line of defence. There would always have been time afterwards to strike a decisive blow if the opportunity offered, and to have routed the wearied enemy in the plains of Roumelia.

Such, in a few words, is what the Turks might have done. We will now let the facts speak for themselves, always keeping in mind the fact, that the attacking army had to penetrate the Balkans and secure either flank from attack; whilst, on the other hand—having lost the opportunity of attacking the Russians in Roumania—the Turks had to drive in both flanks of the Russian army and force back its centre. Unless this could be done, the campaign, north of the Balkans at least, was irretrievably lost. A reference to the following sketch D, shows the main positions of the Turkish and Russian forces on June 26, 27. The advanced posts and isolated detachments of the Turks are not given. They existed in greater or lesser strength at Sistova, Nicopoli, Rahova, Nikub, Biela, and Tirnova, at Osman Bazar and Eski Djuma in the east, and at Plevna, Lovatz, and Selvi in the west. At Rustzuk there were also several gun-boats of the Danube flotilla. To provide against these vessels interfering with the bridges which had to be constructed west of Rustzuk, it was necessary to lay a line of torpedoes in the river. The place selected for this operation was Parapan, a Roumanian village some ten miles west of Rustzuk. The indefatigable Skobeloff was selected for this exploit, which he proceeded to carry out on the night of June 20. The better part of the night was spent in getting down through the marshes and bulrushes to the water's edge, and the real work of laying the torpedoes did not begin until daylight. It was a tedious process, for several islands at this point encumber the bed of the stream; but it was successfully carried out, and for a time Skobeloff and his little party stood on the Turkish bank. The work was interfered with by the Turkish batteries and gun-boats which had steamed up from Rustzuk, and it was in dealing with one of them that Lieutenant Stridlin, in a tiny steam-launch, displayed conspicuous gallantry in driving them off. After his dashing attempt the two gun-boats sheered off for reinforcements, and the work was completed. But after it had been done, and when as yet Skobeloff's men had not got out of range on the island of Gura Kame, a couple of Turkish field batteries arrived at a trot from Rustzuk and opened fire on them from the opposite bank. Their tardy arrival did not indicate much alertness: at the latest the alarm must have been given by daybreak, and they did not fire their first shot until after two. Owing to the presence of the gun-boats on the watch lower down stream, it was thought well to get the little steam-launch through the bulrushes to the bank, and to bring it away on an ox-cart. This operation had to be carried out under the fire of the Turkish field-guns, and the casualties were one officer killed and seven men wounded: in return for which, the river was blocked most effectually and the way barred from Rustzuk westwards, as will be seen on referring to sketch D. The Turks, however, imagined that the Russians had intended to seize the island of Gura Kame, and were not a little elated at their supposed victory when they saw the Russians fall back and retreat to the opposite bank.

These precautions having been taken, a general cannonade was commenced all along the river by the Russian and Roumanian batteries, in order to conceal the real advance, which it had been decided should take place at Zimnitza, opposite Sistova, lying in and among the cliffs which here border the Danube on the south. Below Sistova, for a distance of two miles, the bank remains steep, the heights partially well wooded along their lower slopes, whilst the crest is bare and denuded of vegetation. But at the distance of two miles below Sistova there is a creek in the line of cliff formed by the mouth of a small stream which here falls into the Danube.

Above, and to the right of this creek, was a small camp of Turkish soldiers, fixed there, doubtless, in consciousness of the weakness of the point; and above the camp on the sky-line was a battery of heavy guns. Between the creek and Sistova several cannon were disposed under cover of the trees, and immediately on the proper right of the town was a small open earthwork, armed with a few field-guns. Sistova was an open town, and not garrisoned by more than a brigade of Turkish troops; but then it was not distant more than a long day's march from either Rustzuk or Nicopoli. So much for the Turkish side. About Zimnitza the



D—Main Positions of Russian and Turkish Armies on June 26-27, 1877.

Roumanian bank is high; but between it and the Danube proper, which flows to the Turkish bank, was a broad tract, partly of green meadow, partly of sand, partly of tenacious mud, the whole just emerging from inundation. This flat was cut off from Zimnitza by a narrow arm of the Danube, so that it was really an island. A raised road and bridge leading from the town across the flats, to the landing-place on the Danube, had been wrecked by the floods. It was necessary, therefore, for the Russians to gain access to the flats by a short pontoon bridge. These flats were still in many places under water, or scored by intersecting streams, and studded with impracticable swamps, so that the road through them was difficult and tortuous. They were quite bare, except that at the lower end, exactly opposite the creek on the Turkish side, there was a wood of willows and alders of considerable extent, and capable of affording a good deal of cover. The Danube all along the Sistova position is about sixteen hundred paces wide, and flows very rapidly. The ground on the Roumanian side shows a sloping face to the higher Turkish bank, so that it was impossible to bring troops into Zimnitza unobserved. Hence, probably, the Turkish readiness, such as it was. The attempt was, as far as possible, to be of the nature of a surprise, and it was necessary, therefore, to postpone the dispositions till after nightfall. The Dragomiroff division had the post of honour, and was expected to make a footing on the Turkish side by early morning. The Mirski division, in support, was to make a night march from Lissa, half-way between Zimnitza and Turn-Magurelli, and be in position at Zimnitza at 7 A.M., to follow the 1st division across in the event of its success. In the event of failure, it was to take up the fighting, and force a passage at all sacrifices; for the Archduke Nicholas had announced that the river should be crossed at Zimnitza, cost what it might.

With the darkness General Dragomiroff had begun his dispositions. The first work was to plant a row of field-guns all along the edge of the flats, to sweep the opposite banks. This was done while his infantry was being marched over the flats down into the cover of the willow wood. The darkness and the obstructions were both so great that all was not ready till the first glimmer of grey dawn. There was no bridge, but a number of pontoon boats, capable of holding from fifteen to forty men each. These were dragged on carriages through the mud, and launched in the darkness from under the spreading boughs of the willow-trees. The troops embarked, and pushed across as the craft arrived, under the command of Major-General Yolchine, whose brigade consisted of the regiments of Valnisk and Minsk, the 53rd and 54th of the line. The boats put off singly, rowing across for the little creek; and later on the little steam-tug *Annette* was brought into requisition. But the Turks were prepared as much as lay in their power. Their few cannon at once opened fire on the boats, on the hidden masses among the willows, and on the columns marching across the flat. Nor was this all. From the slopes above the creek there came at the boats a smart infantry fire, whilst the Turkish riflemen were holding the landing-place. Yolchine, however, succeeded in landing his men, and bade them lie down in the mud. Several were down previously with Turkish bullets. He then opened a skirmishing fire to cover the landing of the boats that followed. One by one these landed their men, who followed the example of the first boat-load. At length enough had accumulated; and when Skobeloff arrived, Yolchine bade his men fix bayonets, stand up, and follow their officers. There was a rush and a cheer that rang louder in the grey dawn than the Turkish volley that answered. But that volley was not fired in vain; for though Yolchine's skirmishers followed them doggedly some distance up the slope, they were unable for some time to make any way. Incessantly, however, the craft moved to and fro from shore to shore. The Russian guns had at once opened when the Turkish fire showed that there was no surprise; but they could not silence the Turkish guns, whose shells kept falling in the water, whistling through the willows, and bursting among the columns on the flat. One shell from a mountain gun fell into a boat containing two guns, their gunners, and the commandant of the battery. The boat was swamped at once, and all on board perished. This was the only serious casualty; but numerous Russian soldiers were falling on both sides of the river. Nevertheless, the work was going steadily on, and soon after seven, the whole brigade of Yolchine had reached the other side, and Dragomiroff himself had crossed. The Turks, however, would not give in; and in spite of the artillery and musketry

fire poured in upon them, they clung to their posts and their guns with wonderful staunchness, amidst clouds of dust thrown up by the shells which burst around them. Nor were their single pieces among the trees wholly quiet. Shells dropped fast among the Russian troops on the flat, and made the ambulance-men hurry about with brancards, or plod towards the ambulances with their heavy blood-sodden burdens.

But the weight of metal commanded by the Russians, and the great superiority of numbers, soon began to tell against the handful of Turkish troops; and whilst General Yolchine gradually pressed them back, Prince Mirski began the passage with his division, consisting of the 33rd, 34th, 35th, and 36th regiments, and soon after three P.M. on June 27th, the Russian troops crowned the lower crest of the hills south of Sistova, and occupied the town itself; the Turks falling back partly to Nicopoli, and partly to Tirnova. The losses of the Russians amounted, according to the official returns, to 240 killed and 410 wounded.

Now, although the garrison of Sistova had not been surprised by the sudden attack of the Russians, it is certain that the Turkish commanders-in-chief had been deceived. Whether Abdul Kerim or Osman Pasha is to blame for having been thus misled, there are as yet no data to show. But it remains a fact that the Turks expected the real passage to be effected at Turn-Magurelli, opposite Nicopoli; and it was in the neighbourhood of this place, between it and Rahova, that Osman Pasha was lying in wait with the *gros* of his army.

The report that the passage would be effected at Nicopoli had been so persistently spread that it could not but have come to the knowledge of the Turks, who, as we have said, concentrated a large number of troops at this point. The Russians, learning this, still further kept up the deception by making a serious demonstration against Nicopoli, which they would have changed into a real attack had a fair chance of success offered; so that up to the last moment it was uncertain which point would be the real crossing—Zimnitza or Nicopoli. The emperor and his staff, and the grand duke and his staff, went ostentatiously to Magurelli—a fact which soon became known to the Turks, who took it, together with other indications—the building of a bridge, collecting a large number of boats, &c.—as evidence that this would be the real point; but the Russian forces had been so placed in the villages in the neighbourhood, that they could with equal ease fall upon Sistova or Nicopoli; and they had besides collected a large number of boats at the mouth of the Aluta, a little way above Magurelli; and as there was a spot very favourable for passing by boats, the feint would have been turned into a real attempt had it not been discovered that the Turks had already concentrated 30,000 men at this point under Osman Pasha, thereby necessarily weakening Sistova.

That the Russians meant to cross at Nicopoli had they been able, and had not the passage at Sistova been successful, was also evident from their having commenced the construction of a bridge of very much the same kind of work as at Braila, with the exception that the trestle-work and road were constructed on the Roumanian side instead of on the Turkish. The materials for the bridge were collected, and on Wednesday night, at the same time as the passage at Simnitza, a demonstration was made which turned out to be only a demonstration, but which had all the appearance of a real attack. A fierce cannonade was begun in the afternoon, which lasted till nightfall, when there was a slight pause; after which the firing was recommenced with redoubled fury. Soon the darkness was lit up by the red flames of burning houses on the opposite shore of Nicopoli, of which there were several standing in a row, each looking in the distance like an angry burning coal; while there hung over the town of Turn-Magurelli, what first appeared to be a monster comet with its head on the horizon, and its tail reaching to the zenith, extending across the sky in a broad flashy white light. It was an electric light employed by the Russians to light the other shore, show the position of the Turks, and thus enable the Russian fire protecting the passage to be properly directed. Its pure white light formed a strange contrast with the red glare of the burning houses.

As the night wore on, the roar of artillery and the boom of guns became louder and louder, until the whole valley of the Danube rang and echoed with the contending fire of the Russians and Turks, the Russians firing from three batteries above the town, composed, two of mortars, and one of heavy breech-loading 24-pounders, whilst the Turks answered with might and main, supposing they were preventing the passage,

while this passage was being quietly effected at Zimnitza with scarcely more difficulty than at Braila. Still some attempt was made to throw across a bridge to the right in front of Nicopoli, which bridge the Turks promptly destroyed; and, at the same time, a move also was made above the town, as if to cross in force in the boats collected there. The corps marched down to the riverside, and at twelve o'clock four batteries drove down to the road opposite Nicopoli, a considerable amount of infantry having preceded them earlier in the evening. But all resulted in nothing. The Turks showed in such force on the opposite side, and were evidently so well prepared there, that the risk was deemed too great, too serious a sacrifice of life being required to effect a passage. It was thus decided to wait the result of the affair at Simnitza. That having proved successful, the 9th corps received orders to march from Turn-Magurelli to Zimnitza, only a few troops remaining behind to protect the positions and batteries. A footing on the Turkish bank having thus been gained at a remarkably small expenditure of life, the construction of a bridge at Sistova and Zimnitza was at once proceeded with. This operation was not disturbed in any way by the Turks, except by the commander of one of the Turkish gun-boats which had succeeded in making its way up the river, and gave the Russians a good deal of trouble, showing an amount of activity and energy very unusual with the Turks, continually shelling the Russian batteries, and destroying the boats. The Russians accordingly determined to destroy it.

Four torpedo boats were prepared, and sent against the gun-boat. Hiding behind an island, they laid in wait, and when the vessel was steaming past they suddenly darted out from their hiding-place, and bore down on her in broad daylight. This vessel, it soon became evident, was handled and commanded in a very different manner from others with which the Russians had had to deal. With wonderful quickness and skill she was prepared for action, and, nothing daunted by the fate of others, made a successful defence against her four terrible enemies, a defence of which the Russians spoke with the greatest admiration. Her commander began by likewise thrusting out torpedoes on the end of long spars, thus threatening the boats with the danger of being blown into the air first, at the same time opening a terrible fire on them with small arms and mitrailleuse. He besides manœuvred his boat in a most skilful manner, with a dexterity and address which, with the torpedoes protecting, made it impossible for the Russian boats to approach sufficiently near. He besides tried to run them down, and very nearly succeeded in doing so. The reason soon became evident. The commander was a European, and, as the Russians believed, an Englishman, who directed the movements from the deck. He was plainly visible all the time, and was a tall man, with a long fair beard parted in the middle. He stood with his hands in his pockets, giving orders in the calmest manner possible.

The torpedo boats continued their attempts for more than an hour, flitting round the gun-boat and seeking the opportunity to get at her, but without success. The gun-boat was equally active in trying to run them down, avoiding a collision by quick and skilful movements, backing and advancing, turning, and ploughing the water into foam as she pursued or avoided her tiny but dangerous adversaries—a lion attacked by rats. At one moment one launch, in rapid manœuvres, found itself between the gun-boat and the shore, with no great distance between them. The gun-boat's head was in the other direction, but her commander instantly began backing her down on the torpedo boat, with the intention of crushing it against the bank. Just at this moment the engineer of the launch was wounded. There was some confusion and delay in starting the engines, while the current carried her head aground in such a position as to render escape impossible. One of the crew sprang out into the water and pushed from the ground, while another started the engines just in time for her to escape; but the shave was very close. One Russian officer sprang ashore, and seeing the captain of the gun-boat coolly standing on the deck with his hands in his pockets, emptied his revolver at him, three shots, at a distance of not more than forty feet. The captain of the gun-boat, in answer, took off his hat and bowed, not having received even a scratch. Later, however, the gallant fellow seems to have been killed or wounded, for he suddenly disappeared from the deck. The gun-boat immediately afterwards retired precipitately from the scene of action.

Since that time she kept out of the way like the others. The Russians supposed that she was no longer commanded by the

same man. The fight was conducted with wonderful skill on both sides. The Russian boats were commanded by Lieutenant Niloff, and the attack was a most daring and tenacious one. His loss was only four or five wounded, in spite of the incessant fire of the small arms and mitrailleuse which poured into them. This shows how well-handled the boats were. They were, however, considerably damaged by the mitrailleuse fire. No attempt was made by the commander to use his guns, he evidently believing it impossible to hit such a small and rapidly moving object as a steam-launch. That the boats should have suffered so little loss in one hour's fight shows how difficult it is to hit these launches. They were fitted out in the same manner as those which blew up the monitor at Braila; but this attempt, as well as the one at Giurgevo, was made in broad daylight, neither of which succeeded. This vessel was soon afterwards surrounded by torpedoes, as well as all the others on the Danube.

The crossing having been successfully effected, the Russians seemed to think that the best part of their work was already done, and exhibited a carelessness and *nonchalance* that eventually cost them dearly. Having driven the Turks from their first position, it was an imperative duty, at all cost, to keep sight of the retreating enemy, to ascertain their line of retreat, to learn whether they were receiving reinforcements, and what were the indications of their line of action, This course was not pursued, and it was not before June 30th that young Skobeloff, with a sotnia of Cossacks, went on a scouting expedition to gather intelligence of the whereabouts of the Turks. This tardiness was all the more injudicious when it is remembered that the force across the river had opposition on either flank, Rustzuk and Nicopoli. An advance was rendered precarious by the consequent threatening of communications, and in the absence of a completed bridge there was no line of retreat except by the hazardous recourse to boats. It is possible to despise an enemy too much. The minor arrangements, too, of the Russians were somewhat faulty. Access from Zimnitza to the place of embarkation was by a difficult track, which was not a road, down the bluff, over a single pontoon bridge, and by a tortuous sandy path through swamps and shallow patches of inundation on the flats. No attempt was made to better these imperfect communications. The Germans would not have occupied a similar position for twenty-four hours without cutting half-a-dozen practicable roads down the face of the bluff, throwing at least two bridges over the branch of the stream, and making a good, straight, and firm track across the flats. They would have thrown up and fortified a bridge-head on the farther side. Their Uhlans would be in view of Rustzuk on the one side and Nicopoli on the other; their mass would have been on its march toward whatever objective points might have been decided, instead of coquetting with time at a season of the year when every hour was valuable, if the campaign was to be triumphantly ended before the winter. The Germans would not have taken three days to build a bridge, the appliances for which were all prepared and at hand. Their troops on the other side would not have been living from hand to mouth, so that a general's dinner had to be sent to him from his baggage waggon on the other side, but they would have accumulated in Sistova a depôt of provisions and ammunition, and surrounded this virtual base with a cordon of fortified redoubts.

But most culpable of all was the neglect to ascertain the movements of Osman Pasha and his 30,000 to 40,000 troops. It was assumed—why, it is impossible to say—that having heard of the successful passage of the river at Sistova, Osman Pasha was making his way by a circuitous route through the interior towards the Quadrilateral.

Far from doing this, Osman Pasha, leaving a strong garrison in Nicopoli, called up the rest of his forces and fell back upon Plevna, where he at once commenced to entrench himself, whilst the Russians at once pushed headlong forwards as soon as sufficient men had crossed the river. Owing to a storm, which sunk many of the pontoons, the free-boards of which were too low, the bridge was not completed till July 2nd; but by the end of the second week in July, the 8th, 9th, 12th, and 13th corps had all effected their passage across the river, the 11th and 4th still remaining on the Roumanian shore, as well as the Roumanian corps at Kalafat and opposite Nicopoli.

On July 1st, the Russians occupied the town of Biela, on the Yantra, and on the high-road to Rustzuk. On the 7th of July, they drove the Turks out of Tirnova, and, still pushing forward into the Balkans, occupied the villages of Drenova and Gabrova

on July 10th. On the 12th of July, the Grand Duke Nicholas took up his head-quarters at Tirnova, and was followed by the greater portion of the 8th corps; whilst Prince Tcherkasski, who was entrusted with the administration of Bulgaria, also accompanied the grand duke to Tirnova.

These movements had been prepared by General Gourko, who had been entrusted with the advance guard of the 8th corps, consisting of six battalions of riflemen, the Bulgarian legion—for local purposes—and eight regiments of cavalry with about forty guns. With these forces General Gourko cleared the way to Tirnova and Gabrova, which they held till relieved by other detachments of the 8th corps, who also extended their outposts on the right, and occupied Selvi and Lovatz.

From Tirnova General Gourko turned south-east, crossed the Hankoi Pass, made a raid upon Yeni Sagra, scoured up the Tundja valley, occupied Kezanlik on July 17, pushed northwards over the Schipka Pass, and joined hands with Prince Mirski on July 19; the Turks holding the pass having escaped during the night, when they found themselves taken between two fires.

Meantime the 12th and 13th, and, later on, part of the 4th corps, were taking up their positions on the Yantra, and between the Yantra and the Lom, towards Rustzuk and Rasgrad, under the command of the Czarevitch and his brother Vladimir.

On the other side, to the west, it was deemed necessary to seize Nicopoli. This task was entrusted to General Krüdener, who commanded the attack on July 13, and forced Hassan Pasha to capitulate on July 16, after a most obstinate resistance. Six thousand prisoners, two pashas, forty guns, and two gun-boats fell into the hands of the Russians. Elated with this success, and hearing that large bodies of Turkish troops were marching on and into Plevna, General Krüdener sent General Schilder-Schuldner to take the town. Schilder-Schuldner arrived before Plevna on July 19, on the same day that General Gourko had joined hands with Prince Mirski in the Schipka Pass, and whilst Russian cavalry were scouring the country between Adrianople and Philippopoli. On the same day the army of the Lom advanced to Pirgos and Kadikoi, close to Rustzuk, the Grand Duke Vladimir even pushing on to the railway from Rustzuk to Varna, and blowing up a bridge and part of the line. And on July 19, also, General Zimmermann drove the Turks back across the line Czernavoda-Kustendji, where he took up his position along Trajan's Wall, and swept the country from the Danube to the Black Sea.

In truth, therefore, the 19th of July was a memorable day for the Russian armies. By that day—say within three weeks—they had effected three passages of the Danube—at Braila, Zimnitza, and Turn-Magurelli; they had crossed and re-crossed the Balkans, and planted their standards in the plains of Roumelia; they had taken Nicopoli; they had pushed their advance eastwards almost under the very walls of Rustzuk; the Dobrudja was at their mercy; and they had hemmed in Abdul Kerim and his armies, east and west, in the Quadrilateral.

A comparison of the following sketch E with sketch D, shows in a striking manner the impetuous advance of the Russian forces. They carried out the first part of their campaign to the letter. They had elbowed their way east and west admirably, and had left a broad lane north and south for their choicest troops to penetrate through the open gates of the Balkans into Roumelia. All they now had to do was to defeat the forces in the Quadrilateral, to annihilate Osman Pasha, and push forward in triumph to Constantinople.

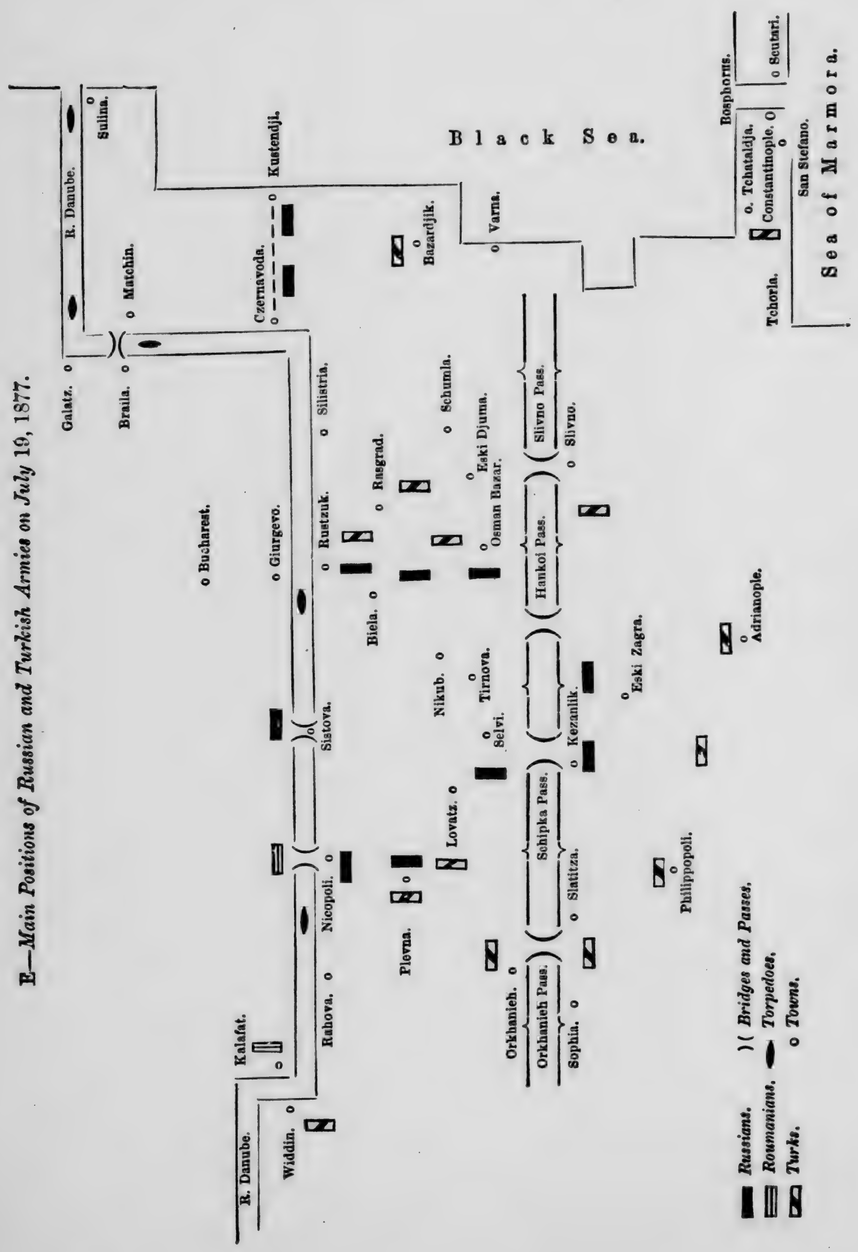
But before proceeding to the second act of the great drama, we will fill-in the general picture we have given with the details, to show how so much was accomplished in so short a time.

It is true much was accomplished, but it was against very little. The tempest was very violent, but it only swept over frail, bending reeds. A bright swelling bubble was blown at Sistova, which expanded and expanded across the Balkans, across the Lom, and across the Vid, till it grew thinner and thinner, and suddenly burst at Plevna—burst and vanished into thin air like a glorious dream.

Four distinct operations had to be carried out for the Russians to gain the position set forth in sketch E.

1. The Dobrudja had to be occupied to secure the ports on the Black Sea and the mouth of the Danube, in order to prevent the Turks from using them, and also in order to turn the Turkish position in the Quadrilateral.

This first operation, as we have seen, was successfully carried out by General Zimmer-



E—Main Positions of Russian and Turkish Armies on July 19, 1877.

mann, because he met with no serious opposition.

2. The left flank of the advance had to be protected.

3. The right flank of the advance had also to be protected.

4. The advance southwards had to be conducted rapidly, and in force, whilst the right and left wings fully engaged the Turkish field armies north of the Balkans, and prevented them from going to the assistance of the Roumelian troops against the advance, whose objectives were Adrianople and Constantinople.

All this, down to Kezanlik, was apparently accomplished on July 19.

The Grand Duke Nicholas had successfully followed the road cleared for him by General Gourko up to the foot of the Balkans, and the advance guards were eagerly awaiting his appearance in the Roumelian plains.

The Czarevitch had set up his barrier against the Turks in the east, and was eagerly awaiting the signal to advance and invest the fortresses and capture all the Turkish armies in a trap.

General Krüdener had seized Nicopoli, and had bidden General Schilder-Schuldner to go up and take Plevna.

Such was the state of the bubble on July 19th. We will now show how it was blown, and who blew it, and what disastrous consequences resulted from it.

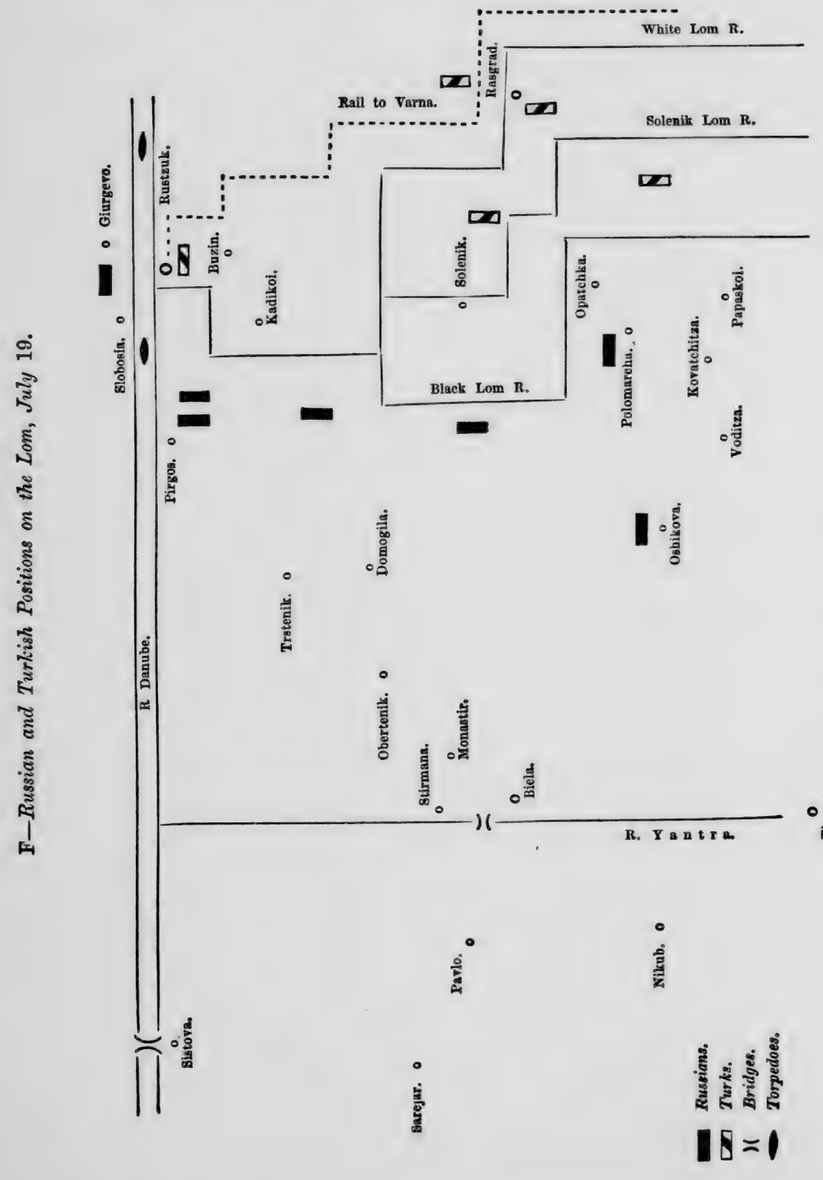
CHAPTER XVI.

THE RUSSIAN ADVANCE ON THE LOM AND OSMA.

THE Czar having taken up his head-quarters at Zimnitza, General Arnoldi was sent forward with his cavalry to prepare the way for the advance of the 12th corps in the direction of the Yantra, Lom, and Rustzuk. An idea of the scene of operations may be gathered from the following sketch F, which covers the field between Sistova, Tirnova, Rasgrad, and Rustzuk.

The force commanded by General Arnoldi consisted of the Oldenburg regiment of Dragoons (the finest dragoon regiment in the Russian service), and the regiment of Belgarski Uhlans: he had with him only the dragoon regiment, the Uhlans being a short distance behind. With the dragoons he had the divisional artillery, consisting of two horse batteries. The colonel of the dragoons, who rode with the general, was a very young man, barely thirty, Colonel Bilderling, who owed his early promotion entirely to merit. General Arnoldi had served many years, and had retired from active military employ, but came back in answer to the summons of the war.

The brigade rode away up the green slope and over the breezy uplands, where the yellow barley waved in the wind. The general's commission was to occupy the town of Biela, where it was believed there still remained some Turkish soldiers. The Hussar regiment was still in front, but it was to halt in support at Kosna, while the dragoons and artillery went on against Biela. The time passed swiftly, although the pace was slow and the route circuitous, for the force had to follow two sides of a triangle, through Sarejar and Pavlo, in order to strike as early as possible the chaussée between Rustzuk and Tirnova, on which Biela stands. The relative position of these places will be seen on referring to sketch F; the high-road from Rustzuk to Tirnova running by way of Biela and Nikub, past the villages set down in the sketch. On the way they passed the beautifully situated village of Burunli, lying in a deep grassy hollow, where the Bulgarian inhabitants crowded out with joy in their faces and words of welcome on their lips, carrying brimming pitchers of clear cold spring-water, which in the boiling heat was preferable to nectar. Here in a camp, knee-deep in natural grass, two squadrons of the hussars were left behind, and in half-an-hour more the main force was on the chaussée and in sight of the swift-flowing stream of the Yantra, overhung by dark umbrage. A patrol galloped out, and cut the wires of the telegraph line running along the chaussée, thereby interrupting telegraphic communication between Rustzuk



F—*Russian and Turkish Positions on the Lom, July* 19.

and Tirnova, Nicopoli, Widdin, and indeed the whole north-western section of Bulgaria. If General Arnoldi had served in the American war, he might have learned to tap the wires instead of cutting them, and then perchance he might have gained some intelligence, which was wanted badly enough. But in all probability the Turks had abandoned the use of the line before the patrol cut the wires. At the junction with the chaussée, between Pavlo and Biela, all the hussars, except the advance guard, which still continued in front, were left behind, and the way then lay up the steep slope of a ridge which shut out the view beyond. As they topped it, the rich valley of the Yantra, waving with golden barley, lay at their feet, intersected by the sparkling river; and in the mouth of a little cross-valley on the other side of the Yantra, were the red-tiled roofs of Biela half hidden in foliage. Beyond the river, flanking Biela, on its proper right, rose the steep marl heights, with abrupt grass-grown slopes beyond, of a position which at once arrested the eye of every trained soldier in the little band. If it were defended the carrying of it would cost dear. On the Russian side, on the gentle slope, there was no greater cover than that afforded by a casual stook of barley. Then the river would have to be crossed—it would be necessary to search for a ford—and then the marl heights would have to be stormed, for there was no way of turning the position. It was a sight to stir the deepest interest—the loveliness of the scene, the gleaming river with the overshadowing masses of dark verdure above Biela, the dusky red roofs recessed in the little valley, the golden slopes, the country village of Stirmana across the river on the left, where the marl steeps softened into green slopes—all this delighted the eye of him who looked at it in the spirit of the love of a sweet scene. And then how different the feeling of him who looked at it with a soldier's eye! If there were Turks on that crest opposite, ere it be taken the barley would wave over many a corpse; the silvery sheen of the Yantra be dulled with blood; and the dazzling white marl be dabbled with many a red stain. The umbrage might hold sharpshooters; the pretty Stirmana might be a network of barricades; the bridge down there might be mined; among the red-roofed houses might be masses of infantrymen; and behind these dark objects on the slopes might be Krupp cannon.

But all these fears, so poetically described by the correspondents, were groundless. For a while General Arnoldi and his staff took a long steady look at it, all standing there on the little conical knoll on the ridge—a knoll on which a battery had begun to be built evidently not a week before, and a flanking shelter-trench dug. General Stahl von Holstein had come on thus far with General Arnoldi, and the two held some talk apart, and then the former went off to have his hussars at hand for support if need should be. And so Arnoldi, taking his place at the head of the column, gave the word to march, and the dragoons began to descend the straight road leading through the barley-fields to the bridge. Till then it seemed that the duty of scouting had been very much neglected, looking at the fact that the men were marching through a country presumably hostile, and with an enemy known to be close. Till then Arnoldi and his staff had constituted the advance guard; there were no flankers, and patrols were not thought of. But now the old soldier pulled himself together; out on the slopes, to right and to left, galloped flankers to peer down into the side valleys. A patrol trotted along the road in front. There was a cloud of dust, and three Cossacks came galloping up from the right front. They had poked their way across the river, but neither into the town nor on to the heights. The only information they brought was that some Turks were reported near Biela; and their only capture was a Turkish pony. Suddenly a wild scared Bulgarian, galloping *ventre à terre*, with a gun carried by the muzzle across his shoulder, came with the intelligence that there were some Turks plundering in Stirmana, whence he had come; he could tell nothing about the heights or about Biela. Half-a-dozen Cossacks were sent scouting away to the left towards Stirmana, led by the wild Bulgarian with the gun over his shoulder. He shouted and gesticulated with the maddest energy; he was in a paroxysm of furious rage and crazy terror, and yet he rode straight enough on his rat of a pony. Sweeping down at a hand gallop, riding straight through the standing barley, and taking the banks and ditches at a stride, still the Cossacks were not quick enough for the light-heeled rascals of Bashi-Bazouks; and as they dashed into the stream, all they caught sight of was a very voluminous pair of blue unmentionables vanishing round the corner of a

house. The river turned out too deep to ford, and only one Cossack swam it; the others respectfully declined. So they went about; but as they were cantering back, one single gun-shot sounded from above the village, as if in mockery.

Still it was reported that some Turks were prowling about the heights, but not in force, and the informants could not tell precisely of their whereabouts. Colonel Bilderling then rode forward to the bridge, but only found by the wayside there a company of Bulgarian people who had come out to welcome their deliverers. At their head stood their venerable priest, and then commenced the obligato performance of sobbing and tears and kissing of hands, peculiar to the tender-hearted Russian and the meek Bulgarian.

Ascertaining from the people that the Turks had abandoned the town, General Arnoldi sent forward a detachment of dismounted dragoons across the bridge, to scour the opposite heights, where a few shots were fired to keep up the idea of war, and a skulking Turkish peasant taken prisoner. Outposts were then set up round and in part of the town, which was occupied in the early dawn, when the rest of the force swarmed into the place in the persistent search for schnapps. They further diverted themselves by hunting for hiding Turks, breaking open the shutters of suspected houses in these endeavours. Some four or five were thus captured, and conveyed as prisoners to the Konak. In Biela the Sistova example had been little followed. Few Turkish houses had been wrecked or plundered. There were comparatively few Turks in the place: the great mass of the population was pure Bulgarian, and painfully eager to display the utmost hospitality towards their new friends.

All this took place on July 5th; but for two days General Arnoldi was left without any infantry to support him. He was not a little troubled in consequence. He had expected infantry to have arrived for his support long before this time; the infantry had not come, and in his front the Turks were showing in very formidable force, and threatening an immediate attack. This, with a handful of cavalry, and his flank uncovered, he could not sustain, and he had withdrawn his camp and baggage and the mass of his brigade behind the Yantra River, which he had crossed the day before, and there awaited the arrival of the infantry, maintaining a sort of attitude of defence on the heights, with a chain of pickets and vedettes, but having no other intention or alternative but to fall back immediately he should be attacked. He had definitely resolved, with perhaps an excess of caution, to withdraw altogether behind the Yantra for the night, if the supporting infantry should not have arrived by five in the afternoon, when indeed some of the 33rd division arrived on the heights, and somewhat relieved his mind.

Comment on this cavalry advance on to the heights above Biela cannot be of a favourable character. The advance of Arnoldi's brigade, unsupported by infantry, could effect no good purpose that was not open to half-a-dozen scouting parties, each consisting of an officer and a few men; and it might have been followed by very unpleasant consequences. The advance of Arnoldi, while his dispositions by no means included the protection of the town of Biela, even while he camped on the heights close to it, compromised that place in a manner which its inhabitants would have had occasion bitterly to realise, if the retreat, which he regarded as almost inevitable, had actually been carried out. The Turks had quitted Biela without working there any injury; but had they come back—and if their pressure had led Arnoldi to retire, they would of course have come back—they would hardly have practised the same moderation as before. They would have found some Turkish houses wrecked; they would have found the mosque not quite in the state in which they had left it; they would have learned that the Bulgarian inhabitants had hailed the Russian troops with enthusiasm, and guided Russian soldiers in their hunt after Turks who had remained behind. Turks are certainly human, and it would have demanded more than human self-restraint on their part if, under the circumstances, Biela should not have had reason to mourn the hour that Arnoldi's cavalry rode over the bridge, without first making sure that infantry supports were within easy distance. Thus their advance compromised unjustifiably the safety, if not the existence, of a friendly town.

But Biela later had occasion to realise that in war-time friends are often nearly as cruel as foes. Indeed, a cynical inhabitant of Biela might say that he had found friends more cruel than foes, for the Turks had left the place without doing any mis-

chief. At five o'clock on July 7th, when the infantry of the 33rd division arrived on the heights, Arnoldi, leaving his forepost line standing, withdrew to his camp on the Yantra, and the infantry and artillery took up the position on the heights he had occupied, and also on others covering the town. Biela was thus safe from the Turks; but there was nobody to defend them from the Russians except the special correspondent of the *Illustrated London News*, Mr. Villiers, who had taken up his quarters in the town.

About eight o'clock in the evening a number of infantry stragglers were buying bread outside a shop near Mr. Villiers' quarters. They were not supplied with the quickness they desired, so they broke into and plundered the shop. This was witnessed by Villiers and a Russian cavalry officer who was sitting conversing with him at the window of his room. The officer at once went and drove away the plunderers, thrashing them soundly with the flat of his scabbard. Another cavalry officer joined the first; and the two, with Mr. Villiers, walked down the street. A Bulgarian came up to them, wringing his hands, and complaining that his house was being robbed. They heard a tumult near, and shrieks of women, and as they approached a number of soldiers jumped out from windows, and through doors, laden with portable loot. The officers at once chastised these fellows with all imaginable vigour, and each took two soldiers prisoners; of the onlooking soldiers they organised an informal police patrol, and all plunderers subsequently caught they handed over to this body, after having previously thrashed them soundly. The officers took their prisoners, who were infantrymen, to the cavalry camp, whence they were forwarded to their regiment. The officers in the cavalry camp, who were made aware of the circumstances, expressed great anger at the conduct of the soldiers; but the precaution was strangely neglected of sending protecting patrols into the town, probably because no cavalry soldiers were concerned in the mischief.

About one o'clock, Villiers, sleeping in his room, was roused by the noise of woodwork being smashed in the street outside, Looking out, he saw by the light of the broken pieces of blazing wood carried torchwise by the soldiers, that the work of plundering was going on apace to right and to left. Women were shrieking, not so much because of any violence offered to them, but because of the ruin to their property. Men were revelling in a liquor-shop which had been broken open, and wine was running from the casks. On the other side of the way a butcher's shop was being cleared out, fellows tearing at the meat to make it part. The women of the house came into the room occupied by Villiers, and with tears besought his protection. But what could he do? There was no authority in the place—no man to whom appeal could be made. All was license, and Villiers sat at the window, for a long time expectant of an attempt to break into the house. At length came the challenge, "Is that a Turkish or a Christian house?" The servant replied in Russian that it was a Christian house, and occupied by gentlemen accompanying the army. The soldiers no further attempted to gain an entrance, and apparently went away. But presently a knocking was heard below, and the people of the house said they were breaking into the cellar, which, as in most Bulgarian houses, had its opening directly into the street. Presently there was a wild tumult about the door and a hammering for admittance, which quickly brought Villiers down to the door. Then came the comic element in a scene that was surely grim and lurid enough. The proverb that ill-gotten goods never prosper had come home to the Russian soldiers with more than ordinary swiftness. As Villiers opened the door, there stood four of them in the torchlight, clamouring wildly, with bottles in their hands, a strange blackness about their lips, and a curious smell pervading the group, which was certainly not the *bouquet* of any potable fluid known.

The owner of the house had in his cellar a number of bottles full of vitriol, used for the purification of wool in the manufacture and dyeing of woollen stuffs, which was the man's business. These the Russian soldiers, who, although they did not invade the house, took the liberty of breaking into the cellar, promptly annexed, and having extracted the corks, began to drink. The drink did not exactly meet their views; on the contrary, they must have had cast-iron mouths and throats, and the vitriol must have been greatly diluted, or they would have paid with their lives the penalty of their lawless conduct. As it was they had fared pretty badly. Their lips and mouths were burnt black; their clothes,

hands, and boots were burnt, and they were half mad with rage and pain. They had rushed to the conclusion that the house must be a Turkish house, and the cellar a Turkish cellar; that the proprietor had purposely stored a quantity of devil's drink in wine-bottles, wherewithal to poison his Russian enemies, and that they were the victims. They insisted on regarding the servant as the Turkish proprietor, and strove to revenge themselves by forcing him to drink as they believed he had brewed. With wild cries and threats they forced bottles into his hands, and swore that he should drink. But he objected to the beverage in the most emphatic manner. He imitated the unwilling horse in that they could not make him drink; but in the struggle he got his hands and clothes very much burnt with the vitriol. Villiers interfered, and for the second time in this singular night he was in the hands of the Philistines. Still they had some sense of discipline and order left. They would not deal condignly with Villiers, although they professed to believe him a Turk and a spy. They whirled him up to a solitary under-officer who was addressed as the "patrol," and who appeared to be serenely superintending the operations of his comrades. The patrol recognised the correspondent badge on Villiers' arm, and ordered the soldiers to unhand him, whereupon the victims of vitriol retired, probably in search of a less fiery fluid as an alterative.

After break of day the work of plundering flourished with greater vivacity than ever. But now that there was daylight, and that he could see whither he was going, Villiers determined no longer to let the mischief continue without an effort to stop it. So he walked up to the infantry camp on the heights, found the colonel in command of the regiment, reported the proceedings to him, and asked for a guard to prevent further outrages. The colonel at once granted the request. He said he had already heard of the disgraceful conduct of the soldiery in the town, and was taking measures to stop it when Villiers came with confirmation of the discreditable fact. All his officers professed much disgust and regret. In a few minutes a strong guard was marching down to the little place with Villiers as guide. The officers commanding it at all events did their duty thoroughly. Every marauder met on his way to the camp from the town was searched. If his pannikin contained wine it was spilled upon the ground. The officer thrashed him, and then made him a prisoner. In the town a strategic movement bagged the plunderers of a whole street, some thirty-five in number, who were duly searched, thrashed, and made prisoners. This guard then remained permanently on duty, a police officer was appointed, as also a *commandant de place*. But the evil had been wrought; the scandal stuck like a blister. It is true there was an intention to give compensation for the damage done, but the *entente cordiale* between the Bulgarians and the Russians had greatly suffered. To descend to particulars, the Russian soldier may take credit for being quite as expeditious and sweeping, if not so quiet and methodical, a plunderer as the French "forager," as he modestly prefers to be termed. When the Russians arrived there was in the place an abundance of bread, meat, coffee, sugar, tobacco, cigarette-paper, writing-paper, under-clothing, boots, &c. But within two days there remained but the memory of these products of nature and art.

Confidence was, however, restored when compensation was made and the rest of the infantry followed, whilst the Czarevitch and his brother, the Grand Duke Vladimir, took up their head-quarters at Pavlo. By this time the forces on this line had received their title as the army of Rustzuk; but the commander-in-chief was certainly in no hurry to get there. Biela was first reached by the cavalry advanced division on the 5th July, and by the 11th there had reached there, thus far on the road, but one infantry division, the 33rd, belonging to the 12th corps. The 12th division, belonging to the same corps, was behind a few versts at Pavlo with the Czarevitch. Of the 13th corps, which with the 12th made up the army of Rustzuk, one division, the 35th, which was among the earliest troops to cross the river, was in the first instance sent on to Ovca Mojila, a village in a south-westerly direction from Sistova, had to march across country, and reached Kosna, which is close to Biela, on the 11th. The 1st division, the other division of the 13th corps, was in a valley to the south of Pavlo, so that the whole infantry of the army of Rustzuk was then within a few hours' march of Biela. Biela is two days' march from Rustzuk, but many days elapsed before the infantry pushed onwards. As for the cavalry division, the head-quarters of the

division general, Baron Driezen, were at Monastir, about eight miles in advance of Biela, on the road to Rustzuk, while the brigades Arnoldi and Stahl von Holstein were more forward, and spread out over a considerable extent of country. Cossacks were also forward to the east and north-east of the Biela position, sweeping the country, and driving in the scattered handfuls of Turks who had been lurking in the woods.

The delay may be attributed to several causes, but the principal reason was the necessity which was believed to exist for accumulating supplies to feed the troops before the advance began in earnest. Precaution in this respect was wise, but it was carried to an undue extent; and to cart supplies all the way round from Zimnitza for an army supposed to attack Rustzuk, was a needlessly roundabout process, when they might have been ferried over the river in the rear of the batteries at Slobosia, the railway station at Frateshti offering for this purpose a convenient basis for the operation.

At last the infantry gradually dribbled into its positions along the Yantra, but still no move forwards was undertaken. This inactivity naturally created great dissatisfaction among the officers eager for an opportunity to distinguish themselves. Earnest entreaties were persistently sent to the head-quarters begging for a relaxation of the strict injunction that the infantry mass of the army was not to cross the Yantra for a long time, but without effect. Yet, though the Czarevitch and his brother Vladimir were among the supplicants, General Niepokoitschitzki was obdurate in the maintenance of the prohibition against anything save a defensive and preventive attitude. The policy of this attitude was obvious. While two corps stood lining the road of advance on Tirnova, no attempt by the Turks to intercept that advance, or to disturb its communications, was likely to be made, as the Turkish field army, reported to extend from Rasgrad to Osman Bazar, could not change its front and, marching to its left, move off into the Balkans to interfere with the passage of the Russians through the defiles without showing a flank, and, indeed, its rear, to this threatening mass of men, purposely motionless for the time, but ready to march quickly and far when the opportunity for doing good by so doing should offer. The policy was obvious, but it was cautious. It was not in accord with Prince Frederick Charles's standing orders—"Find your enemy, and fight him whenever and wherever you find him."

The restriction against crossing the Yantra was at last removed, head-quarters were transferred to Biela, and the whole army sent well forward toward Rustzuk, beyond Obertenik. On the heights above Domogila, a village to the north-east of Obertenik, lay the white tents of the 35th division. At Trstenik, a village close to the chaussée, about six kilometres beyond Obertenik, were the head-quarters of the Archduke Vladimir, commanding the 12th army corps. The infantry had pushed on the cavalry a few versts, and General Driezen's head-quarters were moved onward to the heights within four miles of the Danube, at Pirgos, due north; and just over the crest of the slope, on the reverse side of which he had pitched his camp, was the valley of the Lom. The forces were considerably crowded down in this corner between the Danube and the Lom, and cavalry and infantry camps were mixed up anyhow. A glance at the map will show that the main river Lom, the Cerni or Black Lom, entering the Danube at Rustzuk, flows down through Bulgaria in a direction nearly due north, bending to the north-east as it approaches the Danube. Along its western bank was the position of the Russian army of Rustzuk. It covered a broad front, although the principal concentration was near the Danube. The right flank of its cavalry was at Polomarcha, a village about forty miles south of the Danube, in the direction of Osman Bazar, and regiments were studded among the villages on the western bank of the Cerni Lom, all the way to Pirgos. The Beli, or White Lom, with a north-westerly course, flows into the Cerni Lom at the village of Kirsova, and the triangular interval between the two rivers was occupied by detachments of cavalry belonging to the 12th and 8th cavalry divisions. In all, about 40,000 men were now on the Lom by July 19. This position was gained without any fighting to speak of. There was a trivial cavalry skirmish on the height, and a few dragoons fell in clearing the crest of the Turkish troops. Two days before there was a more serious skirmish down in the Lom Valley, at a village called Kadikoi, about midway between the Lom and the road between Rustzuk and Schumla. There was reason to believe that Turkish troops were there in some force, and from the

heights on the western side the Lom, the Russians opened fire with one gun, with intent to provoke reprisals from the enemy, and so gain some idea of his strength. But the Turks were wise, or at least wily in their generation. They replied with one gun. If the Russians had brought two into action, no doubt they would have followed suit; but in the meantime a fair exchange was enough for them.

Emboldened by this seeming weakness, a couple of squadrons of Bilderling's dragoons were pushed across the Lom in the direction of Kadikoi. They advanced some distance, but not to glory. They had passed through a swarm of Circassians lying in ambush, and suddenly the two squadrons were beset, surrounded, and assailed with great fury. It remained for them but to fight their way back, which they did with a hard hand-to-hand struggle, losing some nine men killed and twenty-one wounded. The killed were brought into camp across their horses. The Circassians followed the dragoons across the Lom, hanging on their rear, and trying to cut off detached parties; but they came a little too far. A battalion of infantry had accompanied the cavalry as far as the Lom. So when the cavalry came back thus sore beset, the infantry were ready to cover them, and the Circassians found themselves exposed to the withering rifle-fire which it has since been ascertained caused them a loss of twenty men killed and fifty wounded. Subsequently, appearances indicated that Kadikoi and its vicinity had been evacuated by the Turks; and to make this certain, a *reconnaissance* was conducted in that direction by the Archduke Vladimir himself, at the head of a squadron of dragoons, a squadron of Cossacks, and a battalion of infantry. He penetrated to Kadikoi without opposition, and found it empty and deserted; so he determined to take the opportunity that offered, and make a bold dash at the railway between Rustzuk and Schumla. His Cossacks rode on through Buzin, and struck the railway at the Guvemli station. This they burnt, and blew up with dynamite an adjacent bridge, thus effectually destroying the railway communication between Rustzuk and Schumla.

Having proceeded so far, and having established themselves in the positions shown in sketch F, the Russians were satisfied. They had masked Rustzuk and the field army which still preserved its inactivity under Abdul Kerim, on the White Lom and Solenik Lom. And all this had been accomplished almost without a shot being fired—certainly without any serious combat—beyond the little skirmish between the Cossacks and Circassians above described.

We will now devote a few words to the advance westwards.

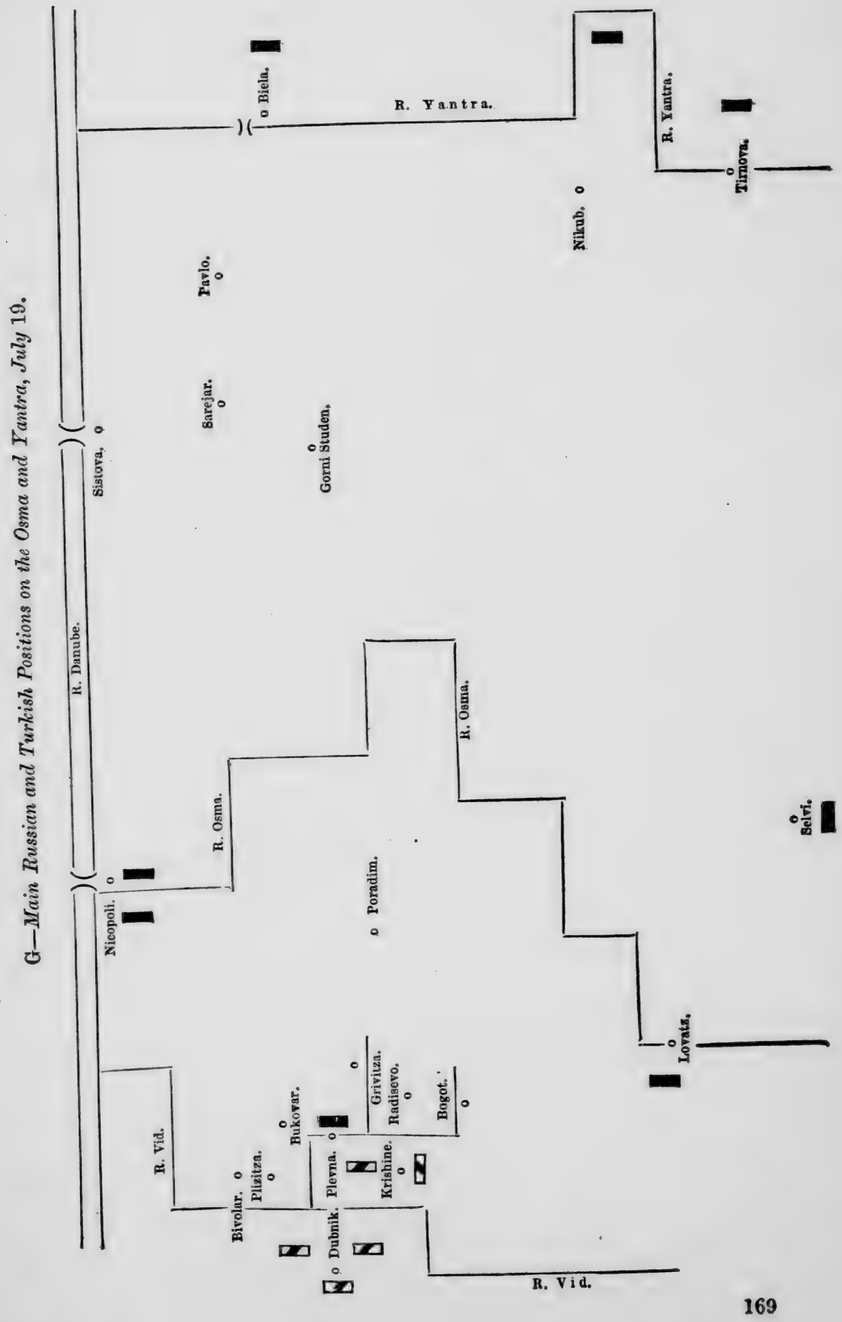
Simultaneously with the advance on the Lom and on the Balkans, an expedition was sent westwards, under the command of General Krüdener, to seize the fortress of Nicopoli, opposite Turn-Magurelli, when an attempt to force a passage was undertaken on the same night that the Danube was forced at Sistova.

That attempt, as we have seen, was unsuccessful, owing to the determined resistance of the Turks and their presence in force. The passage of the Danube, therefore, as originally planned, was a failure, although that failure was hidden and redeemed by the successful passage at Sistova. But that the speedy possession of Nicopoli was regarded by the Russians as an absolute necessity, is evident from their at once sending General Krüdener westwards to seize it in the flank and rear, whilst the Roumanian and Russian forces and batteries on the opposite shore assailed it in front.

General Krüdener, believing, with the rest of the staff, that Osman Pasha was making his way down across the Balkans, or not giving the matter a thought, or not coming where Osman Pasha was, marched straight upon Nicopoli, as though it were the only place in the universe worth thinking about. Supposing that Plevna was held only by a few detachments of Turkish soldiers, he neglected to send either cavalry or infantry to that place, if only for the purpose of protecting his flank.

A glance at sketch G will plainly show the great initial error committed at this early stage by the Russians. Although it was certain that Osman Pasha, with 40,000 men, was somewhere in the country west of the river Osma, the Russians not only took no measures to ascertain precisely where Osman Pasha was, but they also neglected to secure the lines of the Osma and Vid, as they had done on the Yantra and Lom. With the exception of General Krüdener's force at Nicopoli—engaged as they were with the attack on that place—and a weak detachment at Lovatz, the whole line of the Osma and Vid was left to take care of itself.

G—*Main Russian and Turkish Positions on the Osma and Yantra, July 19.*



However, elated with their relative success—gained, be it repeated, because there was no opposition—the Russians undervalued their enemy, and neglected the most elementary precautions in this direction of the field of war.

Thus, unsecured against any attack on his left flank or rear, General Krüdener commenced his attack on Nicopoli. The action was opened by the batteries on the opposite bank, which by far outnumbered the Turkish pieces, and equally far exceeded them in weight of metal. Breaches were speedily opened in the crumbling fortifications; in many places the town was set ablaze, and on the third day the assault was ordered. Advancing from all sides, and supported by the redoubled activity of the Russo-Roumanian batteries, several outworks were at last carried, and Hassan Pasha, the commander, forced to capitulate for want of ammunition on July 16, and yield himself and 6,000 men prisoners. This success was purchased with the loss of about 1,500 Russians killed and wounded. It was therefore the most important affair the Russians had as yet sustained, and gave them a foretaste of what was to come as soon as they really felt the enemy. Had they been wise they would have taken more account of this affair than they did, and have arrived at the conviction that it was one thing to advance unopposed, and another when the road was disputed.

Meantime the Turks had been fortifying themselves in Plevna, whilst Osman Pasha, hearing that Nicopoli was lost—or perhaps purposely leaving that place to its fate—was calling up all the forces at his disposal to occupy Plevna, and secure his communications with Sophia by the Orkhanieh Pass. (See sketch E.)

Some inkling of this movement, or perhaps only the fact that a larger force was at Plevna than at first supposed, caused General Krüdener to send General Schilder-Schuldner, as already mentioned, to seize Plevna, before which place Schilder-Schuldner arrived on July 19th, when the positions were as shown in sketch G.

During the attack on Nicopoli, a few miles south of Sistova, there was a sudden alarm. A Cossack rode in with a hurriedly scribbled despatch from a telegraph clerk at the bridge across the Danube, to the effect that the Turks were marching from Nicopoli on Sistova, and threatening to sever the Russian communications, destroy the bridge, and compromise the safety of the emperor. Immediate steps had to be taken. One brigade of the 11th corps was in Sarevica. The other brigades of the same corps were forwarded. Dispositions were made with the artillery and infantry covering the line of the heights protecting the line of approach from Nicopoli. The emperor himself assumed the chief direction of affairs, and is said to have shown at once the most perfect coolness and competent military ability. The scouts sent out, however, brought back the intelligence that the country in the direction of Nicopoli was quiet, and presently there arrived intelligence from Baron Krüdener, respecting his success at Nicopoli. It was ultimately discovered that the telegraph clerk had become confused and alarmed by the noise of firing at Nicopoli and concern for the emperor's safety. The incident seems trivial, but shows on what thin ice the Russians were treading with hostile forces left on both flanks.

To this scare succeeded the elation produced by the capture of Nicopoli, the triumph being heightened by the arrival of Hassan Pasha, the brave defender of Nicopoli, of whose fighting prowess the Russians themselves spoke with generous appreciation. As he fought when free, so Hassan Pasha acted when a prisoner, bearing himself before the Great White Czar with true Turkish *nonchalance*. When asked why he capitulated, he said his ammunition was all gone, and he had been obliged to kill with his own hand three or four soldiers who left their duty. He spoke as rank folly of the conduct of a Russian artillery officer who, when one position was barely carried, rode his guns in among the still undefeated Turks, and, unlimbering, came into action against other positions as yet uninjured. So highly did the Russian staff estimate General Krüdener's success, that they considered that gain of the fortress freed them from the threat of attack on their right flank; and one division, the 31st, was thought sufficient, on the line of Plevna-Nicopoli, to protect communications and guard against any trouble from the Widdin direction. The other, the 5th, was intended to form a portion of the Balkan advance, which had apparently been so brilliantly inaugurated by General Gourko. To this operation we must now devote our attention.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE FIRST PASSAGE OF THE BALKANS.

WHILST, as we have seen, a screen was thrown forward on either side to protect the flanks of the advance on the Balkans by the main force, which was to pierce its way beyond the Balkans into Roumelia, and dictate the terms of peace before the walls of Constantinople, General Gourko was entrusted with the task of clearing the way for the Grand Duke Nicholas and the 8th corps.

But though the passage of the Danube was effected on June 27th, several days elapsed before General Gourko was well on his way to Tirnova with two brigades of cavalry, and field artillery; and it was not until July 7th that he effected his entrance, almost unopposed, into Tirnova. The Russian staff therefore allowed no less than eight days for a cavalry raid on a place not more than fifty miles distant from Sistova—a rate of marching of six miles a day!

Tirnova itself, beautifully situated in the valley of the Yantra, which winds tortuously through the town, was occupied by about 1,500 Turkish line, who, after firing a few shots, withdrew over the hills towards Elena, as they were unsupported by any large forces in the vicinity. The place was not fortified, though it might have been made of immense strength; but would, in that case, also have required a very large number of men to hold it.

The news that Tirnova was denuded of Turkish troops, and that none were in force in the vicinity, arrived at Sarejar on July 8th, and on the following day the grand duke and the greater part of the 8th corps started to occupy it in force, the grand duke intending to make it his head-quarters. He arrived there on July 12th, with the greater part of the 8th corps, and therewith the town was really occupied by the Russians. The march from Sistova was rather like a military promenade or a triumphal procession than a forced march. Everywhere the people came out to meet the army, offering bread and salt and the most friendly greetings; while the women and girls offered fruit, and pelted the men with flowers. At the entrance of many of the villages, arches were erected, covered with leaves and flowers. Processions, headed by priests, came out singing, with pictures from the churches, standards, and banners. There were deafening cheers, and the most extravagant joy. They insisted on shaking and kissing hands, and shed the customary tears. At the entrance of the village of Zavada, at the beginning of the gorge that leads to Tirnova, a rude arch was constructed of branches of trees. The whole population of the village gathered at the road-side near it. The soldiers, without orders from their officers, uncovered as they passed under, to the great delight of the people; while a huge bar of iron, beaten by a mallet, gave forth the first sound resembling a bell heard there for four hundred years. Just inside this gorge or hollow there were two very ancient monasteries, built one on each side of a steep mountain side. The priests from these monasteries came down with banners and pictures, and a large beautiful Bible, which as many of the soldiers as could, kissed as they passed, the people of the monasteries hoisting old bells which had lain hidden in the basements for four hundred years, and the voices of which were soon heard rolling up and down the hollows and gorges of the mountains.

The reception at Tirnova was splendid. The streets were full of women, girls, and children, who mingled with the soldiers on the most friendly and sociable terms. The windows were teeming with the faces of pretty girls, flags, and streamers. The narrow, crooked streets were choked up by crowds of people, soldiers, horses, and waggons, and the whole town was ringing with excitement and joy. Such was the greeting the invaders received at all hands. The grand duke arrived about noon. He was met at the usual entrance to the town by priests in robes chanting prayers in the old Sclavonic tongue, and by immense crowds of people. With deafening cheers he was conducted to the church, where he attended a short service, then passed through the streets, where several arches had been erected with the inscription upon

them of "Welcome," followed by a crowd of girls singing. The women and girls at the windows literally covered him with flowers, while Christo Ignatieff, with the enormous moustache, was quite buried in the carriage under the leaves, flowers, and wreaths showered upon him. The grand duke then went to the quarters already prepared for him.

The people universally opened their houses to the Russians. There was no trouble about getting billets. The officers had only to inquire at the first house, and if not already occupied they were sure to be received. In only one village had there been a cool reception. This was Akchair, where the people showed a disinclination to sell anything, either because they were afraid the Russians would go away and the Turks come back, or because some flying band of Russians had taken things without payment. The Turkish population fled everywhere, and several villages had been abandoned, the Turks carrying off all their effects that they had not been plundered of. Nearly the whole Turkish population had also fled from Tirnova, carrying off their goods and chattels. The houses of those who fled were more or less damaged by the Bulgarian population. Windows and doors were smashed, as at Sistova. The most needy part of the population helped themselves to what the Turks left behind, which was not much. These acts were committed during the day or two of anarchy which followed the departure of the Turks and preceded Russian rule. They were repudiated by the better class of Bulgarians, who expressed great chagrin at them, but who professed to have been powerless to prevent them.

The conduct of these retreating Turks deserves mention. Though there were isolated cases of outrage and murder and violence, they were rare. They drove off all the Bulgarian live stock—sheep, horses, and cattle—they could lay their hands on, but did not go further.

The grand duke was thus safely installed in Tirnova, and Prince Mirski was sent forward with part of the 8th corps to attack the Schipka Pass in front, whilst General Gourko, who had left Tirnova the day before the grand duke arrived, was to try to cross the Balkans at some other point, and attack it in the rear.

The positions of the Russians and Turks at this juncture—on July 13-14—are shown in sketch H.

At Tirnova there was the grand duke, his left flank protected by Gourko's cavalry till relieved by a detachment of the 8th corps which occupied Slataritza. His right was protected by another detachment at Novoselo, and still further west, at Selvi on the road to Lovatz (see sketch F). Prince Mirski was well forward with his forces at Drenova and Gabrova, scouring the country round Elena.

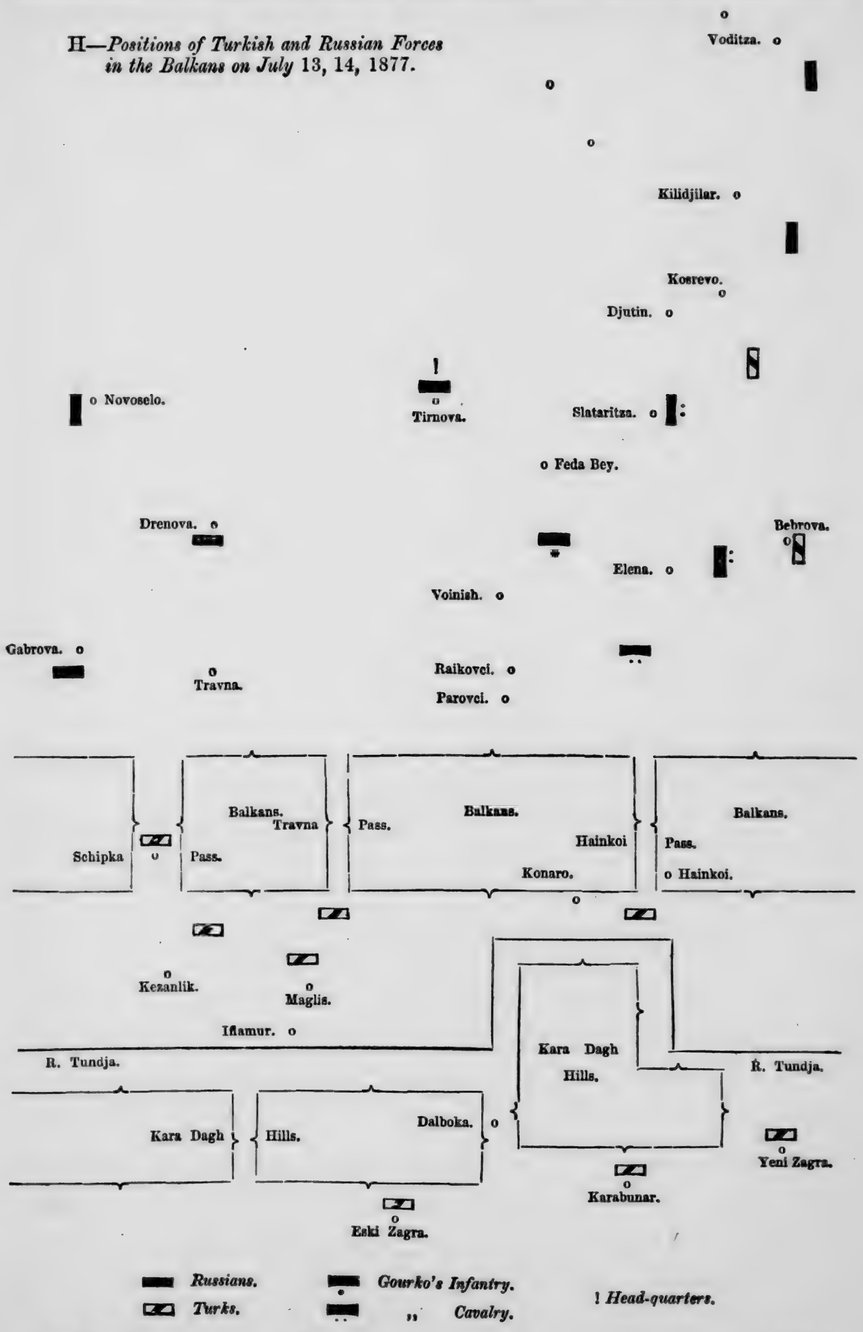
In front of these forces lay the Balkan passes. From Tirnova, the road to the Schipka Pass led past Drenova to Gabrova. Midway between these two places the road split, the chief one going on straight to Schipka, and the other to Travna, whence it ran southwards through a difficult pass, and emerged in the valley of the Tundja, opposite the village of Maglis.

West of Tirnova, a road led to Novoselo, and Selvi, and Lovatz; to the east, one road ran due east to Slataritza, and another south-east to Elena. This latter road splits at Feda Bey, the high-road running to Elena; whilst the other, a cross-road, led to the Hainkoi Pass, a difficult, little known pass, seldom traversed by either Turk or Bulgarian except for local purposes, the great traffic between the northern and southern sides of the Balkans being carried on through the Schipka or Slivno passes west and east.

Of these three passes, two, the Schipka and the Hainkoi passes, have become renowned. The third, the Travna Pass, has never been mentioned during the war; and yet, as we shall show, that pass might have been turned to immense advantage by either Turks or Russians in subsequent combats, as by means of it either party might have outflanked the other.

South of the Balkans and its passes the river Tundja flowed, from west to east, through a broad valley, the southern boundary of which was formed by the Kara Dagh mountains. This hill approached the Balkans opposite the Hainkoi Pass, and forced the river Tundja to describe a wide bend. On the southern side of the Kara Dagh lay the towns of Eski Zagra, Karabunar, and Yeni Zagra, near which ran the railway from Adrianople to Yamboli. The Kara Dagh is also pierced by two comparatively easy passes leading from the valley of the Tundja into the plains of the Maritza. One of these passes, the most westerly, leads from Kezanlik to Eski Zagra, and the other from Maglis to Karabunar and Yeni Zagra.

H—*Positions of Turkish and Russian Forces in the Balkans on July* 13, 14, 1877.



There were thus three distinct sections of country lying between the Russians at Tirnova and the great Roumelian plains. The first was the Balkans; the second, the valley of the Tundja; and the third, the Kara Dagh.

Now, having arrived in force at Tirnova, the Russians spread out like a fan, as shown in sketch H. The Turks occupied Schipka, Kezanlik, and Maglis with small detachments, whilst the *gros* of their forces were south of the Kara Dagh, at Eski Zagra, Karabunar, and Yeni Zagra; the basis and head-quarters being at Adrianople, even as the Russian basis was at Tirnova. Should the Turkish basis be forced, the Turks would have to fall back upon the lines of Tchataldja in front of Constantinople (see sketch F). Should the Russian basis be forced, the Czar and his army would have to fall back across the Danube at Sistova.

In these few lines the whole gist of the Russo-Turkish campaign is contained, and the object of Turk and Russian succinctly explained.

The first thing which General Gourko had to do when he left Tirnova on July 11, was to ascertain how far the Turkish concentration, said to exist about Osman Bazar, was in force, and whether the alignment of the enemy was prolonged from Osman Bazar in a southerly direction through the Balkans. Accordingly General Gourko led a cavalry *reconnaissance* on the road in the direction of Osman Bazar, and pushed it home with considerable determination—driving in the isolated detachments of the Turks till he learned that there were some 6,000 Turks in the Osman Bazar district, which, however, constituted the left flank of the Turkish alignment between the Danube and the Balkans. Their position did not prolong itself into the mountains; so, leaving a detachment of the 8th corps, which had followed him, to watch the Turkish position about Osman Bazar, he coolly turned his back, wheeled his cavalry round from east to south, and headed straight for the Balkans.

At Feda Bey the expedition struck the road to the Hainkoi Pass. This pass and this road were discovered by Prince Tserteleff, to whom had been confided the whole business of obtaining information about the roads, the movements of the enemy, their numbers, dispositions, and so on. He soon ascertained that the Turks had fortified the Slivno and Gabrova passes in such a way as to render the forcing of a passage at either of them a very difficult matter, and he determined to look for another. Count Moltke, in his book, refers to a pass between those of Gabrova and Slivno, but speaks of it as only a path not practicable for an army. Prince Tserteleff decided to investigate this pass, in the hope that it might lead to something. He soon ascertained that it had a very bad reputation—a place that was generally frequented by brigands, and rarely used either by Bulgarians or Turks. Among the Turks he found it had even a worse reputation than among the Bulgarians. It was a kind of tradition among them that this pass was in the clouds, that the defiles leading to it were so wild, so savage and barren, as to be unfrequented by either bird or beast—a kind of mountain desert where nothing could live. Pursuing his investigations, the prince heard of a man who had been through this pass, and, finding him, he learned that he had been through in fact, but that was two years ago, and the road might have become impassable since then. But what made the information really important was, that he had been through with one of the ox-carts of the country. If an ox-cart could go through, very probably a cannon might be got through somehow, and it was determined to reconnoitre and explore. Three days before the arrival of the grand duke at Tirnova, General Rauch went forward with 200 Cossacks for this purpose, taking with him Bulgarian guides. Without waiting to explore the road to the end, he immediately began preparing it for the passage of artillery—a task which, as far as the pass itself was concerned, turned out to be no very difficult matter, as the worst part of the road was on the south side. The most wonderful part of it was, that although these 200 Cossacks were working three days on this road, with the Bulgarian peasantry coming and going all the time freely, the Turks never got a whisper of their presence, nor any intimation of the evident intention of the Russians to try this pass. They even sent three battalions from Kezanlik to Slivno to strengthen the positions before the latter place, and these three battalions passed by Hankoi, at the mouth of the pass, the day before the Russians issued out. These three battalions were just where they ought to have been had they but known it, as they ought to have done, and they could have prevented

the success of the movement. And yet, although the whole Bulgarian population of a dozen mountain villages knew the Russians were there, not one man was found amongst them to inform the Turks. Such is the advantage possessed by an army operating among a friendly population. The Turkish staff either did not know of this pass at all, or, knowing it, believed it to be so impracticable that they did not even think it worth while to place a corps of observation to watch it. A small body of troops had been there, which had not even been placed there to watch the place. They were merely a small body whose retreat had been cut off by the Russians at Elena, and who had retreated by this road two or three days before the Russians came, without thinking it worth while to leave a single man to guard the entrance to the pass.

The only danger, therefore, that the Russians had to fear was, that some wandering party of Bashi-Bazouks or marauders should pass that way and discover what they were at, or that the noise made by the Cossacks in repairing the road should excite the curiosity of the small Turkish force which it was known was at Hainkoi, at the outlet of the defile. They did not dare to use powder for blasting the rocks, by which they might have made the road passable in several places where it could hardly be called so for artillery in the condition in which it was left by the Cossacks. But Prince Tserteleff, who had greatly distinguished himself during the passage, and to whom must be given the honour not only of discovering the pass, but of conducting and piloting the advance guard through it, went forward continually with one or two Bulgarians, reconnoitring the route far in advance of even the advance guard. He even disguised himself in a Bulgarian peasant's clothes, and went forward on foot, anxious to see if the road were really practicable before the whole column should advance to what might, after all, be only a sheep-path, over which it would be impossible to take artillery; and he was the first man of the Russian army, and his the first horse, to cross the summit, and the first to open out the defile at Hainkoi.

The road having thus been decided on, General Gourko collected his cavalry round about Elena, and started southwards without more ado, followed by his infantry and artillery into the wild country, broken up by gorges and clefts, which lay between him and the entrance to the pass. He passed through the villages of Voinish and Raikovci to Parovci, a little hamlet made in a gorge of the Balkans, in a dark, narrow little dell, whose sides were so steep that the dozen houses which made up the village seemed to be holding on with hooks and claws, to keep from slipping down into the deep ravine beneath them.

The silence usually pervading these mountains, rocks, and forests, disturbed at most by the occasional cry of some bird startled in its slumbers, was broken by the hum of voices, the impatient stamp of the horses, and the rattle of harness. Just below the village stood a battery of artillery; and extending two miles further up, and three or four miles further down the dark, crooked, rocky little hollow, the rest of the army lay asleep on its arms, without fire or supper, waiting the first ray of daylight to resume its march. It was impossible to take the artillery along in the darkness, through one of the most difficult defiles of the Balkans. Absolute silence in the weird stillness of night was absolutely necessary also, which explains the absence of camp fires and supper, and the usual sights and sounds of a bivouac. The glare of camp fires reflected on the sky, and seen from the other side of the mountains, might have given the alarm to the Turks; and a very small force, a very little thing, would stop the way, and even result in the destruction of the column. They were less than ten thousand men, and were extended along this narrow, crooked defile a distance of seven or eight miles. If the Turks had got wind of the advance, they could have concentrated on the other side, and cut the Russians off in detail as they came out, as easily as one could catch water coming out of a bunghole. There were other dangers to be thought of too. One thunderstorm would have rendered the road, already so difficult, quite impassable. Then there was still the possibility, though a remote one, of the Turks rapidly concentrating twenty-five or thirty thousand men, and crushing them before they could get reinforcements. It was a hazardous undertaking, but one which, if successful, would ensure the passage of the Balkans to the main army.

The night, however, was passed in safety; and in the morning it was found that the road from Parovci to the top of the pass was not nearly so bad as had been supposed. Indeed, the road all the way up to this point

had been much better than was expected. It had been rough to be sure, full of holes and stones, in some places passing, for a hundred yards at a time, over mere heaps of stones that covered the whole bottom of the hollow; at other times through the fields; but there had been but two or three places as far as Parovci where it had been at all steep. With help from the men in these two or three places, the horses were able to draw the artillery through with ease. At Parovci the road began to grow steep; and to the summit, a distance of about two miles, the men had to help the horses nearly the whole way. But even here the great difficulty of mountain roads, their narrowness, does not seem to have been encountered at all. The road all the way to the summit was made wide enough for the wide-tracked artillery waggons without any difficulty. It led up the side of the little hollow, which was thickly wooded to the very top, and opened out on a long narrow ridge, shaped like a saddle, and not more than fifty or sixty feet wide. This was the summit of the pass, the descent on the south side being far more precipitous than the ascent. Here the men had to help to hold the artillery back instead of pushing it forward.

Two hundred Cossacks were drawn up on this ridge, with their horses' heads turned south, looking away over the interminable labyrinth of mountains, hills, ridges, valleys, hollows, and gorges, through which they still had to bore their way to the valley of the Tundja before their passage could be assured. The first streak of day was just growing visible in the east, and a long flash of rosy light climbing slowly up the sky. Before and beneath was a dark narrow gorge, still a pool of blackness, into which they slowly descended down into the depths of the dark defile. The first three or four hundred yards were very steep; but at the end of that time they had come fairly into the little hollow, and the descent the rest of the way was gentle and easy, although the road was rough. The hollow was narrower even than the one on the other side, and the trees were large, the branches completely uniting over-head, making it as dark as a cavern.

A little further on, in a narrow valley, the expedition again camped for the night, being then about half-way between the top of the pass and its outlet at Hainkoi; and as the Turks, known to be at the issue, were but five or six miles off, no fires were lighted. At break of day the force again moved forward cautiously, General Rauch leading, and at about nine o'clock turned sharp round a projecting bluff that a moment before seemed to completely bar the way, and found the defile suddenly open out to the width of half a mile, and beheld beyond the valley of the Tundja; and here, not more than half a mile distant, lay a Turkish camp. General Rauch had already learned from the Bulgarians that there were only a couple of companies there; and counting upon the effect of the surprise and the certainty that the Turks could not know that the whole Russian army was not at his heels, he determined to attack and clear the outlet at once with his two hundred Cossacks. They at once began to advance, firing to drive them away. The Turks were completely taken by surprise. It is not a little remarkable that outpost service should be often the very last thing learned, and that it should never be learned at all by some nations, as by the Spaniards and the Turks, in spite of their having everything else—arms, equipments, organisation — appertaining to modern warfare. A Spanish army will march boldly within the enemy's lines, billet the troops in a village in a little hollow surrounded by hills half a mile distant, without putting out a single picket, with the usual result of surprise and defeat. The military history of Turkey is full of surprises and defeats caused by the neglect of the outpost service. So the force here, watching a most important point, had put out no pickets; it was taken by surprise, thrown into consternation at the near approach of the Russians, and instantly began to retreat—two companies of infantry of the regular army before 200 Cossacks. I could hardly have believed it if I had not seen it. They fired as they fled, but there was little harm done on either side, the Russian loss being five or six wounded. The Cossacks drove them out on the Slivno road, beyond the village of Hainkoi, whence the fugitives proceeded to Konaro, where, next day, they attacked the Russians, but were repulsed after some sharp fighting. In the course of the day General Gourko arrived with six battalions of Russian sharpshooters numbering about 2,000 men, and towards evening, the Bulgarian legion, the dragoons, the hussars, the rest of the Cossacks, and the artillery arrived, making up the whole detachment, and the outlet of

the defile was made safe. The force under General Gourko's command, at this point, consisted of seven battalions of Bulgarians, about 5,000 men; six battalions of sharpshooters, about 2,000 men, the battalion of sharpshooters being very small; a brigade of dragoons, 1,000 men; a regiment of hussars, 500; and three regiments of Cossacks, 2,500 men; three batteries of field-pieces of six, and a battery of mountain guns light enough to be carried on horses—in all about 11,000 men. "With this force," as the correspondent of the *Daily News* trumpeted forth, "half of which were raw recruits not yet four months under arms, and one-fourth more (the Cossacks) irregulars, the Russians made and secured the passage of the Balkans, one of the most formidable bulwarks ever raised by nature for the defence of a country. And they did it with a loss of six men wounded. For the passage was secured from this moment. Even had the attempt to force the pass at Kezanlik proved unsuccessful, the whole army could have crossed this pass with ease." This outburst of mock enthusiasm on the part of the *Daily News* correspondent, characterises the whole tone, with some few exceptions, of the *Daily News* comments on the war. As we have seen, the pass was quite undefended. Where, then, was the glory? Credit may be given to the Russian leaders for their astuteness in finding an undefended pass across the Balkans; and the passage may be regarded as a pedestrian feat on the part of the men; but that is all.

The next day there was some appearance of the Turks concentrating to attack. The three battalions that had passed on the way to Slivno two days before seemed to have returned, and made a show as if they would attack. General Gourko took the dragoons and started to meet them, giving orders for the Bulgarian troops to follow, as he wished to try them once under fire. But the three battalions of Turks retired so rapidly before the two regiments of dragoons, that the Bulgarians could not get up to them. The dragoons drove them some ten miles in the direction of Slivno, and then returned to Hainkoi. "This retreat of three battalions of infantry, 2,000 to 3,000 men, before 1,000 cavalry, was almost as bad as the flight of two companies before 200 Cossacks." This sentence again shows the bias of the correspondent. He does not add that the 1,000 dragoons were supported by 10,000 other troops.

The next day after this affair, or the third after the arrival at Hainkoi, General Gourko, leaving the Bulgarians to guard the place, took the rest of the detachment, and started for Kezanlik. They met a small force a short distance from Hainkoi, which fled after firing a few shots. This force retreating before the Russians, proved to be a most unfortunate circumstance for four or five Turkish villages on the way to Kezanlik. They took refuge in these villages, and fired on the Russians from the houses. The result was that the Russians set fire to every house from which they had been fired at, and, the fire spreading, these villages were for the most part destroyed.

In the meantime the news of the arrival of the Russians had spread to Kezanlik, and the Turkish commander there detached three battalions from the force guarding the Schipka Pass, and sent them to meet the enemy. The Russians met this force near Maglis, about two-thirds of the distance to Kezanlik, and the fight began at once. The Turks had taken position in the gardens, and opened fire as soon as within range. General Gourko then marched straight on Maglis. His troops formed in three columns, one consisting of infantry, close to the mountains. The middle column was cavalry and infantry, and the left column cavalry only, with orders to cover the flank, and if possible to turn that of the enemy. At Iflamur he was stopped by a strong position, and had to cope with the Turkish artillery, cavalry, and infantry. When he was pushing them hard, five battalions of Anatolian Nizams came up as reinforcements, and behaved very well. Their fire, begun as it was at 2,000 paces, caused the Russians considerable loss. The Russian orders were, not to open fire till within 600 paces of the enemy, and it was in this interval that the Russians suffered most. But when their distance was reached, their superiority in numbers allowed them to pour in a fire which soon compelled the Anatolians to give way, with a total loss, at Maglis and Iflamur, of 400 killed and wounded, many of whom fell at close quarters, sabre and bayonet having been freely used in the gardens and houses of the villages. But though forced to yield up their positions, the retreating Turks kept up a running fight all the way to Kezanlik, a distance of six or seven miles; and that they fought well is proved by the Russian loss in this running fight, which was some

600 killed and wounded, nearly the whole of which took place near Maglis, when the Turkish positions were first carried.

General Gourko and his forces got into Kezanlik in the evening, and were most enthusiastically greeted by the Bulgarian population. The Turkish inhabitants had withdrawn into their houses, frightened nearly to death. They had been kept in ignorance of the real progress of the Russians by the Turkish papers, which had been announcing a continued succession of victories for the Turkish arms. Their relief upon finding that the Russians passed through the town without molesting them was very great. But they still had the lower classes of their Bulgarian neighbours to deal with, and this proved to be a far more difficult matter than appeasing the Russians. These Bulgarians had many an old score to settle up, and they proceeded to call the Turks to account with a promptitude and decision which showed how firmly they believed that Turkish rule and Turkish domination were things of the past. Getting a Cossack or two, of whom there were always a number everywhere without any very absorbing occupation, to go along with them, they went into every Turkish house, and rifled it of as many valuables as they could conveniently carry off.

Money where it was to be obtained, jewellery, trinkets, ornaments, linen, clothing, carpets, were the things that were seized. No house was as yet, however, thoroughly pillaged and ruined, except a few that had been abandoned by their owners, and those owners were men who, owing to their misdeeds in 1876, did not dare to remain and allow themselves to fall into the hands of the Russians. One of these was a Sadoullah Bey, a namesake of the then Turkish minister at Berlin, whose house was filled with plunder taken from the Bulgarians during the massacres, and whose fields were likewise filled with cattle from the same source. This man's house was thoroughly pillaged and wrecked, as were the houses of half-a-dozen others of the same class. The fault of it all must be fixed upon General Gourko, who for two days allowed the town to take care of itself, so intent was he upon carrying out the task which had been entrusted to him. Until the pass of Schipka was taken, his position was, of course, a most precarious and critical one. With a small force, completely cut off from the main army, and separated from it by the Balkans, against which the Turks might have rapidly concentrated their whole army south of the Balkans, he was, of course, justified in trying to get possession of the pass, and thus secure his own safety, before looking after the property of the Turks. Still there appears to have been a method in this system. Almost every town occupied by the Russians was left, at some time or other, to the mercy of the Bulgarian population, to do the work for which the Russians did not care to take the responsibility.

However, having left Kezanlik to the Bulgarians, General Gourko, after reconnoitring the positions of the Turks in the Schipka Pass, determined upon an immediate attack. The village of Schipka is some six or seven miles north from Kezanlik, right at the foot of the mountains. A peculiarity of the Balkans is that, while on the north side there is a long series of hills, lesser mountains before you come to the main range, here on the south they stop off short, without any foot-hills at all, unless the other range south of the Tundja Valley may be considered such. As you ride along the valley of the Tundja, you see those monster masses of earth, and rock, and forest rising abruptly out of the plain without any intermediate hills or irregularities, like a row of sugar-loaves placed along a floor and rounded off at the top. The pass is therefore only a couple of miles from the foot of the mountain on the south, and the road up to it very steep and difficult. The Turks had fortified it in the most thorough and effective manner; and had the Russians been obliged to attack it from the other side, it would have cost them a fearful loss of life. As it was, it cost the Russians something like four hundred killed and wounded. But the Turks were discouraged when they found their positions were turned, and did not fight with any hope or chance of success. A Russian force, under Prince Mirski, had advanced on the Gabrova side, and it had been arranged that a combined attack was to be made on the pass from both sides at once; but owing to the difficulty of communication, the combination failed. The attack from the Gabrova side was made a day earlier than it ought to have been, and the one from the Kezanlik side a day later, and both were repulsed.

It had been designed that Gourko should reach Kezanlik on the 16th of July, and on

the 17th be free to assail in the rear the Turks holding the Schipka Pass, while Prince Mirski with the 9th division attacked them in front. But, as we have seen, he was delayed by hard fighting, and the troops were too much fatigued to move further on the same day after the occupation of Kezanlik. So there was no co-operation between General Gourko and Prince Mirski in attacking the Schipka Pass; but the latter, nevertheless, delivered an attack on that position marching southward from Gabrova. He sent against the Turks but one regiment, that of Orloff, which he divided into three columns. The pass was strongly fortified with six successive tiers of intrenchments and batteries, and defended by picked Turkish troops, Circassians, and Egyptians. The latter fought very hard. Of Prince Mirski's three columns, that on the right encountered little opposition, and went on some distance till it missed the support of the centre column, fought five or six hours, and then made good its lodgment in the hostile lines. The left column, consisting of two companies, missed its way, and was beset by twelve companies of Turkish soldiers, and had to fight a retreating combat for four hours against terrible odds, losing eight officers killed and wounded, and about 150 men. It was brought out of action by the only officer left standing, and he was wounded.

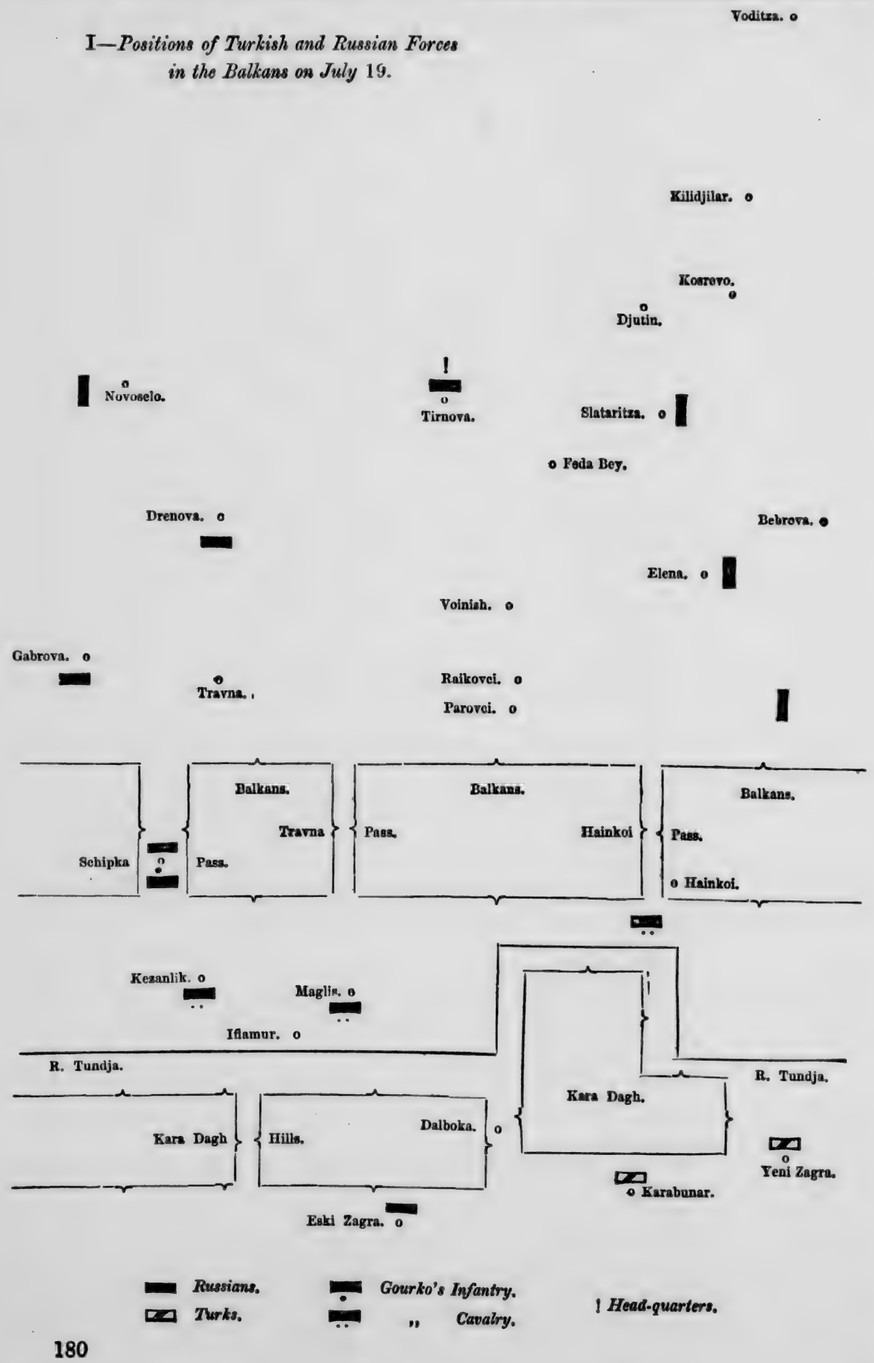
On the 18th, General Gourko, his men refreshed, advanced to the attack of the Schipka position from the rear. Two battalions of rifles formed his advance. As they neared the rear of the position, a flag of truce came out with a *parlementaire*; for the Turks, though they had laid in an ample supply of provisions, had forgotten to make arrangements for a supply of water, not having foreseen that their rear would be attacked, where there was plenty of water to be had.

As soon as the flag of truce was displayed the Russians at once halted, and an officer acting as escort went forward to meet the *parlementaire*. While negotiations were going on, the Russian riflemen, in their curiosity, quitted their extended formation, and drew together into a mass behind where the officer was communing with the *parlementaire*. The Turks seeing this movement, imagined that the Russians were going to fall upon them and massacre them, and poured volleys of rifle fire in upon them from their positions. The *parlementaire* took to his heels at a signal which the Russians heard but did not comprehend. So sudden and fierce was the fire, that in their two battalions the Russians lost one hundred and forty-two men killed and wounded in a few minutes. The survivors in their fury waited for no order to attack, nor regarded any formation. With one common impulse and with yells of wrath they rushed on. It was a bad quarter of an hour for the Turks; but the riflemen finding no signs of co-operation in the attack from the north by Prince Mirski, contented themselves with driving back the Turks some distance, and occupied the abandoned Turkish camp in the rear of the fortifications. On the same night, in reply to General Gourko's summons to the Turks to surrender and abandon the further unavailing defence of the pass, there came a letter from the Turkish commander, Mehemed Pasha, offering to surrender. Negotiations were entered into, and the hour for the surrender of the Turks was fixed for twelve o'clock the next day. An armistice was arranged, and early on that morning the sanitary detachments went forward to bring in the wounded which the rifle battalions had been forced to leave behind. They sent back word that the Turks had fled and vacated the position. The offer of surrender had been a *ruse* to gain time, and by daybreak the Turks had retreated safely toward Sophia.

Meanwhile, on the 18th, Prince Mirski had remained quiet, waiting for further information about Gourko's movements. But on the 19th, young Skobeloff, taking some troops of Mirski's, had pushed forward a *reconnaissance* into the pass from the north. To his surprise he met with no opposition as he passed line after line of fortifications, and he hastily abandoned Turkish camps, with fires yet burning, rations half cooked, and half-written telegrams. At length he reached the crest of the pass, and the view to the south opened before him. Here he saw the tents of General Gourko's camp spread out before him, and within an hour the two columns, Prince Mirski's and General Gourko's, had joined hands across the Balkans. The Schipka and Hainkoi passes were in the power of the Russians. This took place on July 19th, the positions then being as shown in the following sketch, I.

Thus was accomplished the march of General Gourko across the mountains, which

I—*Positions of Turkish and Russian Forces in the Balkans on July* 19.



was regarded at the time as a feat for which a parallel could only be found in the annals of the American war, which treat of Stonewall Jackson's celebrated cavalry raids. But, as we have seen, there was really nothing remarkable at all about it; and a study of sketch I, will show that the Russians were guilty of such stupendous blunders, that not even the Seraskeriat could avoid taking advantage of them in some small degree.

Looking at this sketch, we see that, starting from Tirnova, the Russians enclosed a circle which ran through two passes, the Schipka and the Hainkoi. But the circle was not complete. It was broken by the Travna Pass. Through this pass, whilst engaging the two others, the Turks might have pierced the very centre of the Russian alignment, and have turned both the Hainkoi and the Schipka, whilst Osman Pasha advanced from the west, and Mehemed Ali from the east. But the Turkish commanders either knew nothing of this pass, or they had not the energy to make it practicable, as General Gourko did with the Hainkoi Pass. This, however, does not excuse the Russians from having neglected it. At a later period, as we shall see, this neglect, had it been availed of by the Turks, might have cost them the whole campaign; and had any other staff but a Turkish staff been entrusted with the defence of the country, it is morally certain that it would have demanded all their exertions for the Russians to have escaped across the Danube.

Such was the military position in Turkey on July 19th, 1877. Generals Niepokoitschitzki and Levitzki had successfully blown their bubble. It was radiant with many colours. The blue Danube, the yellow cornfields of Bulgaria, the green forests of the Balkans, vied therein with the crimson of Kezanlik roses; and imaginative enthusiasts even thought they could discern the glittering waters of the Bosphorus, and the sheen of the crescent on the dome of St. Sophia. And ever more gorgeous grew the colours, and grew deeper and deeper in intensity, till the black spot began to appear where the bubble at last bursts. That black spot in the Russian bubble was Plevna; and it was to burst on the very next day.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE SITUATION AT CONSTANTINOPLE.

THE news of the passage of the Danube, the fall of Nicopoli, the advance of Russians to the Lom and beyond the Balkans—all within three weeks—caused a perfect panic in Constantinople. The fugitives streaming into the capital from all directions, increased the confusion; and at Dolmabagtche, the Sultan's palace, the advisability of migrating to Broussa was seriously discussed. The ministry, of course, had to suffer for the misfortunes of the Turkish armies. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Safvet Pasha, who already began to talk about suing for peace, and Redif Pasha, the Minister of War, as well as Abdul Kerim Pasha, were dismissed the day after General Gourko had joined hands with Prince Mirski across the Balkans. Redif Pasha and Abdul Kerim were banished to the island of Lemnos. The Sheikh-ul-Islam, Hairullah Effendi, was also dismissed, and succeeded by Kara Halil Effendi; whilst Mustapha Pasha was appointed Minister of War, and Mehemed Ali, an officer of Franco-German extraction—Charles Detroit by name, and born in Magdeburg—was nominated to the command of the army of the Danube in lieu of Abdul Kerim. Safvet was succeeded in the ministry for foreign affairs by Aarifi Pasha, Turkish ambassador in Vienna. South of the Balkans, Reouf Pasha was succeeded by Suleiman Pasha, who was recalled from his campaign in Montenegro to take charge of the armies in this direction.

Aarifi Pasha and the Sheikh-ul-Islam did not happily inaugurate their tenure of office. Whilst the Sheikh-ul-Islam excited the Mussulmans from the pulpit by the accounts of the cruelties their brethren were suffering at the hands of the Russians and Bulgarians, Aarifi Pasha addressed a circular note to the European powers, draw-

ing attention to, and protesting against the barbarities perpetrated in Bulgaria and the Dobrudja, and repudiating, on behalf of the Sultan, any responsibility if the Mussulman population should avenge itself, in other parts of the empire, upon the Christians.

This despatch was a ridiculous blunder. Rightly or wrongly, the public opinion of the masses in Europe had pronounced sentence against the Porte on account of the massacres in 1876; and naturally this last step of the Porte placed it, in the eyes of that same public opinion, in the position of the wolf who accused the lamb of being his enemy and oppressor.

Even Mr. Layard had to protest strongly against this policy of the new minister; and still more plainly did Prince Reuss, the German ambassador, speak on the subject to Edhem Pasha, the Grand Vizier, and protest against the language of Aarifi Pasha's note, which, he said, was calculated to incite the Mussulmans to reprisals on their Christian fellow-subjects. These representations, supported by those of all the other ambassadors, were so strongly urged, that Aarifi was forced to resign and yield up his post to Server Pasha. At the same time, the agitation in favour of a recall of Midhat Pasha was recommenced; but it led to no result, chiefly in consequence of the intrigues of Mahmoud Damat, the brother-in-law of the Sultan, who was persuaded by him that Midhat was his most dangerous enemy.

Not less intense was the excitement in London when the rapid passage of the Danube and the Balkans, which seemed to presage an early termination of the campaign, became known. When the Danube was passed, Admiral Hornby proceeded, on July 3, to Besika Bay with nine ironclads, followed within a few days by four more; and when Gourko had forced the Balkans, the garrison in Malta was reinforced by 3,000 troops. Sir A. Layard proposed to the Porte that the British fleet should pass the Dardanelles, and that Gallipoli should be occupied by British troops in order to assist in keeping order in case of any outbreak of the Mussulman population against the Christians. But the Porte replied, that unless England was prepared to enter into an offensive and defensive alliance with Turkey, they would not be able to give their consent to either of these measures; and that if, nevertheless, the Turkish government should insist upon carrying them out, it would be, at the least, under protest on their part.

This, however, the British government was not prepared to do; and in the debate in the House of Lords on July 19th—whilst Gourko's and Mirski's men were fraternising on the top of the Schipka Pass—Lord Derby declared, in reply to a proposal that England should offer her mediation, that he did not consider the time for such a measure had arrived; and that as for an armed intervention for the protection of British interests, that could be best effectuated at the close of the campaign, when both the combatants would be exhausted by the struggle, but England be fresh, in the full enjoyment of her power, and unembarrassed in any way. He had informed Count Schouvaloff, he continued, at what point British interests began, and which would be defended by force of arms; and Count Schouvaloff had thanked him for his frankness. But till those interests were seriously threatened, England would keep free from any engagements which might trammel her hereafter; and, for the present, would do no more than keep step with the course of events.

As for the other powers immediately concerned in the fate of Turkey, their action—or rather inaction—presents no points of interest. They all followed the example of England. In Hungary, the Magyars clamoured in popular meetings for intervention in favour of the Turks, just as, in England, popular meetings, under the leadership of Mr. Gladstone and John Bright, clamoured for intervention in favour of the Russian allies—Bulgar and Serb. These demonstrations had no effect, in either country, on the policy of the government. Austria-Hungary was aware, that let things turn out as they might, there was not much to fear from Russia; and that if they let things follow their natural course, Austria-Hungary would also be masters of the situation in European Turkey whilst England commanded in Asiatic Turkey. Bosnia and the Herzegovina would be there for them to take or leave as might be most advisable, according to circumstances. Greece was in the peculiar position of fearing the Russians more than she feared the Turks, yet had not the heart to take side with the Turks nor against them. Having seen how successfully Italy had acquired fresh territory year after year by fighting and being defeated, the Greeks thought it

would be rather a fine thing to try and acquire an extension of their positions by not fighting at all.

There was thus no help anywhere for the Turks; and, seeing that this was the case, and convinced that the struggle was one of life and death, they determined to do their best and die in harness.

On this point they were unanimous; and in no small measure were they justified in regarding the struggle as one of life and death, in regarding the war as one of extermination determined upon by the Russians, when the accounts came in of the cruelties to which their brethren were subjected on both sides of the Balkans, in revenge for what at least was, in the great majority of cases, but a sentimental grievance, exploited to the utmost by the Russians for their own purposes.

That the material condition of the Bulgarian peasant was very good, compared even with that of those in other far more favoured countries whose intelligence and moral qualities secured them a social position much higher than that of the Bulgarian, with much less national prosperity, is a fact acknowledged on all sides, even by the correspondent of the *Daily News*. The Thuringian peasant, the vintners of the Tyrol, of the Basque provinces, the clodhoppers of Suffolk, enjoyed social privileges immeasurably above those of the Bulgarian, with a quarter of the Bulgarian's material claims to consideration. But then the Thuringian peasant, the vintner and the clodhopper were animated by a very different sense of morals.

The character of the Bulgarian has been well drawn even by his friends; and a repulsive picture it is. It is all very well to talk of oppression having made him what he is; but his whole history, long before the Turks ever made their appearance, does not recommend him. The other races of the Turkish empire, Armenians, Greeks, Jews, Arabs, have all been subjected to the same course of oppression, but none of them have sunk to the moral depth of the Bulgar, excited to the full exercise of his worst qualities by the civilising Russ.

We have seen what the Russians and Bulgarians did at Biela and Kezanlik. At Sistova, between the period of the flight of the Turks and the entry of the Russian troops, the Bulgarians sacked and wrecked the Turkish houses without a single exception. The pillage and destruction were as sweeping and universal as if the place had been sacked by a victorious army after storming. There was not a whole pane of glass in the window of any Turkish house in all Sistova. The wrecked interiors presented an indescribable chaos of destruction. Cupboards were smashed, floors torn up, shelves torn down, stoves broken, in search of secreted money. The floors were strewn with miscellaneous *débris* and torn books printed in curious characters. Judging from the number of these in the better houses, the wealthier Turks of Sistova seem to have been a reading people. The furniture was broken in sheer wantonness, and the plaster shattered. The divans were broken up: in fine, the ruin was thorough and universal so far as the interiors of the houses were concerned. Nor was the destruction confined to the habitations. There were eight mosques in Sistova, and all were wrecked. Their interiors were scenes of indescribable destruction. The very railings were broken into small pieces, as if in the keen zest and gloating enjoyment of laying waste. The few Turkish shops and stores in Sistova were pillaged of everything valuable, and the fixtures of the interiors were smashed into fragments and splinters. Nothing Turkish in the place escaped wreck, and the aspect of uninjured dwellings intermingled with others reduced to the extremity of dilapidation was strange and significant; for whilst the Turks of Sistova, to judge by the wrecks of their residences, appear to have been a thriving people in a lazy, easy-going way, the Bulgarians showed few indications of having been materially oppressed, or had thriven wonderfully on oppression. Many of their houses were large and handsome. Paris fashions were not unknown to, or unstudied by, the Bulgarian ladies. To excuse their conduct, the Bulgarians asserted that the Turks were committing atrocities in the interior as they retired; but the correspondents with the Russian army, who had every opportunity to satisfy themselves on the point, stated that the conduct of the Turks, as they evacuated Bulgaria step by step, had a claim to the admiration of the civilised world. They heard once and again of isolated acts of cruelty—there were two Bulgarians with broken heads in the hospital at Zimnitza. But what did the world anticipate? Was it not that the retiring Turks would make Bulgaria a wilderness and a solitude? And how was this anticipation justified? In Sistova no Turk

touched the hair of the head of a Bulgarian, handled no scrap of the property of a Bulgarian. In the intervening villages the Bulgarian inhabitants abode under their unharmed roof-trees, with their flocks and herds around them, fearful only in the apprehension of the visits from the Cossacks, which they had already learned were not simple visits of politeness. The crops, uninjured, waved rich and ripe in the fields; the hay stood in cocks in the fields; there was corn, and wine, and oil, and meal in the land. What the people of Biela suffered in property was at the hands of lawless Russian straggling soldiers, not at the hands of the Turk, "unspeakable" though he may be. It is, indeed, not too much to say, that in acting thus the Turks acted erroneously, speaking in a purely military sense. If their military policy was that of retreat, the complement of that policy was to have left desolation behind them, not to leave a land flowing with milk and honey for the behoof of the invader. When Kutusoff and Barclay de Tolly retreated from Minks to the Beresina, and from Beresina to Smolensk, and from Smolensk to Moscow, before the legions of Napoleon, did they leave behind them a fat land, villages teeming with flocks and herds, growing crops asking for the sickle, granaries for the replenishment of the provision trains? We all know that they left desolation and ashes, and that the desolation and the ashes have counted to Russia for heroism and patriotism, and, what is more to the purpose, for sound military strategy.

But let the Turk have his due. If deficient in the legitimate resources of the military art, he for once, and from whatever motive, erred on the side of humanity. But it cannot be said that the Bulgarians appreciated his forbearance. We have told the story of the wreck of the Turkish quarter of Sistova. Bulgarian Biela was not quite so rough on Turkish Biela, but it wrought not a little mischief on the latter nevertheless. The Turkish Bey there was a good man, held in high esteem among the Christians, for he consistently protected them from the lawless exactions of the Circassians to the best of his power. The Bulgarian inhabitants besought him to remain, assuring him that they would speak of him in such terms to the Russians that no evil could befal him. But the Bey did not relish the outlook, and wisely departed with the people of his own nationality. One would have thought that the least the Bulgarians could have done would have been to have respected the good man's house; but not only was it sacked, the very floor was wantonly broken through. So much, then, for Bulgarian promises and gratitude.

Hearing all this, exaggerated ten-fold, no doubt, by the fugitives with the increase of their terror and the further they got on their flight, it is not to be wondered at that a fierce determination arose among the Turks so sell their lives and their property as dearly as they could. And that sale began on July 20th, and lasted for six months.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE FIRST ATTACKS ON PLEVNA.

WHEN the commander of the 9th corps proceeded against Nicopoli, he made the omission of protecting his flank by not sending cavalry to occupy Plevna, then only weakly held. Afterwards an easy chance did not offer. A Turkish column from Widdin, marching too late to succour Nicopoli, turned aside and occupied Plevna. With intent to repair the blunder, General Krüdener sent three regiments of infantry against Plevna, and without a previous *reconnaissance*. These, after hard fighting, actually occupied the town. They had laid aside their cloaks and packs in the streets, and had quitted the fighting column formation, believing all was over, and were singing as they straggled along. No patrols had been pushed into the recesses of the town. No cavalry had been sent forward beyond. The whole business was slovenly to a degree. The penalty was paid. Suddenly, from a hundred windows and balconies, a vehement fire was poured into the troops straggling along the streets. They were beset on all sides, and had to retreat. One regiment left its packs where they had been taken off in the street. During the retreat, more or less precipitate, 2,771 men and 66 officers were lost. One regiment lost nearly 2,000 men. Thus curtly was the first repulse of the Russians before Plevna made known to the world; and it was not until a month later that the details of the affair became published.

There was much controversy as to who was to blame for this catastrophe; but though it was generally assumed that Krüdener was responsible for it, yet, considering the fact that, after some temporary relegation, he was entrusted with the command of his corps as heretofore, the assumption is that the staff was entirely responsible for the mischance.

It was said that Krüdener had orders to occupy Plevna as soon as he had crossed the river. But it is clear that his orders were also to seize Nicopoli, and, by the same process of reasoning, Lovatz also; and it is clear that he had not men enough to carry out this triple operation. Krüdener may therefore be identified with the Russian staff, and the Russian staff identified with him. Both, no doubt, committed mistakes; and if, as Krüdener affirms, he could not help doing so, he should have resigned his command.

As a matter of fact, General Krüdener, occupied with the siege of Nicopoli, not only did not seize Plevna, but even withdrew the cavalry that had been sent there for that purpose to Nicopoli. As cavalry could hardly be used for the storming of redoubts, his object in doing this can scarcely be conceived, as he had quite enough men to prevent the Turkish garrison from cutting its way out. The only explanation is that he had some inkling of the presence of the Turks on his flank, and wished to secure himself from attack whilst occupied with Nicopoli. Had he even occupied Plevna immediately after the fall of Nicopoli, all might have been well. Had he even sent out the cavalry to ascertain where the Turkish army was, and give warning of its advance, all might still have been well. The neglect to occupy Plevna as long as he positively knew the Turkish army was still far away, would have been of slight consequence. But he did not send a single squadron to see whether that army was approaching Plevna or not, and the first detachment of his army marched into Plevna two hours after the Turks had arrived there, without having thrown out a scout or an advance guard, just as though they were marching through the district of Moscow. This in the enemy's country, within ten miles of an army of fifty thousand men. But, at the same time, it is evident that no such important and vital measure as the occupation of Plevna and the protection of the right flank, should have been or could have been left to the care of one man already occupied with an important siege.

The man who should have looked after this matter, and have ascertained that there was no possibility of the Turks seizing the important strategic position at Plevna, was General Levitski. He was practically the executive officer of the grand duke's staff, who had to look after details, see that orders were executed, find the best way of executing them, and who was, besides, the leading spirit in the military councils for the direction of the campaign in general. General Niepokoitschitzki was old, and did not take a very active part in affairs, so that it was Levitski who was the real chief of the staff, and mainly responsible for the direction of affairs. It may not be amiss to say a word about General Levitski here.

He was among the youngest generals of the army, and was appointed to his high position on account of the talent he displayed in the peace manœuvres at St. Petersburg. Here, on the level plains about the capital, where every inch of the ground and every road was known to him, where the fighting was done with blank cartridges, and there were neither killed nor wounded, General Levitski succeeded in handling an army corps very well, and usually won considerable advantages over his adversaries. Fighting a real war and handling an army of two hundred thousand men is, however, a different kind of thing from directing those peace manœuvres; and, besides the affair at Plevna, there were tactical faults in the distribution of the army for which he was answerable. The army had been, in fact, disposed of in the most unheard-of manner. Divisions, brigades, and even regiments were cut up, parcelled out, and sent to the four points of the compass, and dispersed so far that it was doubtful whether they would ever be able to unite again during the war. The 14th division, for instance, was an example of this. There was

a part of it on the road to Osman Bazar, a part at or near Elena, a part at Hainkoi, a part at Selvi, and a part at Tirnova—points that had no tactical connection with each other.

All this confusion arose from General Levitzki's miscalculating the forces required upon given points, and then remedying the mistake in a hand-to-mouth sort of way, by seizing troops wherever he could get them—a battalion here and a regiment there—to strengthen the respective positions. Then when news was received of the occupation of Plevna by the Turks, Lovatz should have been instantly seized by the Russians; and for two very good strategical reasons. In the first place, with the Turks at Lovatz it was just as impossible for the Russians to cross the Balkans as it was with the Turks in possession of Plevna. The possession of either of these points effectually checked the Russian advance, and Lovatz, equally with Plevna, was most important for the Russians as well as the Turks.

But even this was not all. A glance at sketch F will show that the road from Plevna to Sophia passes at no great distance from Lovatz, and that, consequently, had the Russians seized Lovatz as soon as the Turks occupied Plevna, they would have threatened the Turkish line of communications, and their best line of retreat. The possession of Lovatz was also indispensable for a successful attack upon Plevna, for it would have enabled the Russians to completely turn the Turkish positions on the south, and to have brought at least one more division—the 9th, then at Gabrova and Selvi—to the attack. In fact, the possession of Lovatz was so necessary to the Russians before attacking Plevna, that, had the Turks occupied it at the same time as Plevna, the Russians should have taken it before attacking Plevna at all. Yet a week or ten days elapsed between the seizure of Plevna and Lovatz by the Turks, and the Russian general-in-chief never thought of profiting by the opportunity thus offered him. The mistake, therefore, of allowing it to be seized and fortified by the Turks, was only less than that of allowing Plevna to fall into their hands. The capture of Plevna by the Turks was a surprise—caused by the most gross and culpable carelessness and stupidity, it is true—but it was still a surprise for the Russian staff. The same cannot be said of the capture of Lovatz; and the fact of their not having forestalled the Turks looks as though neither General Niepokoitschitzki nor General Levitski understood the importance of this strategical point until it was too late.

Under these circumstances, with the Turks in force at Plevna and Lovatz, orders were issued for the reinforcement of General Krüdener's troops. Part of the 4th corps, which was crossing the Danube at Zimnitza on their way to Tirnova, were ordered to proceed to Karagatch, where they were to rendezvous with Prince Schahoffskoi and the larger portion of the 11th corps, which had hitherto been engaged in the futile and thankless bombardment of Rustzuk, about which so much ink has been wasted. Then crossing the river at Zimnitza, the corps had marched on Tirnova, and hopes rose high in its ranks that for its soldiers no more would be the function of hewers of wood and drawers of water, but that they would cross the Balkans and see fighting and earn glory and crosses among the rose-gardens of the Tundja Valley. These hopes were shattered. A day's march from Tirnova the corps was ordered to bend to the east, and take up a defensive position on the line of a Turkish march from Schumla by way of Osman Bazar against Tirnova and the Russian communications between that place and the Danube. But, on the 20th of July, there came to the 11th corps the order for yet another long march to assist Krüdener, and it accomplished the distance from Kosarevatch, some twenty miles east of Tirnova, to the vicinity of Plevna, in six days, and that in the intense heat of the summer.

At the same time the 9th corps came up from before Nicopoli, under General Krüdener, who sent General Skobeloff to take the command of a brigade of Circassian Cossacks, with which he was to operate against Lovatz and protect the Russian left flank.

On the morning of the 29th, Prince Schahoffskoi and his head-quarters moved from Karagatch, and first went forward some distance on the direct road towards Plevna, and advanced into the vicinity of Grivitza, without seeing anything of the enemy. The head-quarters were faithfully followed at a very short interval by the whole of the head-quarter baggage train. Now, the head-quarter baggage train of a Russian general commanding an army corps, and of his staff, is no light thing. Lord

Albemarle tells us, that in 1828, in the Russian column which crossed the Balkans under General Diebitsch, every general officer had his caleche. With the Russian army, it is not alone that every general officer has his carriage—most have more than one—but the larger proportion of field-officers have vehicles also. On Prince Schahoffskoi's staff there was a baggage waggon between every two officers, and a surprising number of miscellaneous vehicles besides. The chief of the artillery had a travelling chariot drawn by four horses, driven after the manner of a four-in-hand. Servants swarmed; and every servant contrived to find a place in or on a vehicle of some kind or other. The staff train was half a mile long if it was a yard, to say nothing of escort, suttlers, and the priest, who rode in a vehicle of his own. A train such as this must always be a great embarrassment and impediment; even in an advance with favourable means of communication it is an incumbrance; in retreat, along bad roads, it must be a nuisance of the most abominable character; and here it was following the staff beyond the outposts, until it was countermarched with considerable precipitation, when the chief turned his horse's head and rode backward within his own forepost line, to the bivouac ground, near Poradim.

Here, all night, the troops lay on the grass, with tents struck and horses saddled, waiting for an *alerte*. It was believed that it was the intention to make the attack on July 30th, and that the preliminary positions were to be taken up under cover of the darkness. Fires were made up as if the army were remaining in its positions, with intent to delude the enemy, whilst waiting for orders from General Krüdener; but they came not. About midnight, two officers rode to him from Prince Schahoffskoi, and brought back instructions that he meant to delay the attack, partly because some of the troops had not come up far enough, and partly to rest the whole after their long and fatiguing march. So about four o'clock in the morning the troops pitched tents again, unsaddled their horses, and lay down on their cloaks for a long unbroken welcome sleep, for the troops were sorely worn with incessant marching, and the cavalry horses were almost exhausted. One great anxiety was relieved. Reports were brought in that no more Turkish troops were marching from Plevna on Lovatz. This removed apprehension of a flank attack in force from Lovatz on the left of the Russian converging assault upon the Plevna position. Krüdener and Schahoffskoi thus considered themselves free to concentrate their attention on the latter place, leaving Skobeloff and his cavalry to watch Lovatz, and, indeed, if possible to occupy it.

During the day (July 30th) the outposts were advanced, and the whole army crept up somewhat closer, the *reconnaissances* feeling the Turks at Radisevo, Tucenitza, Bogot, and Slatina, whilst Skobeloff ascertained that not only was Lovatz strongly held, but was being still further reinforced, and that the Turks also held the line of villages between Plevna and Lovatz with detachments of infantry and cavalry.

In the afternoon a general council of war was held at Poradim, at which were present Baron Krüdener, Prince Schahoffskoi, and the generals of division and brigades. The colonels of regiments and staff officers waited to receive instructions as to the final dispositions. It was settled that the action should begin next morning, July 31st, at five o'clock by a general concentric advance on the Turkish positions in front of Plevna, and that Prince Schahoffskoi and the general staff should move forward at four o'clock. Several aides of the Grand Duke Nicholas arrived, and were detailed to various points to make observations, and after the battle to carry reports of the results back to Tirnova. The gravity of the task before the army was fully recognised, for *reconnaissances* had proved the Turks to be in greater force than was at first believed. Twenty thousand regulars had come from Widdin, and the Turkish positions were known to be strong by nature, and strengthened yet further by art.

The night between the 30th and 31st was very wet, and troops did not begin to march forward before six instead of four.

The number of infantry combatants was actually about 32,000, with 160 field cannon and three brigades of cavalry. Baron Krüdener was on the right with the whole of the 31st division in his fighting line, and three regiments of the 5th division in reserve at Karagatch. He was to attack in two columns, a brigade in each. On the left was Schahoffskoi with a brigade of the 32nd division and a brigade of the 30th division in fighting line. Another brigade of the 30th division was in reserve at Pelisat. The Turkish position was convex, somewhat

in horseshoe shape, but more pointed. Baron Krüdener was to attack the Turkish left flank from Grivitza towards the river Vid. Schahoffskoi was to assail their right from Radisevo, also towards the river Vid. On the left flank of the attack stood Skobeloff, with a brigade of Cossacks, a battalion of infantry, and a battery, to cope with the Turkish troops on the line from Plevna to Lovatz, and to hinder them from interfering with the development of Schahoffskoi's attack. On the right flank stood Lascareff, with a brigade of the 9th cavalry, to guard Krüdener from a counter flank attack.

The main fault of the dispositions was, that Krüdener and Schahoffskoi were practically independent of each other, that the two attacks were too far apart, and without a connecting link; but the gravest evil, which did not rest with the commanders on the spot, was the weakness of the assailing force. After the previous reverse nothing should have been left to chance, and it was tempting Providence to attack the Turks in a strong defensive position with inferior numbers.

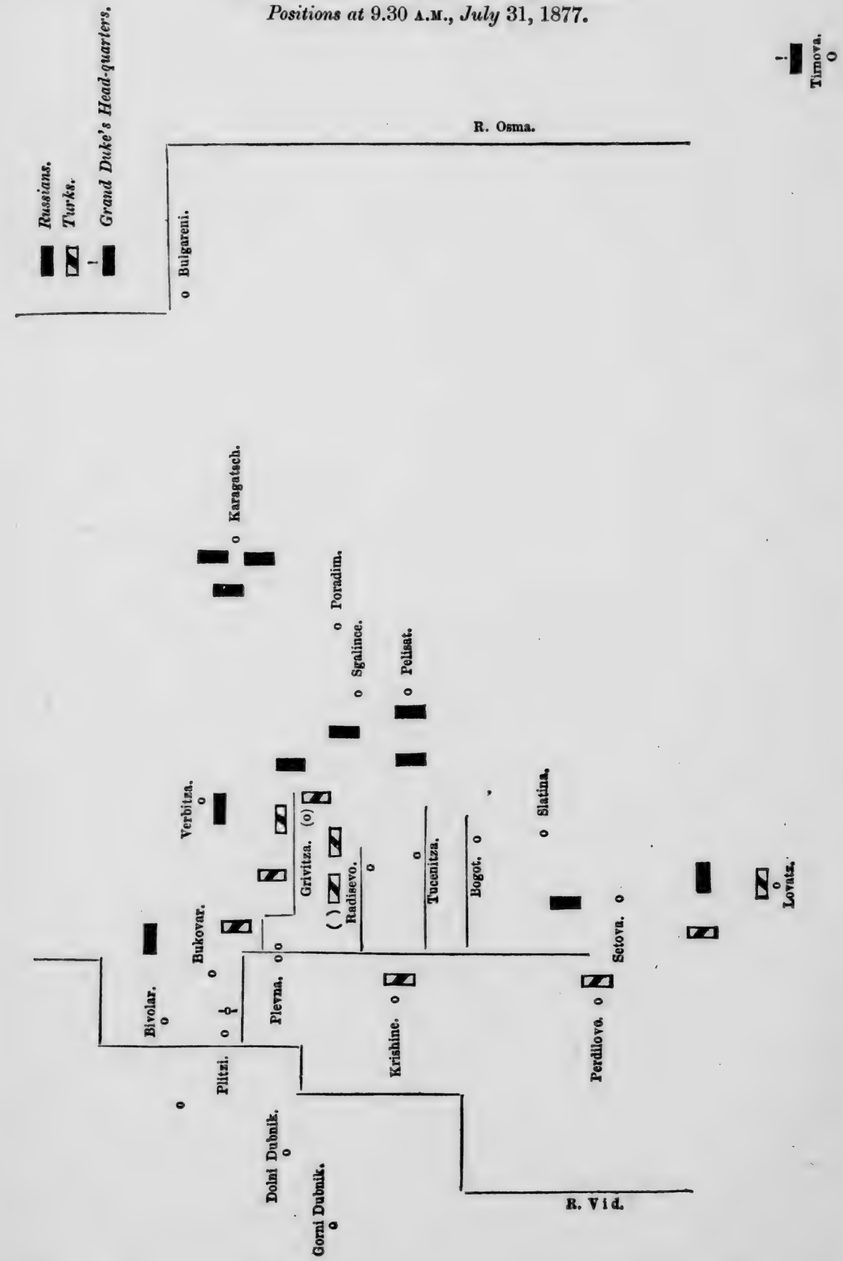
The morning was gloomy, which the Russians regarded as a favourable omen. The troops cheered vigorously as they passed the general. Physically there were no finer men in the world. In the pink of hard condition, and marching without packs, carrying only great-coat, haversack with rations, and ammunition, they seemed fit to go anywhere and do anything. Schahoffskoi's right column marched over Pelisat and Sgalince. The left column headed straight for Radisevo. The artillery were pushed forward from the first, and worked independently. Krüdener, on the right, opened the action at 9.30 A.M., bringing a battery into fire from the ridge on the Turkish redoubt above the village of Grivitza. At first it seemed as if the Turks were surprised. It was some time ere they replied; but then they did so vigorously, and gave quite as good as they got from Krüdener. Meantime Prince Schahoffskoi bore way towards Radisevo, the position at this time (half-past nine) being as is shown in the following sketch (J, No. 1).

Plevna lies in the hollow of a valley, lying north and south. The ground which intervened between the Russians and this valley was singularly diversified. Imagine three great solid waves with their faces set edgeways to the valley of Plevna, and therefore end on to the Russians also. The central wave was the widest of the three, and *à cheval* of it were the main Turkish positions, of which there were three, one behind the other. Although the broadest wave, it was not the highest. The right and left waves were both so high, that one on the crest of either could look down across the intervening valleys into the positions of the central wave. But then the Turks were astride of all three waves. The crest of the ridge above Radisevo they did not hold in force. Thus far Prince Schahoffskoi was fortunate; but on the most northerly wave of the three, that against which Baron Krüdener was operating, and which was broader and flatter, the Turks had intrenched position behind intrenched position. Both on the top of this ridge and of the central swell stood the camps of Turks with tents all standing behind the earthworks, as if they had taken a lease of the ground in perpetuity.

Baron Krüdener's cannon had opened fire, not only in front of Grivitza, which was the toe of the horseshoe, but against its northern flank also. The return fire, however, was so heavy that he made no way, and for the time, at least, was fast held. Schahoffskoi's artillery tried to aid him from the crest of the ridge by bringing a battery into action against the Grivitza earthwork; but the traverse of the redoubt was so high that it did no harm. At noon the whole attention of Schahoffskoi's forces was concentrated on Radisevo.

This village lay in a deep valley behind the southern wave or ridge of the Turkish position, and there was another ridge behind this valley. On that ridge the Russian artillery, placed by Colonel Bischoffski, chief of Prince Schahoffskoi's staff, were firing in line on the Turkish guns on the ridge beyond the valley, with fine effect. The infantry went down into the valley under this covering fire and carried Radisevo with a trivial skirmish, for in the village there were only a handful of Bashi-Bazouks, who, standing their ground, were promptly bayonetted. The Russian infantry remained under cover of the village whilst the batteries prepared the way. These, firing with great rapidity and accuracy, soon compelled the Turkish cannon to quit the opposite height, and it was then practicable for the batteries to cross the valley passing through Radisevo and come into action in the position vacated by the Turkish guns. Following them, the infantry also descended into the hollow, and lay down in the glades about the village,

J—No. 1.—*The Second Battle of Plevna.*
Positions at 9.30 A.M., *July* 31, 1877.



and on the steep slope behind the guns in action.

Presently the five batteries were ranged along the crest of the ridge beyond Radisevo, directing a converging fire on the Turkish guns on the central wave or ridge beyond. Notwithstanding their exposed position, their fire was heavy and steady over the village of Radisevo, into which were falling many Turkish shells, which flew over the ridge occupied by the Russian cannon. It was strange to witness the peasants standing in bewildered groups in front of their houses with the children playing unconcernedly about the dust-heaps, and enjoying themselves without misgiving as to danger whilst the shells were crashing into the place. Still not a single peasant was injured by the shell-fire, although several hundred shells must have fallen in the village. In the Turkish positions, four batteries were defending the earthwork about the little village, which seemed to be the foremost of the fixed and constructed positions on the central ridge. It stood on a little knoll, and was well placed for searching with its fire the valleys by which it could be approached. Beyond were more, and yet more, earthworks right to the edge of the broad valley, where the roofs and church towers of Plevna sparkled in the sunshine from out a circle of verdure. The place had an aspect of serenity strangely contrasting with the turmoil of the cannon-fire raging in front of it. It seemed so near that a short ride would have brought one there to breakfast; yet, ere it could be reached, much blood would have to flow. Already men were dropping fast in the battery, for the position of the guns was greatly exposed, and the Turkish practice was mostly very good.

Up to one o'clock the infantry had nowhere been engaged. The operations hitherto had been confined to the artillery. Krüdener, on the right flank, had scarcely progressed at all, and his co-operation in a simultaneously combined attack on both flanks was indispensable to success. He seemed little farther forward than at the commencement, whereas Prince Schahoffskoi was at comparatively close quarters, and within striking distance. Krüdener was behind, either because his attack was not pushed energetically, or because he was encountering obstacles which the left wing had not met. But Krüdener was generally regarded as a slow soldier and an unenergetic man, and Schahoffskoi, in his impatience, determined to act independently, and strike the Turks single-handed. If Krüdener was slow, Schahoffskoi was rash. If the whole force was too small for the work, how much more so was one-half that force? Fearful was the retribution exacted for that error of judgment.

About half-past two the second period of the battle commenced. To ascertain whether the artillery had sufficiently prepared the way for the infantry to act, Schahoffskoi and his staff rode on to the ridge where the batteries were firing, and had to dismount precipitately under a hurricane of shell-fire which the Turkish gunners directed against the little group. A long and anxious inspection seemed to satisfy Schahoffskoi and the chief of his staff that the time had come when the infantry could strike with effect. This conclusion was arrived at in the face of the fact that the left flank attack had but three brigades all told, one of which constituted the reserve. In other words, he was about to launch ten or twelve thousand men against commanding intrenched positions held by an immensely superior force, and no whit crushed by preliminary artillery fire.

Two brigades of infantry were lying down in the Radisevo valley, behind the guns; the 32nd division—General Tchekoff's brigade—on the right, the 1st brigade of the 30th division on the left. The leading battalions were ordered to rise up and advance over the ridge to attack. The order was hailed with glad cheers, for the infantry had been chafing at their inaction, and the battalions, with a swift, swinging step, streamed forward through the glen and up the steep slope beyond, marching in company columns, the rifle companies leading. The artillery had heralded this movement with increased rapidity of fire, which was maintained to cover and aid the infantry when the latter had crossed the crest and were descending the slope and crossing the intervening valley to the assault of the Turkish position. Just before reaching the crest the battalions deployed into line at the double, and crossed it in this formation, breaking to pass through the intervals between the guns. The Turkish shells whistled through them as they advanced in line, and men went down in numbers; but the long undulating line tramped steadily over the stubbles of the ridge, and crashed through the undergrowth on the descent beyond. No skirmishing line was thrown out in

advance. The fighting line remained in the formation for a time, till, what with impatience and what with men falling, it broke into a ragged spray of humanity, and surged on swiftly, loosely, and with no close cohesion. The supports were close up, and ran up into the fighting line independently and eagerly. It was a veritable chase of fighting-men impelled by a burning desire to get forward and come to close quarters with the enemy firing at them there from behind the shelter of the trenches.

Presently all along the face of the advancing infantry burst forth flaring volleys of rifle fire. The jagged line of flashes sprang onward through the maize-fields, gradually assuming a concave shape. The Turkish position was neared. The roll of rifle fire was incessant, yet dominated by the fiercer and louder turmoil of the artillery above. The ammunition waggons hurried up to the cannon with fresh fuel for the fire. The guns redoubled the energy of their cannonade. The crackle of the musketry fire rose into a sharp continuous peal, and the supports that had remained behind, lying just under the crest of the slope, were pushed forward over the brow of the hill, over the dead and the severely wounded, lying where they fell on the stubbles and amid the maize. Still the living wave of fighting-men poured over them ever on and on until the Turkish cannon-fire began to waver in the earthwork. More supports streamed down with a louder cheer into the Russian fighting line. Then there was a wild rush, headed by the colonel of one of the regiments of the 32nd division, and the rest of the officers waving their swords. The Turks in the shelter-trench held their ground, and fired steadily, and with terrible effect, into the advancing forces. The colonel's horse went down, but the colonel was on his feet in a second, and, waving his sword, led his men forward on foot; but only for a few paces; a moment afterwards he was killed.

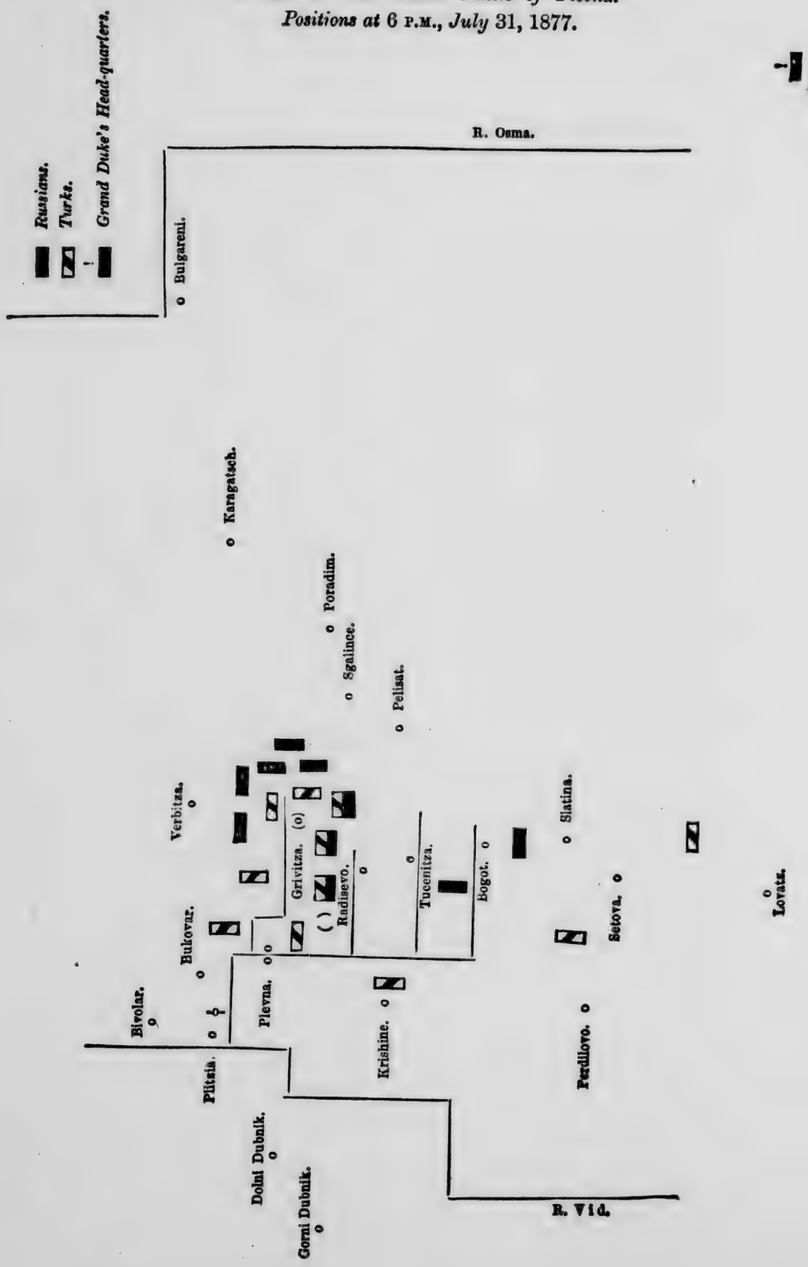
The men, however, kept on, and charged with their bayonets over the parapet and shelter-trench, and in among the Turks like an avalanche, and with this rush the outer edge of the first position was won. Still it took them half-an-hour from the shelter-trench before they again converged and made their final rush at the main earthwork. This time the Turks did not wait for the bayonet-points, but with one final volley abandoned the work, and fell back in a huddled mass into the gardens and vineyard behind the position, cramming the narrow track between the trees to gain the shelter of their batteries in the rear of the second position.

So fell the first position of the Turks. Being a village, it afforded ample cover, and Schahofskoi would have acted wisely had he been content to hold it and strengthen it till Krüdener, on his right, should have carried the Grivitza earthwork, and come up in line with him. But the Grand Cross of St. George dangled before his eyes, and tempted him to rashness. Krüdener was clearly jammed. The Turks were fighting furiously, and were in unexpected force on that broad central ridge of theirs, as well as against Krüdener. The first position, in natural as in artificial strength, was child's play to the grim starkness of the second on the isolated mamelon with the batteries on the swell behind it. But Schahofskoi determined to go for it, and the word was again, "Forward!" The first rush, however, was out of the men. Many must have been blown. They hung a good deal in the advance, exposing themselves recklessly, and falling fast, but not progressing with much speed.

Still Schahofskoi kept his finger well on the throbbing pulse of battle. Just in the nick of time half his reserve brigade was thrown into the fight immediately below, while the other half took part in the attack more on the left flank. The new blood told at once. There was a move forward, and no more standing and craning over the fence. But the Turks on the flank in the earthwork were also reinforced, and all of a sudden the white smoke spurted forth all along the lip of the epaulement, on the swarms of dark-clothed men scrambling on to it. There was a short but sharp struggle for the possession of the earthwork on both its flanks, till, at about 6 P.M., the Turks pressed forward a heavy mass of infantry for its recapture. Schahofskoi took a bold step, sending two batteries down into the first position he had taken to keep them in check. Here Russians and Turks were locked awhile in a deadly embrace (sketch J, No. 2); but the Turks were not to be denied, and, in spite of the most determined fighting of the Russians, had reoccupied their second position before seven. The battle was lost.

The first brigade of the 30th division had early inclined to the left, in the direc-

J—No. 2.—*The Second Battle of Plevna.*
Positions at 6 P.M., *July* 31, 1877.



tion where the towers and houses of Plevna were visible. It was rash, for the brigade was exposing its right flank to the Turkish cannon astride of the central ridge; but the goal of Plevna was a keen temptation. There was no thoroughfare, however. They would not give up, and they could not succeed. They charged again and again; and when they could charge no more from sheer fatigue, they stood and died, for they would not retire. The reserves came up, but only to swell the slaughter. And then the ammunition failed, for the carts had been left far behind, and all hope failed the most sanguine, as the sun sank in lurid glory behind the smoke-mantled field.

Two companies of Russian infantry did indeed work round the right flank of the Turkish works, and dodge into the town of Plevna; but it was like entering the mouth of hell. On the heights all round the cannon-smoke spurted out, and the vine-yard in the rear of the town was alive with Turks.

Schahofskoi had not a man left to cover the retreat. He had staked all his men on the game, and he had lost them at the game irretrievably. The Turks struck without stint. They had the upper hand for once, and were determined to show that they knew how to make the most of it. They advanced in swarms through the dusk on their original first position, and recaptured their three cannon the Russians had previously taken before these could be withdrawn. The Turkish shells began once more to whistle over the ridge above Radisevo and fall into the village behind, crammed with wounded, the streams of whom wending their painful way over the ridge were incessant. The badly wounded mostly lay where they fell. Later in the darkness the Bashi-Bazouks swarmed over the battle-field, and smote and spared not. Lingering there on the ridge till the moon rose, the staff could hear from down below, on the still night air, the cries of pain, the entreaties for mercy, and the yells of blood-thirsty fanatical triumph. It was indeed an hour to wring the sternest heart. They stayed there long, to learn, if it might be, what troops were coming out of the Valley of the Shadow of Death below. Were there, indeed, any at all to come? It did not seem as if it were so. The Turks had the range again before dark, and the escort and the retreating wounded were often struck. A detachment of cavalry at length began to come straggling up to take over from the staff the forepost duty on the ridge; but it will give an idea of the disorganisation to say, that when a company was told-off to cover somewhat the wounded in Radisevo, it had to be made up of the men of several regiments.

About nine o'clock the staff quitted the ridge, leaving it littered with groaning men, and moving gently lest they should tread on the prostrate wounded. The staff soon lost their way as they had lost their army, and could find no rest for the soles of their feet, by reason of the alarms of the Bashi-Bazouks swarming in among the scattered and retiring Russians. At length, at one in the morning, having been in the saddle since six on the previous morning, they turned into a stubble-field, and, making beds of the reaped grain, commander, correspondent, and Cossack alike rested under the stars. But they were not even then allowed to rest. Before four an alarm came that the Bashi-Bazouks were upon them, and they had to rouse and tramp away. The only protection of the chief of what in the morning was a fine army was a handful of wearied Cossacks. About the Bashi-Bazouks there is worse to tell. At night they worked round into Radisevo, and, falling upon the wounded there, butchered them without mercy.

Krüdener, too, sent word that he had lost severely, and could make no headway, and had resolved to fall back on the line of the river Osma, which falls into the Danube near Nicopoli. There had been a talk, his troops being fresh, of renewing the attack the next day with his co-operation; but it is a plain statement of fact that Schahofskoi had no troops to attack with: 5,000 men, out of three brigades, had been lost, besides Krüdener's losses.

In fact, the Russian army before Plevna was completely broken up and dispersed. The regiments, compacted in strong positions at daybreak, were broken up into three streams of fugitive groups, panic-stricken, confused, wearied, harassed, hurrying away through the dark night across the broken country towards Karagatch, where they had started from confident of victory, and further on still to Bulgareni on the Osma. Skobeloff also had been severely handled, losing 300 men out of one battalion, and had also been forced to retreat before the advancing bodies of Bashi-Bazouks and Circassians. The fol-

lowing sketch (J, No. 3) gives a graphic picture of the field during the night of July 31st to August 1st; and it also shows how ill-advised the Turks were not to have followed the flying movements of the Russian army, at least to the banks of the Osma, and then have intrenched themselves. Had Osman Pasha boldly advanced, striking blow after blow, and had he been supported by Mehemed Ali, who had succeeded Abdul Kerim on the Lom, the Russians might have been crushed on the Yantra and forced back across the Danube.

Not a Russian soldier stood between Tirnova and the victorious Turkish army in Lovatz and Plevna. Only a weak division of the 11th corps stood between Tirnova and the Schumla army. Thus, north of the Balkans—the 8th corps being already committed to the mountains—there was but the 9th corps (already roughly handled, once at Nicopoli and again previously at Plevna), one division of the 11th corps, and the Rustzuk army. But if the Rustzuk army were marched to the west against Plevna, then the Turkish army of Rustzuk would be let loose on the Russian communications to Tirnova, and the advance over the Balkans be seriously compromised. The Russian strait was so bad that the scattered detachments were called up from Roumania, and a Roumanian division, commanded by General Manu, ordered up to the line of the Osma River, whilst the Grand Duke Nicholas precipitately left Tirnova, and hurried up to Bulgareni to check the headlong flight of his shattered armies.

The following letter, from the *Daily News*, describes the state of the defeated Russians the night after the battle:—

"Bucharest, August 2nd.—It was the evening of the battle of Plevna. The sun was going down behind the smoke-mantled heights, in a glow of lurid crimson. The dusk was fast settling on one of the bloodiest battle-fields of the century—closing in round the batteries whose guns were still firing, round detached parties of Russian soldiers who were doggedly maintaining the fight against the swarms of Turks who formed a ring around them, firing fiercely into their midst—round the dead and the wounded lying thick on the stubbles, on the grassy slopes, in the hollows among the maize plants and the oak copses—round the knots of wounded who had crawled for cover to the leeside of the grain-stacks on the fields, and who lay there in the unspeakable agony of waiting for the inevitable doom which they knew too well was to befall them—round the groups of miscreants tramping about the battle-field intent on wreaking that doom on the defenceless wounded, and stopping ever and anon to perpetrate some barbarity. Prince Schahofskoi and his staff stood on the summit of the ridge above the village of Radisevo, which was crammed with wounded men. The fate of the battle had hung in the scale for some time, but now all hope of success had gone. There was no reserve among us in the acknowledgment that the attack had been a failure; all the concern now was to do what was possible towards minimising the results of that failure. There was no conversation; men's hearts were too heavy for talk. We sat about on the knoll, gazing down into the pandemonium below. The general, alone and apart, paced up and down a little open space in the oak copse, gloom settled on his face. All around us the air was heavy with the low moaning of the wounded, who, having limped or been aided thus far out of the fight, had cast themselves down to gain a little relief from the agony of motion. There was not even water for them, for Radisevo is all but a waterless village, and what water trickled in a tiny rill from the fountain behind the village was struggled for eagerly by the parched and fevered wounded who crowded around it, coveting with a longing, the agony of which the reader can never know, a few drops of the precious fluid. I cannot tell when I most respect and admire the simple honest Russian soldier—whether when he is plodding along without a murmur verst after verst, under a burden just double in weight that which our soldiers carry, cheering the way as he tramps with a lusty chorus; or when, with cheers that ring with sincerity, and with an alacrity which is genuine, he presses forward into the battle; or when he is standing stubbornly confronting his enemy, conscious of being over-matched, yet never dreaming of running away; or when he is lying wounded but uncomplaining, helping his neighbour in the same plight with some trifling act of tender kindness, and waiting for what God and the Czar shall send him, with a patient, unmurmuring calm that is surely true heroism.

"The darkness closed in around us, and

J—No. 3.—*The Second Battle of Plevna.*
Positions at 9 P.M., *July* 31, 1877.



the enemy seemed bent on following the example of the darkness. We had been on this ridge for a long time beyond the range of the enemy's batteries; but now these were advanced, and we were once more under fire. Through the darkness we could see the flashes of the cannon-shots; they must be back now in the position on the knoll below—the position where, four hours ago, the Russian soldiers had charged home with the bayonet, and whence, two hours ago, the Russian cannon had been firing. A second more, and nearer and nearer came the whistle of the shells, with a swiftly gradual crescendo into a scream as they sped over us and crashed down into the village in the valley behind us; and yet nearer there was the flashing of the musketry fire in the darkness: one could watch the streaks of flame foreshortened down in the valley there; and nerves tried by a long day of foodlessness, excitement, fatigue, and exposure to the sun and the chances of the battle-field, quivered under the prolonged tension of endurance, as the throbbing hum of the bullet sped through or over the straggling group. No man dared to say to that stern lowering chief, eating his heart there in the bitterness of his disappointment, that it was a bootless tempting of fortune to linger longer on this exposed spot; nor did any man care to quit, for the sake of greater safety, the companionship which had endured throughout the day. So we lingered on till our senses became dulled, until some dropped off into slumber, regardless of the scream of the shells and the hum of the bullets. It was a humane object which so long detained the general in a position so long exposed. There was no force available to line the height, and cover, to ever so little extent, the wounded lying on and behind it from the Bashi-Bazouks, who too certainly were prowling in the vicinity, and ever coming nearer and nearer. An attempt had, indeed, been made to get together a detachment of infantry for this purpose, and a bugler, at the general's order, persistently sounded the assembly; but the result was merely to gather a handful of stragglers from half-a-dozen different regiments; and although but a company was wanted, that trivial strength could not be collected; so the general, his staff, and his escort took up for the time a kind of informal forepost duty, and there we waited till the pale calm moon rose and poured the sheen of her white radiance over the battle-field. While it was yet dark there had been no cessation of the firing, both artillery and musketry; and now that heaven was holding a candle to hell, the fire waxed warmer and brisker. Up from out of it, with broken tramp, came a detachment, silent, jaded, powder-grimed. There could not have been a company all told; a lieutenant marched at its head, and it was the remnant—so far as could be gathered the sole remnant—of one of the finest regiments of the 32nd division, that had crossed the ridge over which its *débris* was now listlessly trailing itself three fine battalions strong.

"At length the jingle of cavalry accoutrements was heard, and a squadron of dragoons rode on to the heights, and extending in skirmishing order, relieved the head-quarter staff. It was a poor screen to interpose between a victorious and remorseless army and a mass of wounded men; but nothing more was available. The general had lost an army, the fragments of an army had lost their general. We turned the heads of our jaded horses, and, silent and depressed, rode down the slope across the valley and up the slope beyond. Our pace was a slow walk, for there were wounded men everywhere, limping along the narrow pathway in front of us, prostrate on the grass by the side of it, or asleep in the very dust. Occasionally we struck detachments of infantry who had scrambled back out of the fight, and were lying on their arms in utter ignorance of the best direction in which to march. Or it might be a battery of artillery, halted in perplexing dubiety whether if they went on they might march into the bosom of the Turkish army. I believe there existed some intention that we should go for the night to a village called Bogot. But we got confused as to the road, and bewildered by the crackling spurts of musketry fire that broke out all around in the most uncomfortable fashion. Were the Turks then wholly round us, that we heard, and occasionally felt, fire as it seemed to north, to south, to east, and to west? Once such was the confusion that we were fired upon by a detachment of Russian troops, halted in equal bewilderment with ourselves, and expecting an enemy from any or every side. We made halt after halt, but there never was rest for us. A spurt of near firing would stir us, or a Cossack would ride in with intelligence that Bashi-Bazouks were prowling near by; and through all this

harassment there yet lingered with the most sanguine of us the idea that the battle would be resumed next morning, we affording an artillery support to the supposedly fresh troops of Krüdener. Where, I asked myself, is our artillery to take orders for such a purpose? We did not know where we were ourselves, much less where the army was, of which this groping, forlorn, dejected band were the head-quarters. Of Krüdener's experiences or whereabouts we knew simply nothing. It was useless to despatch aides-de-camp or orderlies without being able to give them a direction in which to ride. All we knew was that everywhere there were wounded men about us, and that we and our horses were dead beaten.

"Nature will assert herself. About one o'clock in the morning we turned aside into a field where the barley had been reaped and piled into small stacks. These we tore down, shook some sheaves out as fodder for our horses, and others as beds for ourselves, and, throwing ourselves down, fell into dead slumber. But there was no long rest for us. At three o'clock we were aroused by the tidings that the Bashi-Bazouks were close to us, and the near firing told of the accuracy of the statement. We huddled a number of wounded into and upon some carts which came up casually, and started them off, whether in the right direction or not we had no conception. Ugh! how miserably raw and chill struck the bleak morn just before the dawn! But if the rawness of the air struck to our marrow, hale and sound men as we were, what must have been the sufferings of the poor wounded, weakened by loss of blood, faint in the prostration which follows so inevitably the gun-shot wound; foodless, without water, lying on the damp grass by the wayside in their blood-clotted clothes! Yet happy they, pitiable as was their plight, in comparison with their fellows who had littered the battle-field, and had been left behind in Radisevo. The fate of the former we knew from what we had ourselves seen; of the latter, it was told to us by scared messengers, that the Bashi-Bazouks had in the dead of night worked round our left flank, and had fallen upon them and butchered them in their helplessness."

The reverse of the Russians was thus as complete as the inability of Osman Pasha and Mehemed Ali allowed. This inability permitted the grand duke to stay the tide of retreating and disheartened troops; and after a while, with the assistance of reinforcements and the Roumanian corps, to regain possession of their positions before Plevna. Here, broken, disallusioned, we leave the Russian army of Plevna in what would have been the most critical position had the Turks been able to turn their success to advantage, and will now turn to the advance forces under General Gourko, and see how the Plevna reverse affected operations in this quarter.

CHAPTER XX.

GENERAL GOURKO'S ADVANCE AND RETREAT.

LITTLE suspecting what a terrible blow was awaiting the army before Plevna within the next two days, General Gourko was ordered, by the commander-in-chief, to advance with three columns from Kezanlik and converge upon Yeni Zagra, in order to seize and occupy the district south of the Kara Dagh mountains, and cut the line of communication of the Turks with the railway at Yamboli and the western portion of Roumelia towards Philippopoli and Sophia.

Here the Turkish government had placed Suleiman Pasha, who had successfully marched through Montenegro, at a great expenditure of blood, in the command of the army of the Balkans. Taking up his head-quarters at Adrianople, he energetically began to organise his troops in view of the impending irruption of the Russians, which he fully expected, and to construct intrenchments and earthworks at the most important points to delay the advance of the enemy.

A reference to sketch D, page 154, will show Suleiman's general plan. It was to draw together the forces distributed in a circle at Sophia, Philippopoli, Adrianople,

and Slivno, and to converge with them at the Schipka Pass, the keystone of their position, whilst at the same time keeping his communications open with Osman Pasha on his left flank by way of the Orkhanieh Pass, and, on his right flank, with Mehemed Ali, by way of the Slivno Pass.

This plan was good strategy, but it demanded a sufficient number of troops, and premised the certainty of forcing the Schipka. Unless this certainty were assured, the strategy was faulty; but, taken all in all, there is no doubt, as the course of events fully proved, that had the Turks simultaneously drawn their net round the Russians, and that had the commanders-in-chief, Osman, Suleiman, and Mehemed Ali acted in full co-operation at a given moment with each other, the plan, as it stood, would have had every chance of success. Whether the means at the disposal of the Turks warranted the plan, is a question which cannot yet be decided, and thus it is not possible to say who was responsible for its ultimate failure.

Hence, General Gourko having been ordered to advance upon Yeni Zagra, he at once took the necessary dispositions.

The right column, consisting of the Bulgarian legion, two batteries of artillery, and three regiments of cavalry, was to march from Eski Zagra; the central column, under Gourko himself, consisting of the rifle brigade, a regiment of Cossacks, and four batteries of artillery, from Kezanlik; and the left column, of five battalions of infantry, two batteries, and some Cossacks, from Hainkoi, the objective of all three columns being Yeni Zagra.

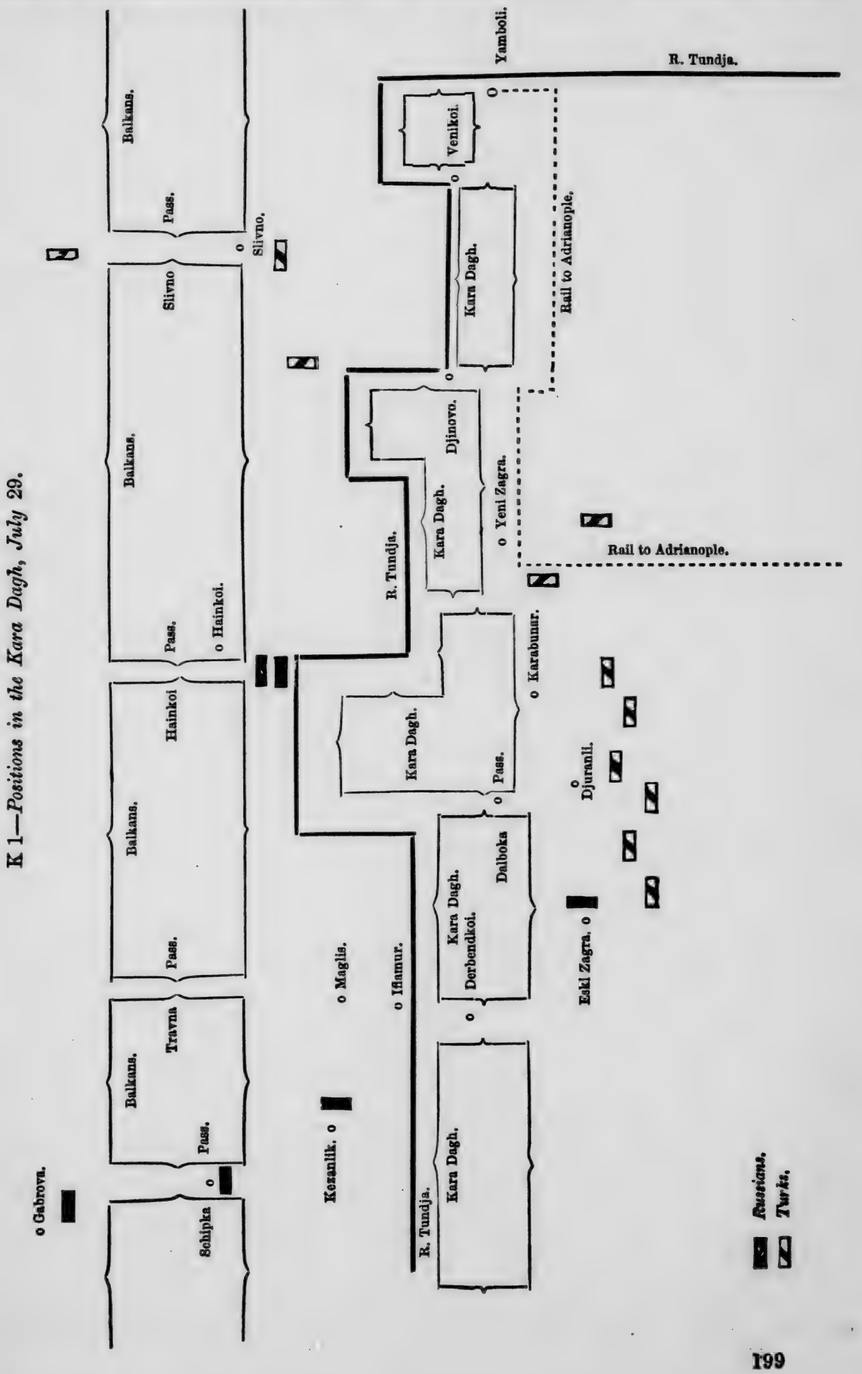
As will be seen on a reference to the following sketch, K 1, two of these columns, the one at Eski Zagra, and the other at Hainkoi, had to pass the river Tundja, and effect their passage through the defiles of the Kara Dagh. These mountains, though much lower than the Balkans, still present considerable difficulties. They are, in fact, the out-spurs of the Balkans, and at one time, no doubt, formed part of the mother-range until separated from it by land-slips and the action of the Tundja. Between Slivno and Kezanlik there are three well-defined passes and a defile practicable for mules and horses.

The first of these passages, from Kezanlik eastwards, is the Derbendkoi Pass; the second, the Dalboka Pass; the fourth, the Djinovo Pass, through which the high road runs from Yeni Zagra to Slivno. The third is the defile above mentioned, and lies nearly due south of the Hainkoi Pass. South of the Kara Dagh lie the great Roumelian plains, through which runs the railway from Adrianople nearly due north as far as Yeni Zagra, whence it turns eastwards skirting the mountains to Yamboli, whence a high road also runs to Slivno, and another to Karnabad, and so on to Schumla, Varna, and the rest of the Quadrilateral.

It will be seen, therefore, that the triangle, Yamboli-Slivno-Eski Zagra, was of high strategic importance. Whoever held it, commanded at the same time the roads from Adrianople to the Quadrilateral, and consequently both the Russians and the Turks devoted all their energies to its possession. To defend it, Suleiman Pasha called up his troops, and taking Slivno and Adrianople as his bases of operations, disposed them so as to converge upon the four passages of the Kara Dagh above mentioned. He had a column at Slivno, another between Slivno and the Hainkoi Pass, with orders to move forward and draw as close to the Russians, and menace their left flank as much as possible. His centre was disposed south of Djuranli, with detachments guarding his right at Yeni Zagra, whilst his left was working up towards the Russian right at Eski Zagra.

This disposition was a very happy one. It enabled him to offer a concentrated front to the Russians; whilst threatening both their flanks whatever route they might advance by. If they had all passed through the Derbendkoi and Dalboka passes, his centre could make front against the Russian centre, whilst his left could always overlap the Russian right; and his right, assisted by the reserves at Slivno, overlap the Russian left. If, on the other hand, the Russians had crossed the Kara Dagh west of Kezanlik to march upon Adrianople, he could have wheeled his left and centre back, pivoting on Yeni Zagra, and have covered the line to Adrianople whilst offering a full front to the Russians either to their full front or concentrate his attack upon their left flank. At the same time the Slivno forces protected his rear and right flank.

These advantages were apparent to General Gourko. He saw how easily he could be overlapped on either flank, and must have arrived at the conclusion that his only chance of success lay in his being able so to extend his lines as to outflank



K 1—*Positions in the Kara Dagh, July 29.*

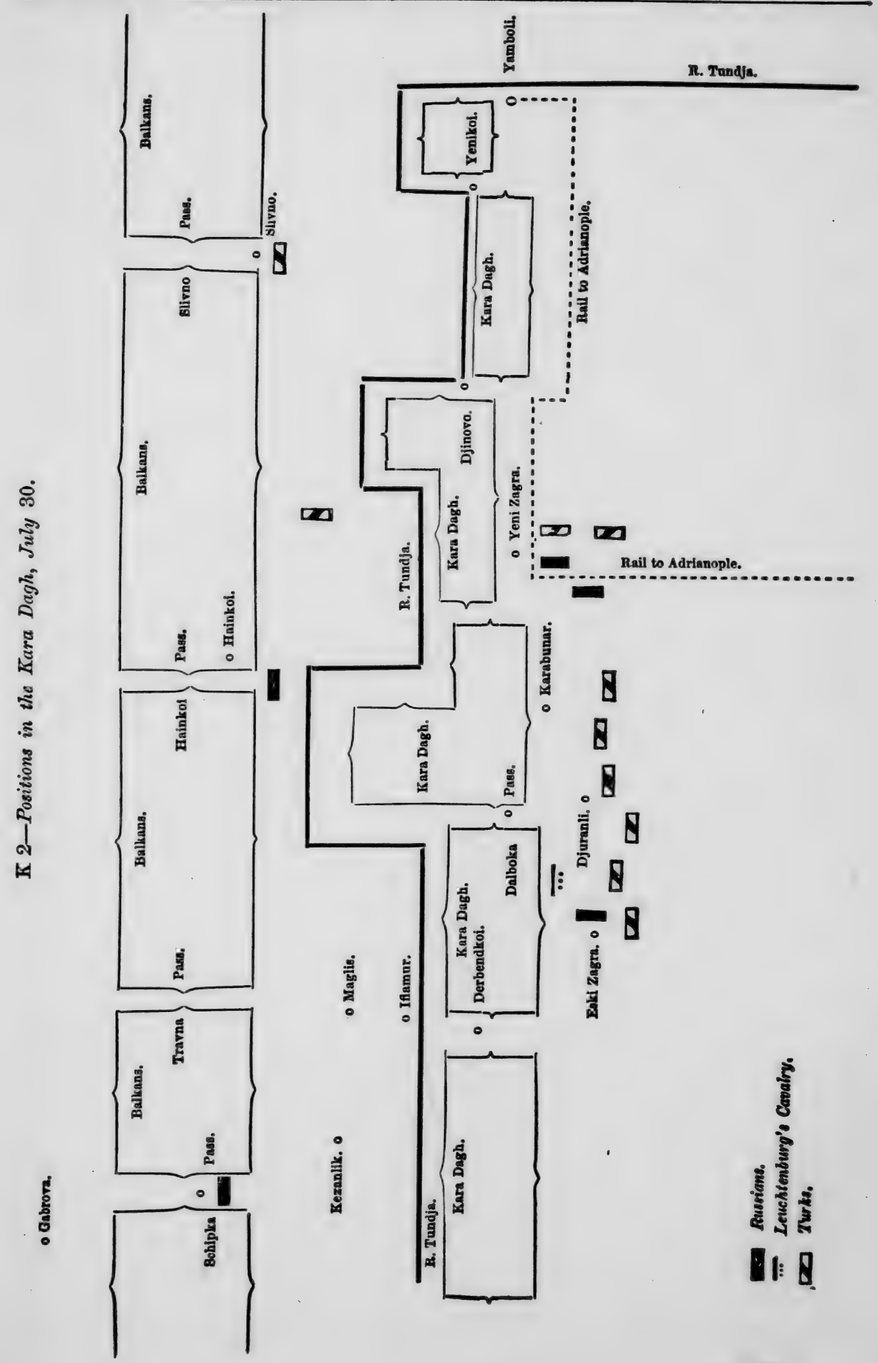
even Suleiman Pasha's extended flanks—an operation which could not be successfully performed without a superiority of forces. Thus, ordering his column at Hainkoi to make across the mountains and attack the right flank of the Turks at Yeni Zagra, he also commanded the column at Eski Zagra to demonstrate against the centre and protect his right flank. He himself determined to force the Turkish left by way of the Dalboka Pass. This arrangement of General Gourko's repeats, on a smaller scale, the errors committed before Plevna. That Suleiman Pasha was commanding a large force somewhere south of Eski Zagra, Djuranli, and Yeni Zagra, could not, or ought not to have been unknown to him. Yet he took no measures to prepare the ground. Like Krüdener, he either did not care what Suleiman was doing, or he simply omitted to ascertain, by his cavalry, how near the Turks were to the right flank of his advance. Before advancing on Yeni Zagra, he should have pushed forward *reconnaissances* on his right till they had felt the enemy, and discovered whether he was present in force within striking distance. But this he neglected to do. His idea was to seize Yeni Zagra, occupy the passes through the Kara Dagh, strengthen his position at Eski Zagra, and thus hold the Kara Dagh from Eski Zagra to Yeni Zagra, as the Balkans were already held from the Schipka to Hainkoi.

This idea only required sufficient forces to carry it out, in order to make it a very good one indeed. Without them, it was a very bad one. Still, though he must have had some misgivings, he set about it, and started for Yeni Zagra from Kezanlik on the 29th July, with a terrible march of forty miles before him. Nevertheless his troops came into action next morning on the left flank of the Turkish intrenchments in front of the railway station at Yeni Zagra to support the attack of the left column on their right flank. The Turks fought desperately, and the bayonet-fighting was long and strenuous, but after mid-day the Russians forced the position, drove out the Turks, took Yeni Zagra, captured three guns, blew up the railway station, and destroyed an immense mass of Turkish ammunition and stores. For want of cavalry, no pursuit was then possible; but next day the Cossacks fell on the retreating Turks and pursued them some little distance beyond the railway, till they discovered that the fugitives had found a support and were preparing to stand their ground again.

The first part of the programme had thus been successfully accomplished, but at a considerable loss, and Yeni Zagra was in the hands of the Russians. But in the meantime Suleiman Pasha had gradually been drawing his forces around. The columns advancing northwards were directed in two supporting corps, one against the Russians and Bulgarian legion at Eski Zagra, and the other to intercept General Gourko's route to that place, or to take him in the rear, whilst the forces between Yeni Zagra and Yamboli, re-forming under Reouf Pasha, assailed him anew in front.

In either case, as will be seen from the following sketch, K 2, Gourko's position was highly critical. He was nearly fifty miles away from his first base at the Schipka Pass, and had twenty-five to thirty miles of difficult country to traverse before reaching his second base, Hainkoi, the scene of his first successful exploit. As may be supposed, by this time General Gourko began to feel uneasy; and when, in the afternoon of July 30th, there came tidings, by a circuitous route through the Dalboka Pass and the defile west of Yeni Zagra, that the right column was seriously compromised in an attempt to force its way from Eski Zagra, he determined to march westward to its succour. That night (the 30th) he reached Karabunar, where he arrived in darkness, and found the whole valley was illuminated by blazing villages, showing that the Turks must have acquired the upper hand and were present in considerable force. But still he omitted to ascertain properly what forces were confronting him; and does not seem to have had an idea that Suleiman Pasha himself was present with his veteran troops from Montenegro, and that as the Bulgarians had treated the Mussulman country between Eski Zagra and Djuranli, the Christian villages and inhabitants were then being treated by the Turks. Five villages round Eski Zagra had been burned by the Bulgarians, and their inhabitants slaughtered to a man—women and children also suffering; altogether 340 souls in one afternoon—and the Turks, excited to the utmost pitch of fury at the ill-treatment their comrades and co-religionists had met with, took a dire revenge, and, as General Gourko was able to see, the whole plain was glowing with blazing villages and hamlets.

Under these circumstances General Gourko



K 2—*Positions in the Kara Dagh, July 30.*

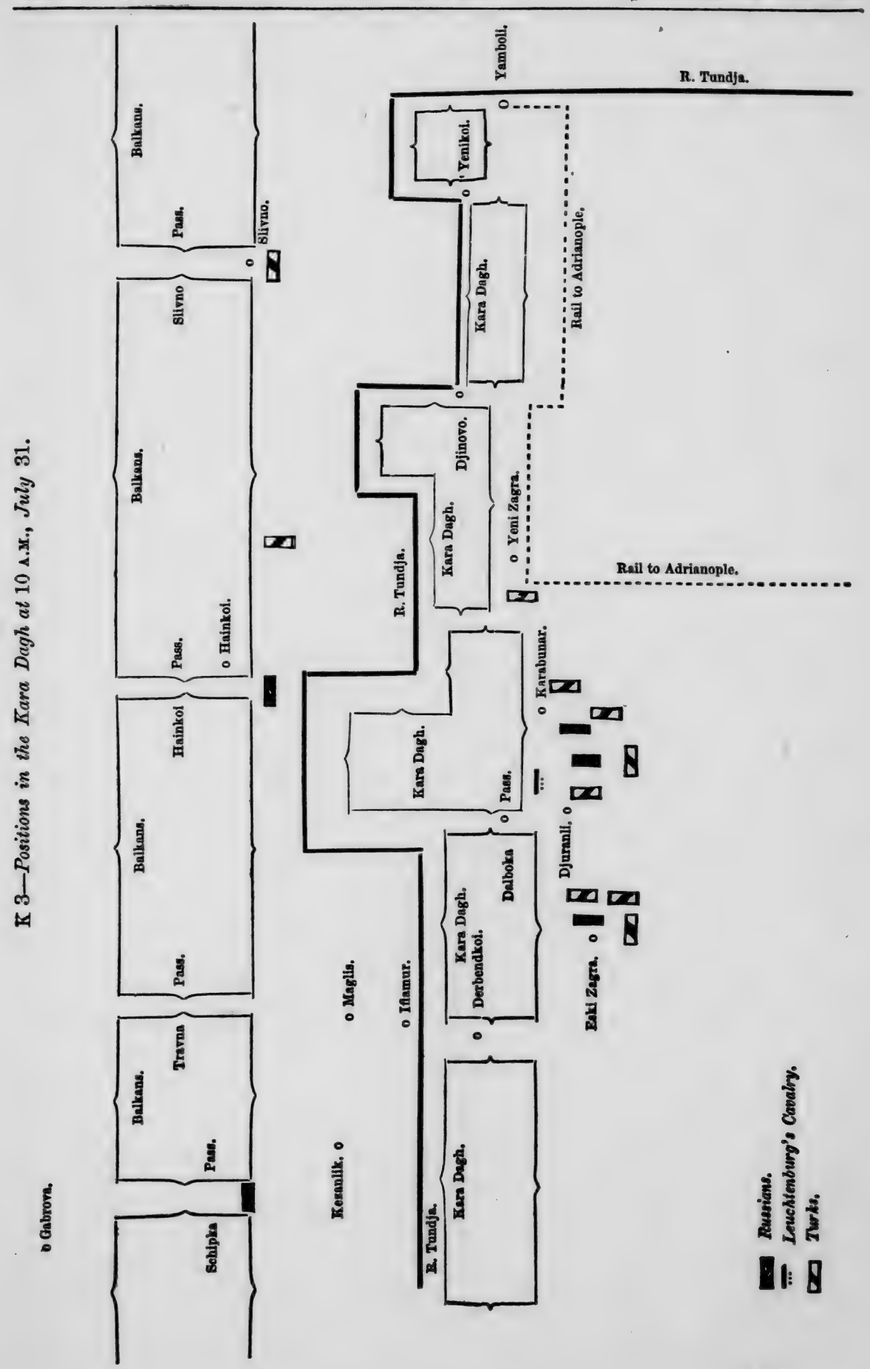
would have done wisely to effect his retreat at once; but next morning (July 31st) he marched onward upon Djuranli, on the road to Eski Zagra, ignorant of the fact that some 30,000 Turks confronted him, and stopped the road into the latter place. The Turkish batteries swept the road with persistent fire; nevertheless General Gourko came into action, sending forward five battalions of infantry covered by artillery. He had forty-eight horses killed in one battery, and eight in another. Later the Turkish masses strove to turn the Russian left. The operation was resisted by the Tirailleur brigade, supported by two regiments of the 9th division, and for the moment the attack was repelled, but with heavy losses. Still later a column of Circassian cavalry strove to turn the Russian right on the mountain slopes, and the attack was succeeding, when there appeared on the scene Leuchtenberg's cavalry, which had cut its way from Eski Zagra, and which repelled the movement of the Circassians and saved the right wing, and, as it turned out, secured the Russian retreat through the Dalboka Pass, as will be seen from sketch K 3.

Here (sketch K 3) we find the Bulgarians at Eski Zagra being driven back towards the Kara Dagh by the Turkish forces, which were pressing them from the east and south, whilst Gourko was surrounded except on the side of the Dalboka Pass. Had the attack of the Turkish column in front of Djuranli upon the Russian right been successful, the whole of Gourko's army would have been put to the sword. From this fate it was saved by Prince Leuchtenberg's cavalry, which had left the Bulgarian legion to its fate. Even at this stage Gourko would have done well to follow his example, and leave his interesting friends to shift for themselves; but he still pressed on, hoping to outflank the Turkish left.

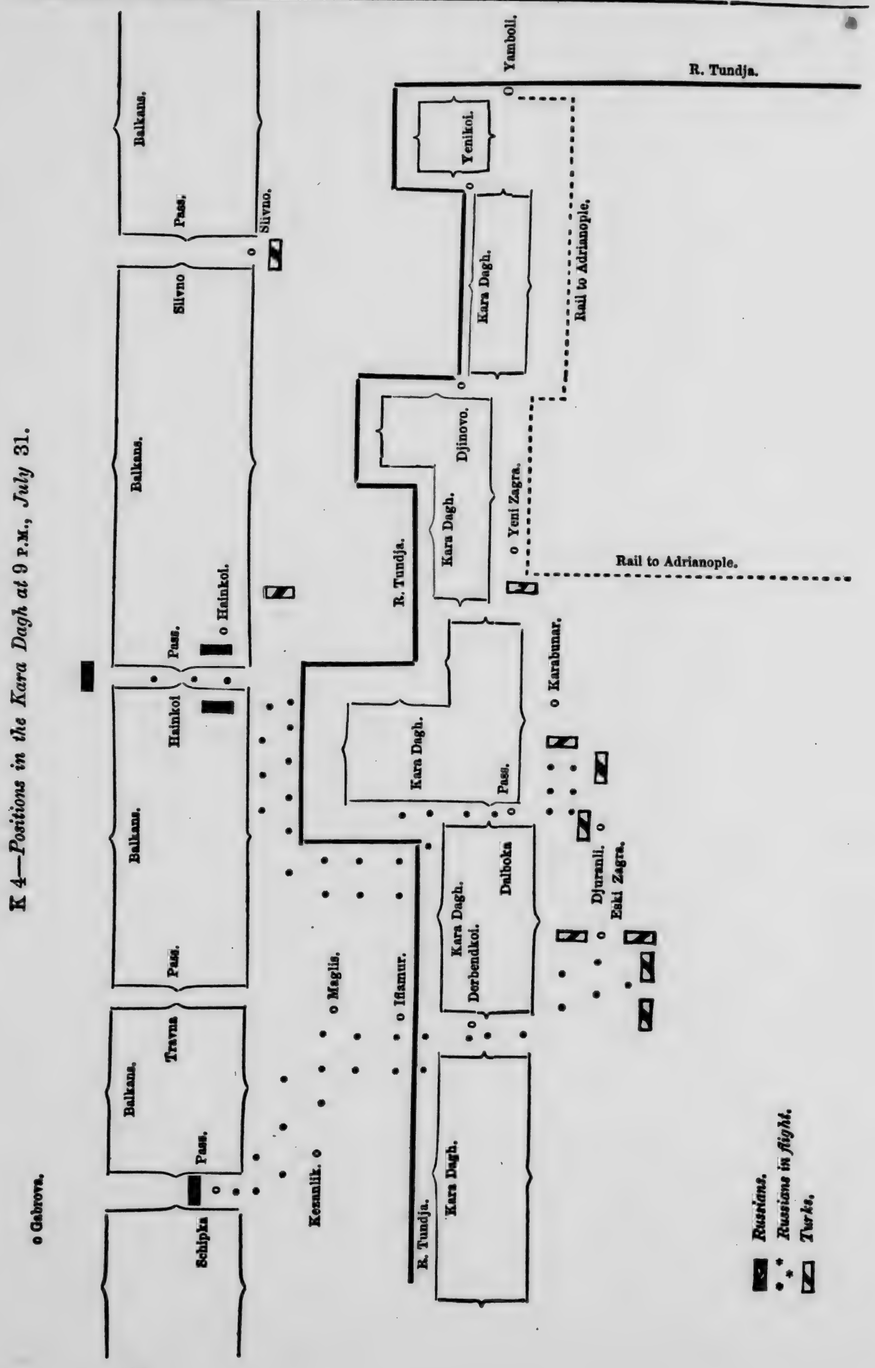
This view was all he was to have of Eski Zagra; for he had scarcely taken his bearings when there came to him an orderly who had evaded the Turks, and brought him intelligence that the Bulgarian legion was beset in Eski Zagra by a force of Turks estimated at 20,000 men. Gourko, small as was his force, for a moment resolved on an attempt to succour them, and in the meantime determined to maintain his position; but his resolution quailed before the appearance of two massive columns of Turks marching on his flank and rear. He had to leave the Bulgarians to shift for themselves, and make good his own retreat through the difficult and narrow Dalboka Pass, and thence through the Hainkoi Pass, accomplishing his retreat to that place on Thursday, 2nd of August, amid cruel hardships. In the retreat the wounded died like flies from jolting and exposure. Hale men succumbed from fatigue and sunstroke. As for the Bulgarian legion composing Gourko's right column, they, after advancing from Eski Zagra ten kilometres towards Karabunar, found the enemy and were driven in, and had to retire into the defile north of Eski Zagra, and thence effect their retreat through the Schipka Pass. Of the severity of the fighting a judgment may be formed from the fact, that of the Bulgarian legion, which began sixteen hundred strong, only between four and five hundred ever reached the Schipka.

The completeness of the *déroute* will appear from a glance at sketch K 4. The stream of panting, panic-stricken fugitives, hurrying on through the Derbendkoi Pass, the other through the Dalboka Pass, were all that remained of the army of the Balkans. By August 2nd, the Russian cavalry were all on this side of the Balkans. The Schipka Pass, however, was strongly fortified and armed with twenty-eight guns, and garrisoned by a regiment of the 9th division. Two regiments held the Hainkoi Pass, which presented a series of formidable defences. There were but few troops at Drenova and Gabrova; and only one brigade of the 14th division at Tirnova. Reinforcements were at once moved south to strengthen the detachments holding the passes, and fresh cavalry sent against Osman Bazar. In the fighting on the 30th and 31st of July, Gourko lost 3,000 men, excluding the Bulgarian loss—over 4,000 men in two days; and altogether, in the four days, over 7,000 men.

Such was the pitiful ending to the expedition across the Balkans, so dashingly begun. It is impossible not to sympathise with the unfortunate men, and the no less unfortunate general who led them to destruction; but, on the other hand, no words are too strong to stigmatise the conduct of the staff and commanders-in-chief, whose pride, carelessness, and ignorance caused such a sacrifice of life. The easily-earned glories of July 19th were utterly wiped out, blotted out, by the disasters of July 31st, before Plevna and in the Balkans. It was, indeed, a strange fatality that success and disaster on both sides of the Balkans should



K 3—*Positions in the Kara Dagh at* 10 A.M., *July* 31.



K 4—Positions in the Kara Dagh at 9 P.M., July 31.

signalise these days; and the Turks may well be excused for seeing therein a direct interposition of Allah in their favour.

The Russians, for the moment, were utterly crushed in their advance and on their right. True, it has been said that, two days after the defeated attack, the Russians had so recovered their organisation as to be able to renew it. It was for them of paramount importance to do so, had it been possible. But it was not; and they stood waiting for the necessary reinforcements, thankful to fortune that they were not assailed in their defensive positions. The Plevna and Balkan reverses altered the whole plan of the campaign.

No more reckless, if victorious, raids were dreamt of, and no more advances, regardless of threatening concentrations on the flanks. The Russians virtually abandoned the expectation of pressing the war successfully across the Balkans for the year. They would have been satisfied to know that, during the three months still available for fighting, they could sweep Bulgaria north of the Balkans clear of the Turkish armies. The Crescent, they felt sure, would wave over the towers of Adrianople and the waters of the Golden Horn for yet another winter. They might, indeed, continue to hold the Balkan passes which they had won. A man does not throw away the keys which open the door of the treasure-chamber. But the orders were to withdraw from all the trans-Balkan positions occupied, where they had not already been forced to retire, and to draw in around the Schipka Pass—this from no direct pressure of the Turkish forces beyond the Balkans, but because of the intrinsic risk always attending unsupported advances when they cease to have a definite object.

Now to speak of this side the Balkans. The paralysis brought about by the Plevna reverse, forced the Russian attitude for the time to be perfectly passive till the reinforcements arrived. Seven fresh divisions, not formed into army corps, were on the march, some still in Russia, others pressing on through Roumania. One hundred thousand men more were wanted, and were forthcoming, but they had to be waited for. The first brigade of reinforcements was expected to cross the Danube in a few days; but the offensive could not be recommenced before all the reinforcements were to hand.

Meantime the Grand Duke Nicholas was in Bulgareni, in rear of the intrenched positions of Schahofskoi and Krüdener, confronting Plevna. Part of Mirski's division stood between Tirnova and Lovatz, to hinder a Turkish advance in the direction of the former important centre. Thus shiftily were stopped the gaps through which was threatened the right flank of the Russian communications; and though the defensive protection was perhaps sufficient, the means were utterly inadequate for a renewed offensive, for sixty to seventy thousand Turks stood on the Lovatz-Plevna line, and were prepared to take a deal of beating.

On the left flank equally a strictly defensive attitude was enforced by circumstances. There were available for holding the line from the Danube to the Balkans on this flank, the two corps constituting the army of the Czarevitch, and the 1st division of the 11th corps, left behind by Schahofskoi when he marched on Plevna; in all about 60,000 men, necessarily attenuated over a long front, so as to leave no gap for the Turks to creep through.

The Turks were of about the same strength, but they had the advantage of choosing where to strike if they cared to strike at all. Mehemed Ali Pasha could concentrate at Rustzuk or Rasgrad, or Osman Bazar. The Russians had to be ready to face him everywhere. They dared not take the offensive and leave tracts of unguarded flank, and were not strong enough to guard a continuous flank and take the offensive as well. They were obliged to remain on the strict defensive. The investment of Rustzuk had to wait. The troops designed for that duty were needed elsewhere. The siege cannon were not ready even if the troops had been available. The river Lom still virtually constituted the line of the Rustzuk army, but the head-quarters of the 12th corps had been moved beyond it, from Trestenik to Kadikoi. The head-quarters of the Czarevitch, with the 13th corps about them, advanced from Obertenik to Kaceljevo, thus confronting Rasgrad, while between Osman Bazar and Tirnova the 11th division stood with its head-quarters in Kosarevatz.

Zimmermann was no further than Trajan's Wall. It was a stalemate with him. He was guarding the Dobrudja against an enemy who did not threaten it. He could not push forward with his 30,000 men lest enemies from Varna and Schumla should converge upon him.

At the same time the Russian army began to suffer in health, owing in some corps to irregular rations, in others to hard marching, in all to heat; but the greatest predisposing cause was the total neglect of all sanitary precautions. They never buried dead horses or oxen, or the entrails of slaughtered cattle. They never dreamt of the wisdom of the latrine system. The result was a general tainting of the air, which poisoned men predisposed to fall ill by reason of lassitude from over-fatigue or long abstinence from food, although men in stalwart health escaped. Strangely enough, the greatest proportion of illness manifested itself in the *personnel* of the imperial suite, whose members were comparatively nursed in the downy lap of ease, and fared sumptuously every day. General Ignatieff, for three days, was dangerously ill from a species of gastric fever, and Prince Galatzin was also suffering from the same disorder. The emperor had five high officers, known as general-adjutants, on personal service about him. Of these, but one was fit for duty; the other four were ill. Nearly everybody was more or less sick, squeamish, and out of sorts. The reason was not far to seek. The air was tainted thick and heavy with filth and rotting offal. Even tobacco-smoke and brandy were powerless to avert nausea.

But at this point, where the errors of the Russians culminated in disaster, the Turkish errors began in a glaring, almost irretrievable manner. They wilfully threw away their opportunities. A vigorous attack, simultaneously carried out by Osman Pasha and Suleiman Pasha, would infallibly have driven the Russians upon Sistova and Biela at least; and then, with the co-operation of Mehemed Ali, the chances were that the Russians would have had to retire across the Danube, or have intrenched themselves round the bridge-head at Sistova. But from whatever cause—jealousy of each other, incapacity, want of material—the Turkish commanders neglected to follow up their successes, and they themselves entered the fool's paradise which they had driven the Russians out of. Here we will now leave them, and turn to the operations in Asia Minor.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE CAMPAIGN IN ASIA.

By the 24th of April, the Russian armies in the Caucasus had taken up their positions on the confines of the frontier. The commander-in-chief was the Grand Duke Michael. He established his head-quarters with the centre and main army, which was commanded by General Loris Melikoff, and stationed at Alexandropol, on the main road from that place to Kars. The right wing, called subsequently the Rion corps, was under the orders of General Oklobschio, and was stationed at Ozurgeti. The left wing, under the command of General Tergukassoff, was at Erivan.

The Turks were in force at Batoum, at Kars, and Erzeroum, with reinforced garrisons at Ardahan and Bayazet. These places formed the goals which the Russian armies were to reach and seize with all possible expedition.

The object of this disposition of the Russian armies was to enable all three to converge upon Erzeroum if possible—that is to say, in case Batoum should speedily fall, as was expected.

The right, or Rion corps, in this case would then march south-west through the valley of the Tcharuk by way of Tortoum, and fall upon Erzeroum in the north.

The centre, or Alexandropol army, after seizing or masking Kars, would form front against the Turkish field army between Kars and Erzeroum, supposed to be about Olti and Deli Mussa, and drive it back, falling upon Erzeroum in the east.

The left, or Erivan corps, would seize upon Bayazet, and, advancing along the valley of the Euphrates, would join with the centre, or arrive before Erzeroum in the south. If it should not be possible to obtain speedy possession of Batoum, then the task of reducing Kars and Erzeroum would fall upon the two other corps, which would then become the army of the advance, and would also operate in three columns; the right against Ardahan, striking the valley of the Tcharuk by way of Ardanudj, whilst the centre and left followed the original plan.—A general bird's-eye view of the scene of operations is afforded in sketch L. The main fault of this plan was, that each of the three corps was isolated from the others by the difficult country, without proper roads or accommodation lying between them. Between the Rion corps and the centre corps lay the terribly mountainous country formed by the Kizil Dagh, the Yagli Dagh, and the Adtschara mountains.* The Erivan corps, on the left, was also separated from the main corps marching on Kars by two almost impassable mountain ranges, the Ala and Kara Dagh in the north, and the Aghry and Perli Dagh, terminating in Mount Ararat in the south, the intervening valley being traversed by the Araxes. Thus the valley of the Euphrates, in which the Erivan corps was to operate, had no means of communicating with the centre except through the difficult pass of Kagisman, across two ranges of mountains and a deep roadless valley—a distance, be it noted, of fifty miles between the two most accessible points in the valley of the Euphrates and the valley of the Kars Tchai. As long as each corps was strong enough to stand on its own feet, and required no assistance from the others, there was, of course, no great danger; but the moment that one or the other was out-matched, destruction or a speedy retreat was inevitable.

However, the Russians were as confident of success in Armenia as they were in Bulgaria; and on April 25th the Rion corps marched on the points agreed upon.

The Rion corps, under the command of General Oklobschio, after leaving Ozurgeti, was divided into two columns. The right column, under General Scheremtieff, advanced along the Atchmarum road, and felt the enemy on the Kinhisch river, whilst the left column, commanded by General Denibekoff, performed a flank movement, and struck the Turkish camp at Muchaster on the Khatzubani heights. A serious engagement ensued, resulting in the flight of the Turks and the capture of their camp by General Denibekoff, who at once fortified the heights and intrenched himself in a strong position. The right column also succeeded in establishing a footing near Anchaury, on the river Choruk, a small but deep stream north of Batoum.

Meanwhile the centre, under Loris Melikoff, also advanced in two columns, whilst a flanking column started from Akhaltzik. The two main columns followed the high road from Alexandropol to Kars together as far as the village of Toknis. Here the road splits, the main road crossing the Kars Tchai at Yamusehli, and the other, a branch road, further south at Pir Ali. At Tiknis, the main column followed the high road by way of Yamnohli, and proceeded to Kurukdara, the second column taking the branch road and passing the night of the 28th April at Hadjivali.

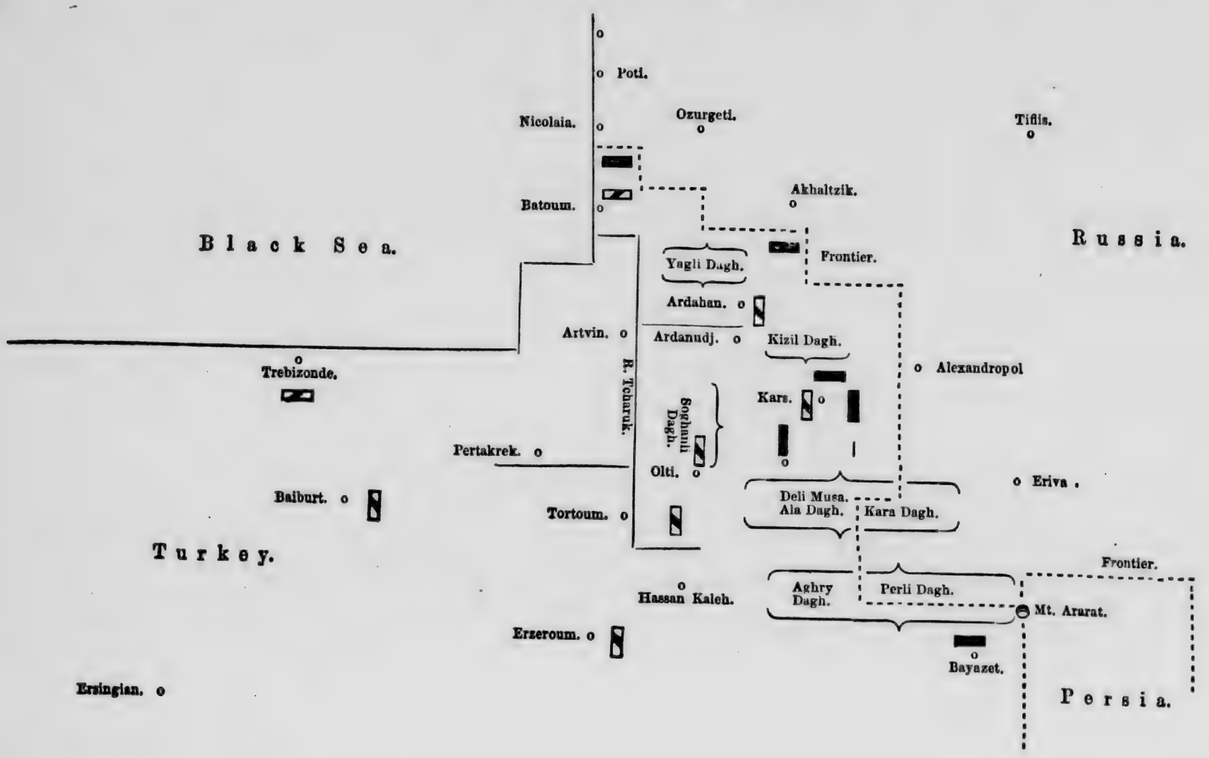
On the 29th and 30th both columns moved forward; the main corps held the northern road, running through Meschka and Kalif Oglu, north of the Yagni Hills, whilst the other column, consisting largely of cavalry, supported by twelve battalions of grenadiers and forty guns, proceeded from Hadjivali to Vezinkoi, as shown in sketch M.

Here the Turks made a sortie under cover of their guns in the fortress, to intercept the cavalry, which was making for the bridge over the Kars Tchai at Tasura. This sortie, however, was a very lame affair, and was easily repulsed by the grenadiers and artillery; whilst the cavalry, scouring the country west of Kars, after successfully crossing the river, actually came in contact with Mukhtar Pasha himself, who was leaving Kars with eight battalions, on his way to Erzeroum. He had left a sufficient garrison—or at least as many men as he could spare—in Kars, and was then proceeding to Erzeroum to complete the organisation of his field army. After these incidents, the Russian infantry and Loris Melikoff returned to Zaim and Mazra, leaving the cavalry at Vezinkoi to watch the army in the south, whilst a reserve force remained in Hadjivali.

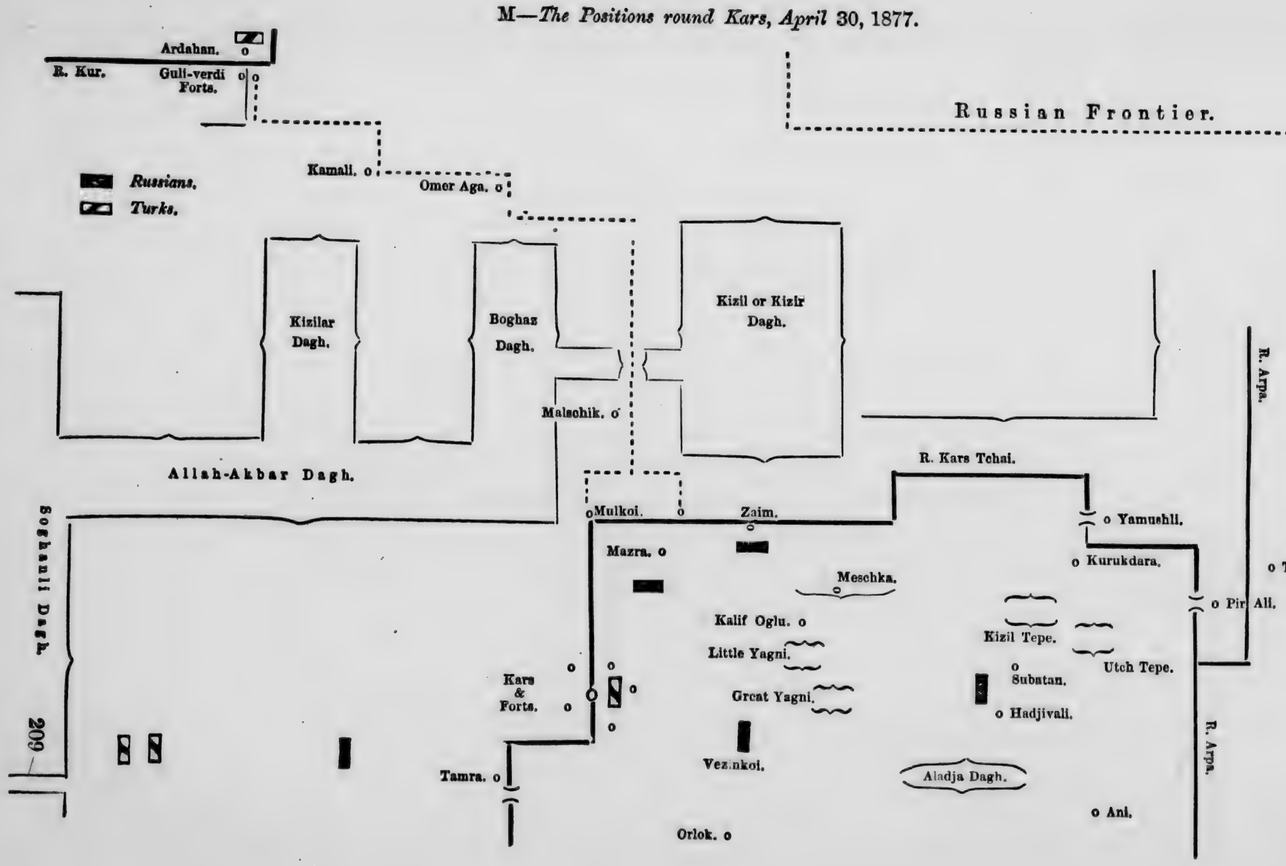
On the extreme left of the Russian line, General Tergukassoff reached Bayazet on the 30th of April. At his approach, the Turkish garrison, some 1,800 men strong, wisely determined not to attempt to defend the tumble-down citadal and crumbling fortifications of the place, in the teeth of an army superior in numbers, and fell back upon Diadin and Hassan Kaleh, picking up the garrisons in these places as they went along. The same day, General Tergukassoff,

* See vol. ii.

L—*The Position in Armenia, April* 30, 1877.



M—*The Positions round Kars, April* 30, 1877.



leaving a garrison in the place, and sending out a few detachments towards Van, continued his onward march along the Euphrates valley.

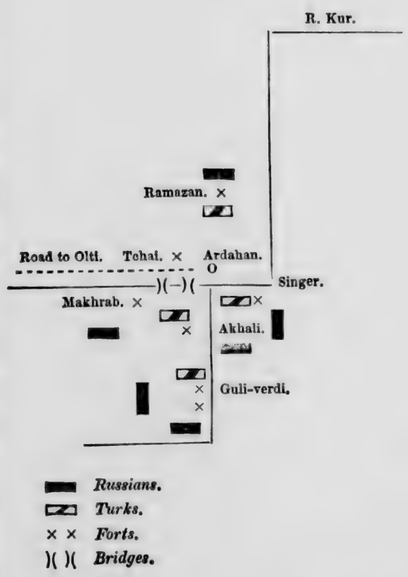
The plan conceived by the Russians had thus been fully executed in its initial phases; and General Loris Melikoff at once bagan to erect siege batteries against Kars. Under cover of these operations, General Melikoff undertook an expedition against Ardahan.

A reference to sketch M, will show that the valley of the Kur is separated from that of the Kars Tchai by the Allah Akbar range of mountains, which is a continuation of the Soghanli Dagh. From the Allah Dagh two spurs branch out, one the Kizilah Dagh, and the other the Boghaz Dagh. The former attains a height of over 10,000 feet; and the latter is close upon 9,000. From the Boghaz Dagh a high ridge stretches across to the Kizil Dagh, 10,500 feet high; and it was across this connecting ridge that the road ran from Kars to Ardahan by way of Mulkoi, Matschik, Omer Aga, and Kamali. It was along this road, which he commanded as soon as he had taken up his position at Mazra and Zaim, that Melikoff advanced, and thus cut off all communication between Kars and Ardahan, except by a circuitous route over the Soghanli Dagh.

In addition to this expedition under Melikoff, Ardahan was attacked from the opposite side by a detachment marching from Akhaltzik on the frontier, which reached Ardahan at the same time as the column from Kars. They were before Ardahan on May 13th, and General Loris Melikoff immediately began making *reconnaissances* and combining a plan of attack. The column from Kars consisted of two regiments of grenadiers, three batteries of artillery, two regiments of cavalry, and a company of sappers; in all about 7,500 men, under the command of General Dewel. The column from Akhaltzik was composed of two regiments of infantry, two batteries of artillery, one battalion of sappers, half a battery of horse artillery, and three regiments of cavalry; in all about 8,500 men, under the command of General Heimann. The commander-in-chief of the two columns was General Loris Melikoff, under whose direction the attack was made.

Ardahan is situated on the river Kur, the same which runs through Tiflis and flows into the Caspian. The fortress was comparatively new, and did not exist in 1854. It was strongly fortified, defended by eleven forts constructed on modern plans, and one on designs drawn up by an English engineer. On the south (as shown in the following sketch N), defending the road from Kars, distant two and a-half miles from the town, was the fort of Guli-verdi, built upon a mountain and armed with nine guns, and near to it was another fort armed with three or four guns, on a hill dominated by Guli-verdi, from which it was separated by a valley only two or three hundred yards

N—*Positions Round Ardahan and Forts, May* 17, 1877.



wide. Near the town, on the same side of the river, were three more forts—on the west Makhrab-tabia, in the centre Akhali-tabia, and on the east Singer-tabia. This latter was the one which was supposed to have been designed by an English engineer, and was of somewhat curious construction. There were three lines of defence; the escarpments were faced with stone; and they were built in a triangular shape, with the points towards the attack, and each line of defence rising terrace-like higher than the one before it. On the north side of the

river there was another fort called Tchai-tabia, which was connected with the southern side by two bridges; and on the north of the town, about two miles distant, was another strong fortress, called Ramazan-tabia, built like that of Guli-verdi, on a steep mountain which overlooks the town. The garrison destined to defend all these forts consisted of about 6,000 men, and all the forts together were armed with 92 guns. The greater part of these guns, however, were of small calibre, besides being old, and quite unable to compete with modern artillery. There were only two 24-pounders in all, the rest being principally 12-pounders; and there was very little ammunition even for these guns, such as they were.

General Melikoff, after reconnoitring the place, decided to make his real attack on the south against Guli-verdi, while the Akhaltzik columns made a feigned attack against the fortress of Ramazan-tabia on the north. In the first place, the fortress of Guli-verdi seemed more accessible, and he besides discovered that Ramazan-tabia was not armed against the town, and that the guns of this fortress could not be directed against an attack from the south. On the night of May 16th he succeeded in planting four batteries, consisting altogether of sixteen guns, against Guli-verdi on three different points, and on the morning of the 17th the batteries opened on the fort, and poured a well-directed and destructive fire into the Turkish batteries. The Turks scarcely replied, partly because the Russian fire dismounted their batteries, and partly because they had little or no ammunition. The consequence of this neglect was, that the whole Russian loss by the Turkish artillery was only six men wounded. About one o'clock the Russians began to perceive the Turks retreating in small parties from the fort to the town. "In the evening," says the *Daily News* correspondent, "General Dewel led three battalions to the assault of the heights of Guli-verdi, and carried them without losing a man and without firing a shot." This was but natural, inasmuch as the fort was already abandoned when the assault was made. The Russians found several of the guns dismounted, and the gunners lying dead beside them, and a considerable number of killed and wounded in the fort. As soon as Guli-verdi was taken, one of the Russian batteries which had been directed against that fortress was then turned towards the town, which was still defended by the forts already mentioned, of Makhrab-tabia, Akhali-tabia, and Singer-tabia.

While this attack was being directed against Guli-verdi, several other batteries had been planted and directed against the three forts defending the town. By half-past five in the evening of the same day, General Melikoff thought that the assault might be delivered, and General Heimann, who was operating on the left, against the Makhrab-tabia, sent at about the same moment to ask if he should not make an attempt upon the works on his side. The assault was ordered all along the line at the same moment, and, although the fort of Singer-tabia was considered the strongest, it was the one which fell first. The others soon followed, although the Turks, as usual, made a very desperate resistance on the walls; for though so badly off for heavy material, they had plenty of ammunition for their small arms. After a desperate fight, in which the principal losses of the Russians occurred, the Turks were finally driven across the river by the two bridges already spoken of, and took refuge in the fort of Tchai-tabia, everywhere hotly pursued by the Russians. When the latter, headed by General Heimann, were a few yards from the opposite bank, the bridge gave way before them; but nothing daunted, the Russians sprang into the water, which was not very deep, and continued to cross by wading. General Heimann himself was one of the first to leap into the water. The Russians had thus obtained possession of all the forts on the south side of the river; there remained only the fort of Tchai-tabia and the fortress of Ramazan-tabia on the mountain. The Russians immediately attacked Tchai-tabia, and the Turks were so discouraged by the Russian success and overwhelming numbers, that they scarcely made any resistance, and fled. In fact, they had already begun to fly before the Russian attack began; so that by dark the town of Ardahan was in complete possession of the Russians. While this was going on, General Dewel was occupying the attention of the garrison in the strong fortress of Ramazan-tabia on the north of the town. "He soon succeeded," says the official Russian report, "in silencing the batteries in this fortress, which only fired three or four shots in all; and towards evening, about the time of the assault on the town, he likewise ordered an assault. But what was the surprise of the Russians, upon

entering the fortress, to find that the Turks had all fled. They had evidently become panic-stricken when they perceived that the town was already in the hands of the Russians, and they had retreated to the west by the road towards Batoum and Olti."

A finer description than this, of the affair at Ardahan, has seldom been penned by victorious general or partisan correspondent. It can only be compared to the account given by the same paper of the siege of Urgel during the Carlist war, and the assault of the Torre Solsona. This unfortunate town had been bombarded by sixteen guns, from 8 A.M. till 12 P.M., without any effect upon the one company of men who held it, and who had not one single gun to reply with. At 2.30 P.M., the garrison, seeing that some 2,000 men were preparing to assault it, took their precautions, and, holding the place till 3 P.M., then quietly retired. The Alfonsists then, when there was not a man in the place, successfully "assaulted" it, and not unnaturally captured it. The same was the case at Ardahan. There were no guns of any size, and there was no heavy ammunition. The Russians bombarded fort by fort without drawing a reply, and then assaulted all round in such numbers, that the Turks, fighting as long as they could do any damage to their assailants, wisely withdrew to fight another day.

The Russian losses, in the whole affair, were 67 killed and 293 wounded, besides one officer killed and ten officers wounded; making altogether 370 killed and wounded. The loss of the Turks was 70 dead and 200 wounded. Among the wounded in the hospital was the constructor of the fort of Singer-tabia. He was found by Colonel Bulmering, the constructor of the Russian batteries, who was anxious to see him and talk with him, but the poor fellow died almost as soon as he was discovered. The Russians captured ninety-two guns, a number of tents and camp material, and a large supply of flour and provisions, but no ammunition; the Turks had little or none. There were very few prisoners taken; and those of the Redifs, or reserves, who had been forced to come in from the surrounding villages, were immediately released and allowed to return to their homes; the Nizams, or regular troops, only were held as prisoners of war. Among the prisoners taken was General Ali Pasha, commander of the Turkish left wing, and several Turkish civil officials, besides many officers who had been wounded or otherwise disabled. The inhabitants, who had fled during the attack, upon being assured by the Russians that no harm should come to them, began to return, and in a very few days the town had resumed very nearly its ordinary aspect. The Turks taken prisoners had a feeble, half-starved look, which showed how long they had been on short rations, and this in spite of the large supply of stores and provisions which had been found in the town.

With the capture of Ardahan, and the rapid advance on Kars and Bayazet, the same exultation was felt by the Russians as in Bulgaria, and there was naturally a corresponding depression in the Turkish ranks. But the disadvantages of a too rapid extension into the heart of a hostile country notorious for its want of communications, soon made themselves felt, especially as the Turkish commander adopted the same Fabian tactics as his colleagues in Bulgaria. The Russians were perpetually seeking their enemy, who was split up more or less, and confined himself to occupying strong positions, which the Russians were not strong enough to carry and at the same time keep a sufficient force before Kars.

Thus, after the capture of Ardahan, a period of inactivity set in—the Russians busied with the preparations for the siege of Kars and Batoum, and the Turks with the organisation of their field army. Isolated attacks and counter-attacks occurred in the passes and defiles between the advanced posts; foraging parties and *reconnaissances* starting from Kars on the one hand, and from the Soghanli Dagh on the other. Small detachments of troops and irregular cavalry somewhat harassed the Russians; the consequence being that both corps, Melikoff's and Tergukassoff's, fell somewhat to pieces, especially as they had to leave detachments here and there to occupy the places and strategic points which fell into their hands as they advanced. Added to all this, was the difficulty experienced by the commissariat and transport services; so that the grand duke was practically fettered, and did not know what to do. Not strong enough to advance, except by venturesome sporadic raids *à la* Gourko—whose place in Armenia was filled by Tergukassoff—and not strong enough to remain quiet and thoroughly invest Kars, with Mukhtar Pasha on the Soghanli threatening his flank and front, he was obliged to leave much to the fortune of war and conceal, by a

firework display of activity, the real weakness he was suffering from.

Thus, to keep up the fiction of a successful advance, he continued the investment of Kars, trusting to the flanking movement being carried out by Genaral Tergukassoff for something favourable "to turn up," whilst demonstrating against the Turkish positions in the Soghanli and the defile leading to Erzeroum.

Between Erzeroum and Kars and Ardahan there were two well-marked lines of defence. The first line, in the immediate vicinity of Erzeroum (of which a sketch will be given in the proper place), was formed by the Palantuken Dagh and the Karakaya Dagh in the south, and the Deve Boyun in the east: on the north the approach was pretty open through the valleys of the Tortoum and the Tcharuk rivers.

The second line of defence was formed by the mountains encircling the uplands, at the eastern apex of which lay Kars. The configuration of this district is admirably shown in the following sketch O.

On the north was the Allah Akbar range of hills, separated in the west by a wild, roadless defile from the Charpak Dagh. This, in turn, was divided from the Keshish Gedük in the west, again by a difficult valley, through which ran one of the roads from Ardahan. The other, the main road from Ardahan, passed the mouth of this valley on the north, and ran by way of Pennek, Olti, and Nariman, near which it was joined by the first road, to Erzeroum and Hassan Kaleh. It was also connected with the first road, or Pertes road, by a traverse-path running north of the Keshish Gedük.

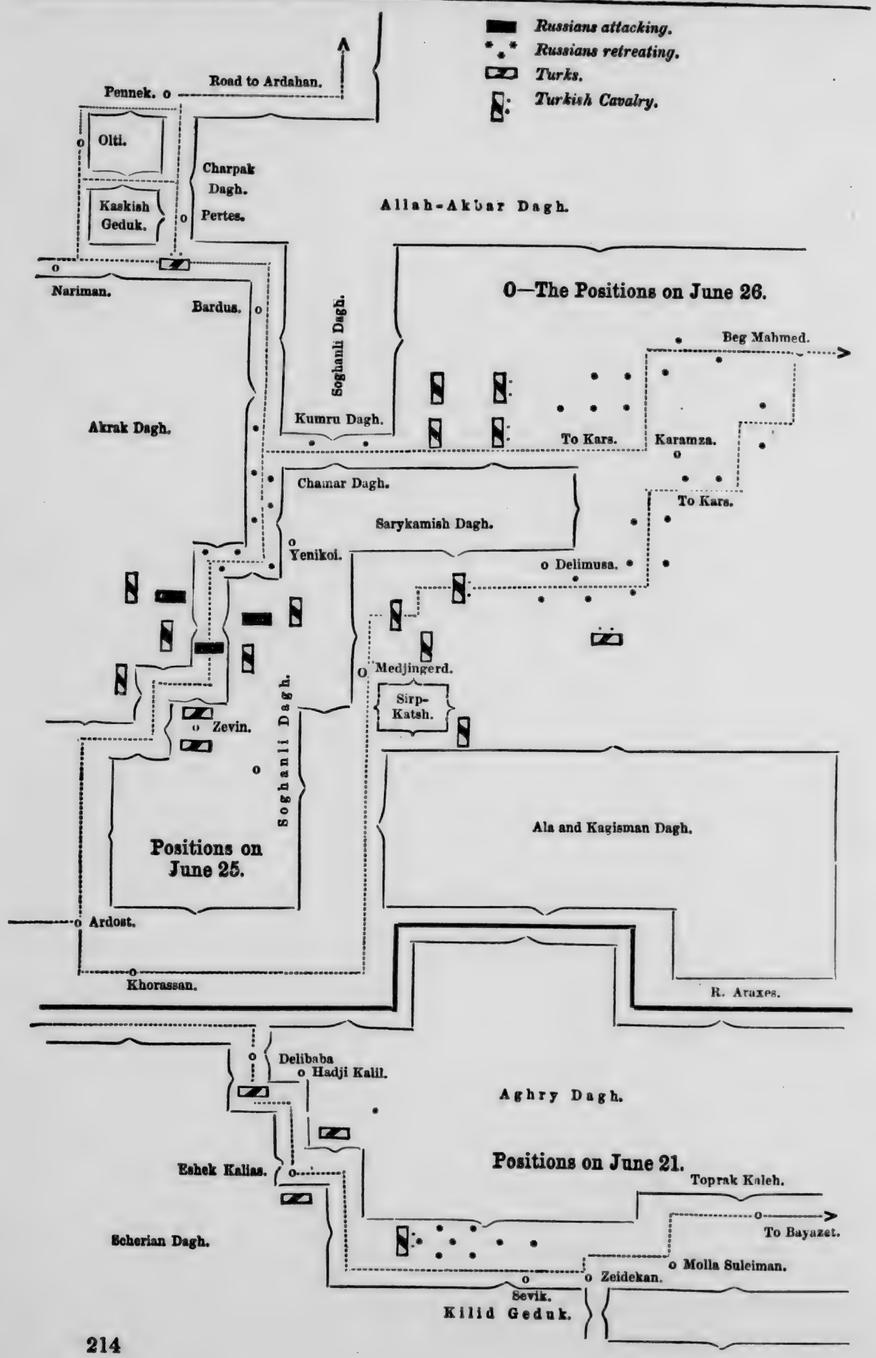
A force, therefore, advancing from Ardahan had a choice of action. It could either attack the rear and flank of any enemy in position on the Soghanli Dagh, or it could advance upon Erzeroum, or demonstrate against both. The keys of the defenders would then naturally be at Pennek, Olti, Nariman, and Bardus.

South of the Allah Akbar Dagh ran the roads from Kars, which split into two branches at Beg Mahmed (see sketch O). The northernmost of these branches ran at some distance from the Allah Akbar Dagh, but close along the slope of a spur of the Soghanli Dagh, jutting out eastward parallel with the Allah Akbar Dagh, and called the Sarykamish Dagh, from the river flowing along its southern base, till it entered the pass on the Soghanli Dagh, between the two peaks of Kumri on the north and Chamar on the south, both of them over 9,000 feet high. Issuing from this pass it joined the road running south from Ardahan, between the eastern slopes of the Akrak Dagh and the Soghanli, to Erzeroum and Hassan Kaleh. Here the keys to the defenders' position from this point were clearly at the entrance or debouchment of the Chamar Pass, or at Zevin.

The southern branch of the road from Kars skirted the southern slopes of the Sarykamish Dagh, and turning southwards ran through Medjingerd between the Soghanli Dagh and the Sirpkatch, or Mount of the Holy Cross, a rugged peak 9,500 feet high, and surrounded by a series of difficult slopes. Thence it ran between and across the hills forming the first ascent of the Ala and Kagisman Dagh on the east, and the Soghanli in the west, till it reached the valley of the Araxes, the northern bank of which it followed to Khorassan and Ardost. On this road the key of the position was at Medjingerd, at the entrance of the defile between the Soghanli and Mount of the Holy Cross.

South of the Araxes were the imposing mass of the Aghry Dagh, rising in parts to 11,000 feet, and generally averaging 6,000 feet above the sea. This range of mountains was separated on the south from the Scherian Dagh and the Kilid Gedük, also rising to an average of 6,000 feet, by the river Scherian, along which ran the road from Bayazet to Erzeroum by way of Diadin, Toprak Kaleh, Zeidekan, and Delibaba, where the water-shed between the Scherian and the Araxes was crossed, Delibaba itself being already in the basin of the Araxes. From Delibaba the road followed the southern bank of the Araxes, which it crossed at Köprikoi, some fifteen miles west of Khorassan.

Along this road there was a large choice of defensive positions, which also allowed of flanking attacks against an advancing enemy. Such a position was offered by Toprak Kaleh, Molla Suleiman, and Zeidekan, east of which the Euphrates, running southwards, opened a lateral approach to the valley of the Scherian, which fell into the Euphrates a few miles south of Kara Kilissa, and through which a force advancing from Melashgerd, Mush, or Bitlis, could attack the right flank, or, if the



defenders' position were properly chosen, and well held, the rear of the advancing foe. Not only that, but the left flank would also be open to attack from any force advancing through the pass over the Kilid Gedük, west of Zeidekan (as shown in sketch O). A fine defensive position was also offered on the line Delibaba, Hadji Kalil, and Eshek Kalias, of which we give a sketch on an enlarged scale further on.

Such, therefore, were the roads open to the Russians to choose from, the immediate objectives being, in all cases, Ardost and Khorassan. These gained, there would only remain the line of the Palantuken Dagh and Deve Boyun between the Russian armies and Erzeroum, the capital of Armenia. The plan of campaign for both sides was thus clearly dictated by the exigencies of the country. It was the duty of Mukhtar Pasha to hold, with strong garrisons, the line Pennek and Olti as a first defence, and Nariman and Bardus as the second, against any force advancing from Ardahan. This would have formed the left of the position. His centre should have been protected by equally strong, or stronger garrisons, at the mouths of the Chamar Pass and at Medjingerd. His right should have been held in the same way at Zeidekan, forming the first line, and at Delibaba, forming the second line. His active army could then have taken up a central position between Yenikoi and Zevin, ready to march to the assistance of any of his garrisons which might require his help.

Similarly the Russians had to be prepared to make a series of simultaneous feints along all four roads, two of these feints, at least, being carried out with forces strong enough to turn the feigned into a real attack.

The only practicable way to have done this, supposing that Mukhtar Pasha kept to the plan dictated by the circumstances of the field, would have been for them to have stationed a large reserve force near Karamza, whence it could advance either on the Chamar Pass or on Medjingerd. Had they done this, or been able to do so, they would have made their feints on Chamar and Medjingerd simultaneously with an attack on the Turkish left from Ardahan, and on the right from Bayazet. The reserve could then have converted whichever of these feints was the most successful into the real attack, and there is little doubt but that one of the two would have succeeded. But, whether it would have succeeded or not, this was the only rational plan: and had Mukhtar Pasha imitated Osman Pasha, he might have inflicted similar disasters on the Russian armies in Asia. Mukhtar Pasha was bound to be all the more careful as, unlike Osman Pasha at Plevna, he was not assisted by a force hammering at the Russians in the south, and holding them in check in the east; for Kars, at the most, rendered him no more assistance than Rustzuk did to Osman Pasha.

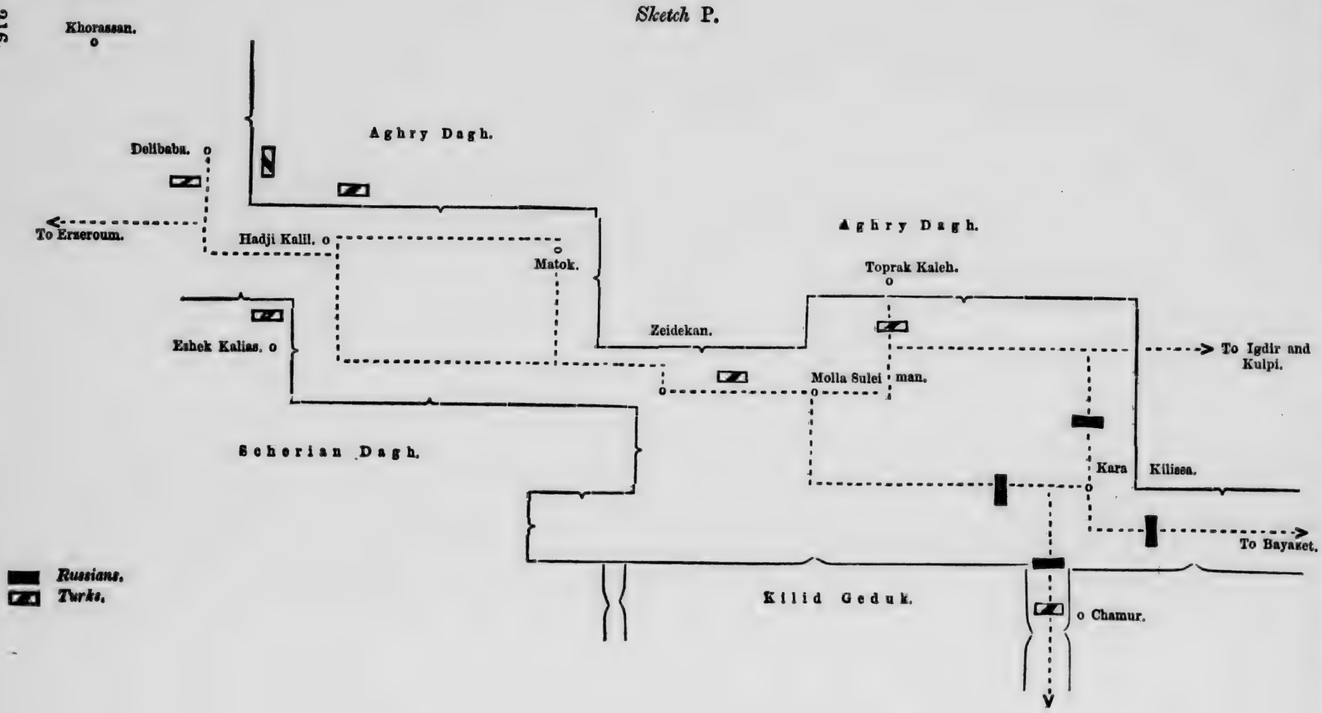
We will now, however, quit criticism, and proceed to facts as they developed themselves.

Whilst General Loris Melikoff was engaged with the capture of Ardahan and the investment of Kars, and reconnoitring the field between Kars and the Soghanli Dagh, General Tergukassoff was pressing on towards Delibaba along the valley of the Euphrates. He occupied Diadin without any serious opposition, and continued his march to Kara Kilissa, where the Euphrates turns southwards, and the Scherian valley commences. Here he was obliged to secure his rear from attack through the Chamar Pass, and sent a body of cavalry forward, which soon dispersed the few troops in Chamar, and then occupied the town till it was relieved by some infantry, who intrenched themselves there, whilst the main body continued its way to Toprak Kaleh and Zeidekan.

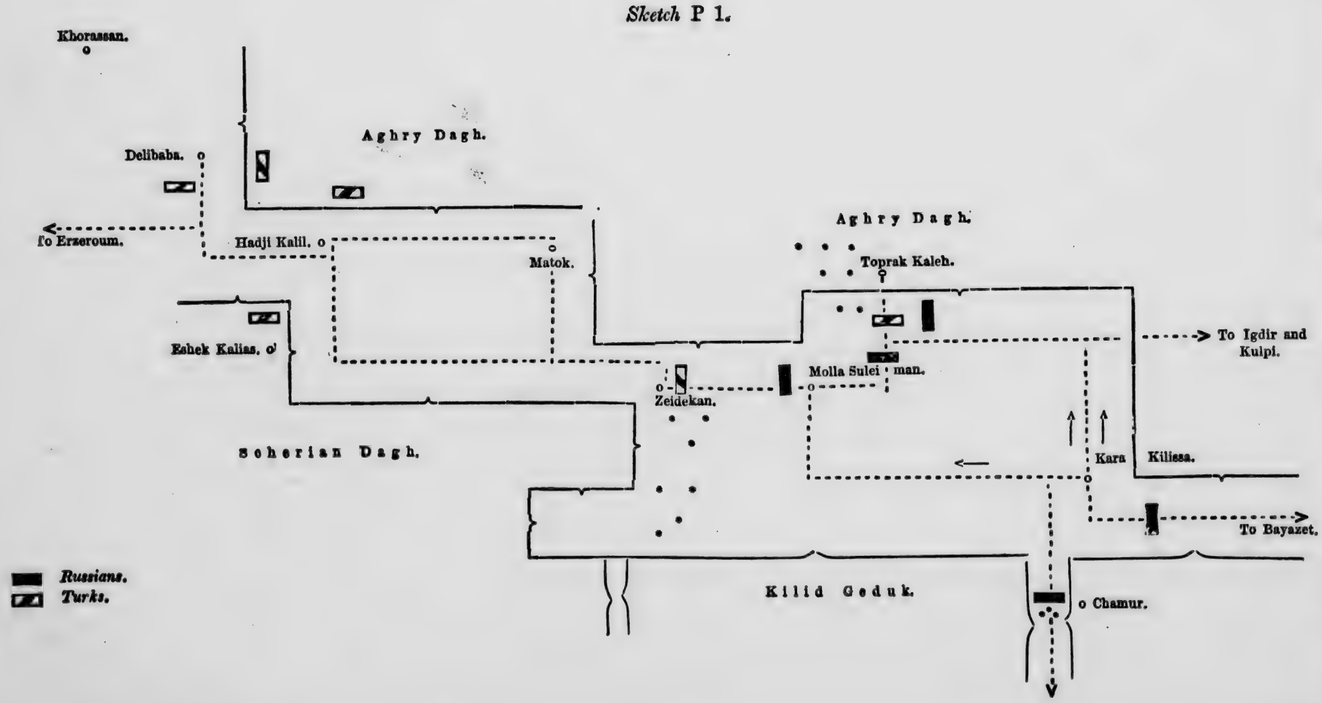
Two roads led to Zeidekan from Kara Kilissa, the northern one running *viâ* Toprak Kaleh, where the Turks had stationed a couple of battalions for its defence, with a small body of cavalry. Sending one column along the northern road, and proceeding with the main body, also divided into two columns, along the main road, his right wing fell upon the Turks in the east, whilst with his centre he barred the way to Zeidekan, cutting off their retreat on this place, and with his left he watched Zeidekan itself, to guard against any surprise from this quarter.

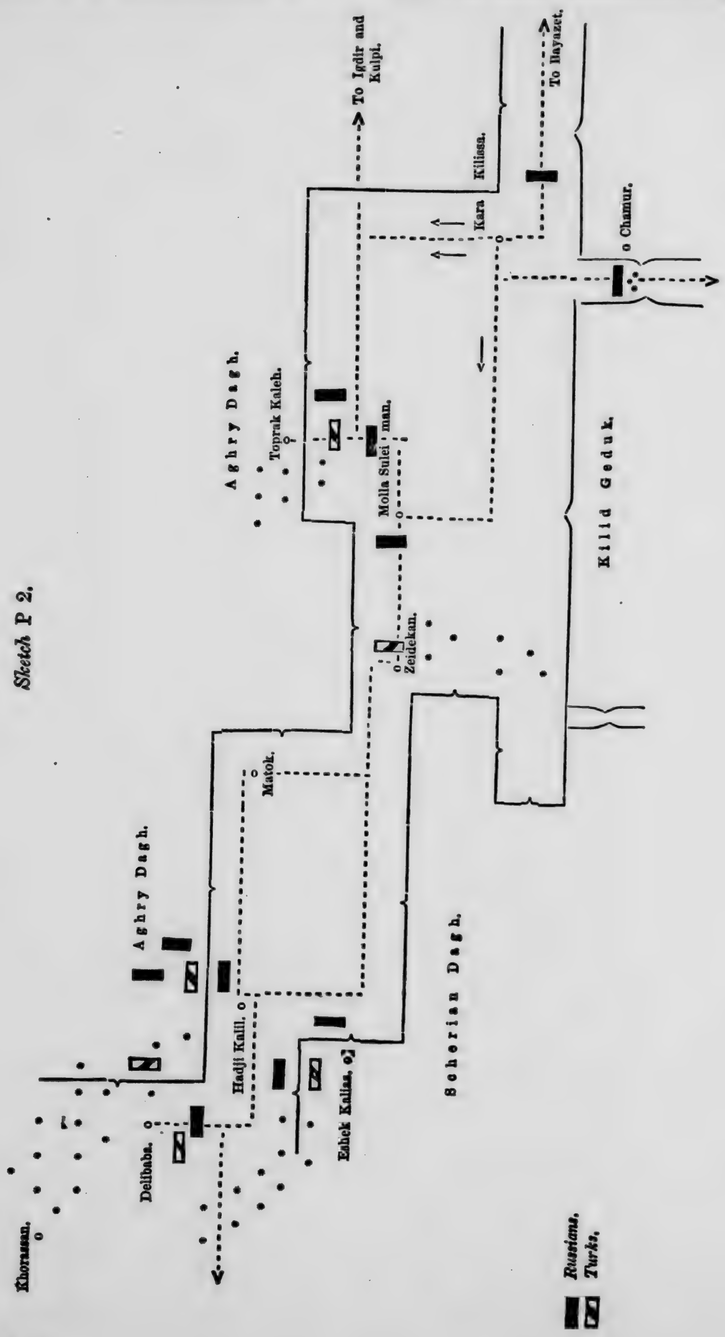
There was, however, no surprise in store for him, and the troops in Toprak Kaleh were soon dispersed, and fled across the mountains as best they could; whilst the detachment at Zeidekan effected its escape southwards and westwards on Delibaba. Still, in spite of the slight opposition he met with, General Tergukassoff's progress was slow. The weather was execrable; the roads almost impassable; and he was still further troubled by the reports of a large cavalry force assembling in the Van district

Sketch P.



Sketch P 1.





Sketch P 2.

on his left flank, which obliged him to move very carefully onwards, and leave detachments here and there to watch the approaches to the valley from the south. Thus, at the end of May, he was still engaged in strengthening his position, and bringing up stores and material to the front, which delayed his advance till towards the middle of June. Then he again moved forward, also by two roads, the main road running direct to within a short distance of Delibaba, and the other by way of Matok and Hadji Kalil.

The Turks had taken up a position on the heights east of Delibaba, and north of Hadji Kalil. This formed the left of their position. The centre was in front of Delibaba, facing the high-road to Erzeroum; and the right was stationed in inadequate force at Eshek Kalias, south of the road from Zeidekan. On June 16th, Tergukassoff advanced to the attack, directing his main efforts on the left wing of the Turks, whilst cleverly inserting a force between it and the right wing at Eshek Kalias, and attacking the Turkish centre at the same time, as shown in the preceding sketch, P 2.

For some time the combat on the hills between Delibaba and Hadji Kalias was fiercely waged; but the artillery playing with great precision on the Turkish flank at Hadji Kalias, the Turks began to fall back, and at the same moment the right wing at Eshek Kalias was also driven in, and fled along the road to Erzeroum. Soon afterwards the centre, in front of Delibaba, began to waver, and the reluctant falling back, step by step, of the left wing soon changed, when they saw their retreat being cut off, into a precipitate flight on Khorassan. With this battle, therefore, General Tergukassoff had gained possession of one of the keys to the defence of Erzeroum, and only awaited the orders and co-operation of Loris Melikoff to continue his advance.

Meantime Mukhtar Pasha's retrograde movement still continued. Little by little, but surely, it was shortening the distance between his army and Erzeroum. From Kars he fell back rather precipitately to avoid being cut off by the formidable flank movement of April 30th, which we have already described. He took up his position on the crests of the Soghanli. Thence, after the fall of Ardahan, he fell back again to Delibaba in consequence of a demonstration by the Russians on Olti and Nariman, a large body of Circassians and Kurds, lately added to the central army corps, keeping well in front to prevent a surprise. These troops clashing together with the Russian dragoons forming the *reconnaissances* of Loris Melikoff, imagined that the whole of the Russian army was advancing, and retreated precipitately; so that Mukhtar Pasha, having ascertained that there was no immediate danger to be apprehended from General Tergukassoff, and that the advance on Olti was only a demonstration, took up a fresh position at Zevin. The true secret of this continued retiring was the paucity of numbers of the main army.

Though considerably swelled by reinforcements, the Turkish central force did not come up to thirty battalions, and many of these were at anything but their full complement. A solitary battery represented the artillery element; though another was at Hassan Kaleh, a day's march to the rear. The slightest flank movement of the enemy threatened to necessitate a general engagement, and was accompanied by a rapid packing up and retiring to a new rearward position. One of the generals in command explained, however, that the retreat from Delibaba followed as a necessary consequence of the falling back of the Circassians. On the left flank, and parallel to the main line of communications of the army, the Sarykamish road was covered by the vedettes of the irregular cavalry. These latter once retired, the army was more or less open to a flank attack, and adopted the system of falling back on the junction of the two roads in front of Zevin. So far, indeed, the central corps, under the command of Mukhtar Pasha, was merely doing duty as a corps of observation, or, at most, retaining nominal possession of the ground, and preventing forays of Cossacks in search of provisions. Serious impediment to the advance of the Russian forces it could not then offer. Even as it was, the entire ground between Kars and the position of the Turkish army, three days' march, was entirely undefended, even by irregulars. On the other hand, the Russian expedition against Olti, of 1,500 Cossacks and three infantry battalions, retired before an equal Turkish force despatched against it.

In fact, both the Turkish and Russian generals were playing at cross purposes, each wanting the other to think he had the most men, whilst ignorant of what was going on in the other parts of the field.

The great drawback for the Turks, however, was their want of cavalry. Fifteen thousand Cossacks, hovering like a cloud in advance of the main Russian columns, effectually screened their movements and prevented their points of concentration from being known. To compete against these, a few hundred mounted Circassians and a squadron of Kurd lancers were hurriedly organised to supply the necessary reconnoitring element. Their vigilance and intelligence were counted on to compensate for their paucity of number; but the very first time they came in contact with the enemy, they proved quite inadequate to the mission assigned them. They were surprised, cut up, and retired on the main army, behind which they then camped—a terror and a nuisance to all but the enemy. Mukhtar Pasha was thus forced to have recourse to another means to keep himself informed of the Russian movements. Upper Armenia had ever been infested by bands of Kurd robbers, who, under various chiefs, and in detachments of from ten to twenty, lived upon the country, exacting blackmail from the villages, and pillaging travellers; and it was these men whom the Turkish general had to fall back upon for scouts.

One of these men, popularly known as Tulu Moussa, or Hairy Moses, enjoyed an extensive renown for his successes in the brigand line. When Mukhtar Pasha was governor of Armenia some years before, he had in vain tried to lay hands on this bandit; but as soon as the war broke out, Tulu Moussa, stirred by patriotism, entered into negotiations with the military authorities, offering his services in return for a free pardon. His offers were accepted, and he thus became the pasha's main source of information as to the doings of the enemy. Accompanied by half-a-dozen followers, he scoured the country in front, collected information, tracked out the Russian spies, and even ventured in disguise into the enemy's camp. He was a tall spare man of some forty years of age, sallow-faced and hollow-cheeked, his large black lustrous eyes sparkling with energy. A heavy moustache scarce concealed a half-suppressed humorous expression about the corners of his mouth, and a dense growth of beard vindicated his title to the *sobriquet* of "hairy." His attire was brigandishly picturesque in the extreme. A long tunic resembling that of the Circassians, the skirt reaching to the middle calf, of a dark olive tint, and bound at the edges with broad silver lace, was confined round his slender waist by a belt of many silver pieces with pierced pattern. On either breast was a double row of silver cartridge tubes elaborately chased and ornamented with green enamel. His sabre and broad-bladed Circassian dagger, masterpieces of carving and enamel, the sheaths and hilts massive silver, were set with coral and lapis-lazuli. Wide trousers, and high red-leather boots turning up at the toe, completed his costume. His companions were attired much in the same manner, though less richly. They were quiet, resolute men, but with an unmistakably brigandish air.

Such were Mukhtar Pasha's chief of the "intelligence department" and his aides, and Moussa was well worth a whole regiment of cavalry to him, for the information he brought was thoroughly trustworthy.

Thus Tulu Moussa soon discovered that the forces under Tergukassoff's command were by no means so formidable as his rapid progress would seem to indicate; and at the same time it was ascertained that Loris Melikoff was not prepared to force the Soghanli Dagh for at least some days to come.

Mukhtar Pasha then determined to strike a blow on his right, after having received reinforcements and supplies; and leaving his position at Zevin to the care of Feizi Pasha, he moved down towards Khorassan on June 20th. The next day he sent Ismail Pasha forward with twenty-three battalions, and Ismail, advancing his centre on Delibaba, whilst his left made for Hadji Kalias, and his right for Eshek Kalias, soon succeeded in forcing the Russians back from Delibaba. Tergukassoff, seeing both his flanks outmarched, was forced to retreat precipitately upon Zeidekan, closely followed by the Circassians and Kurds. The Turks still advancing, passing on like a torrent through the valley, did not allow him any rest even in Zeidekan, and he was forced to continue his flight to Kara Kilissa. Here, to his dismay, he heard that the road to Bayazet was in the hands of a large number of Kurds and Circassians, and sixteen battalions of Arabian troops who had advanced from Van, and who effectually cut off his retreat. There was only one means of escape left—that was by the road running north-east from Kara Kilissa across the Aghry Dagh to the Russian frontier (see sketch P).

Along this path, leaving the greater part of his baggage behind him, Tergukassoff fled with his forces; and after a series of the most difficult marches, at last succeeded in reaching Russian territory, and arrived on July 5th, deteated and out-manœuvred and out-numbered, at Igdir, whence he had set out a little over two months before.

Meanwhile, as may be imagined, the Russian detachments, left to shift for themselves between Kara Kilissa and Bayazet, had a bad time of it. They were driven in, surrounded, harassed, hunted down, and but few escaped by the wild paths leading over the Aghry Dagh; and equally did those Christian villages suffer which had too warmly welcomed the Russian forces and given them any assistance. The same events took place here as occurred in the country south of the Balkans when General Gourko retreated and left the villagers, whom he had stirred up against their Moslem neighbours, to the reprisals of the Turks. All through the valley the Christian villages were sacked and burned, and most of those inhabitants who had not effected their escape were massacred. As for Bayazet, the Russians, thinking only of Turkish regulars, had left but a slender garrison of some 500 men there, and, as we have seen, pushed on towards Zeidekan with their main forces, with the intention of trying to force Mukhtar's position beyond Delibaba. While engaged in this operation, a horde of Kurds, under the influence, if not actual guidance, of Sheikh Jelaledin, swept down from the Ararat chain of mountains, and surrounded the little garrison of Bayazet. The Russians retired within the walls of a mediæval building, half fortress, half palace, which occupied the summit of the hill above the platform on which Bayazet stands. Provisions were scanty, water still more so; and after a couple of days' blockade the Russians offered terms. Round, and in Bayazet at the time, apart from the Kurds, were seven regular Turkish battalions, under the command of Faik Pasha. These had arrived subsequent to the Russian failure to carry the Delibaba ridge. The pasha willingly received the overtures of surrender, and half the entire beleaguered garrison, without arms, marched from their stronghold. But before the regular troops could take any measures for their security, which at the time no one had any reason to doubt, the Kurd horsemen fell on the disarmed and surrendered prisoners, massacring every one without exception. On this the gates of the stronghold were closed, the remaining portion of the garrison refusing to entertain any proposition after the untoward event which had just taken place. In vain the Turkish commander of the regular forces urged on the besieged the expediency of surrendering rather than die of hunger and thirst. The Russian colonel had fallen in the first assault of the Kurds on the town, and his wife, within the beleaguered stronghold, incited the soldiery to resistance, taking her share in the defence like any of the troops. Anything was better, the Russians said, than again trusting themselves to the mercy of a faithless horde of bloodthirsty savages. And so several days went by Water was falling short; but the besieged hit on the plan of mining towards the town, and thus establishing an unseen connection with one of the public fountains. For some time this expedient was successful, the adventurous water-seekers being almost entirely hidden from view in the depths of the subterranean opening. But in an evil day some stray Kurd observed the top of a Russian's hat protruding in an unaccountable manner from the soil. He observed, and soon guessed the truth. An ambuscade was prepared, and day after day the thirsty Russians had to lament one of their number shot through the head at the gallery entrance. Twenty-six days' siege, since the massacre, had gone by. Provisions had long since run exceedingly short, and the besieging enemy had over and over again shouted to the caged foe the intelligence that artillery was coming up to drive them from their refuge. Help, however, was near; and suddenly, on July 15th, as if falling from the clouds, five Russian battalions, with six guns, and 4,000 cavalry, attacked the Turkish force. General Tergukassoff, having received reinforcements from the centre, and having reorganised his troops, had sent these men from Igdir to relieve the beleaguered garrison. The struggle was short; for though the regular battalions resisted bravely, they were forced to retreat, leaving over 1,000 men and three guns in the assailants' hands. The long-suffering detachment in the stronghold above the town were relieved, and, after passing the night in Bayazet, retreated with their deliverers as rapidly as possible, to escape from the Kurds and Circassians, who, as usual, were not where they were wanted,

but were hurrying up from the valley to the support of the regulars.

Such was the end of Tergukassoff's advance. By July 19th, there was not a single Russian in the valley, from Bayazet to Delibaba. The collapse south of the Aghry Dagh had preceded the collapse south of the Balkans by a day.

Meantime, when Loris Melikoff heard of the successful advance of General Tergukassoff, and knowing how much he stood in need of help, he determined to effect a diversion, and was not without hope of forcing the positions of the Turks. This determination was strengthened when he heard of the disaster which had befallen the Erivan corps, and how they were in imminent danger of being cut off to the last man.

In order to prevent such a catastrophe, General Heimann, accompanied by the commander-in-chief, General Loris Melikoff, was detached from before Kars, and, encountering Feizi Pasha at Zevin, attacked him without hesitation on the ridge of rocks where he had intrenched his army (as shown in sketch O). Unhappily for the Russians, the means at hand were utterly inadequate to the task imposed upon the soldiers; and finally, General Heimann, after having experienced severe losses—over 3,000 men killed and wounded—was obliged to retreat in disorder to the point from which he had come.

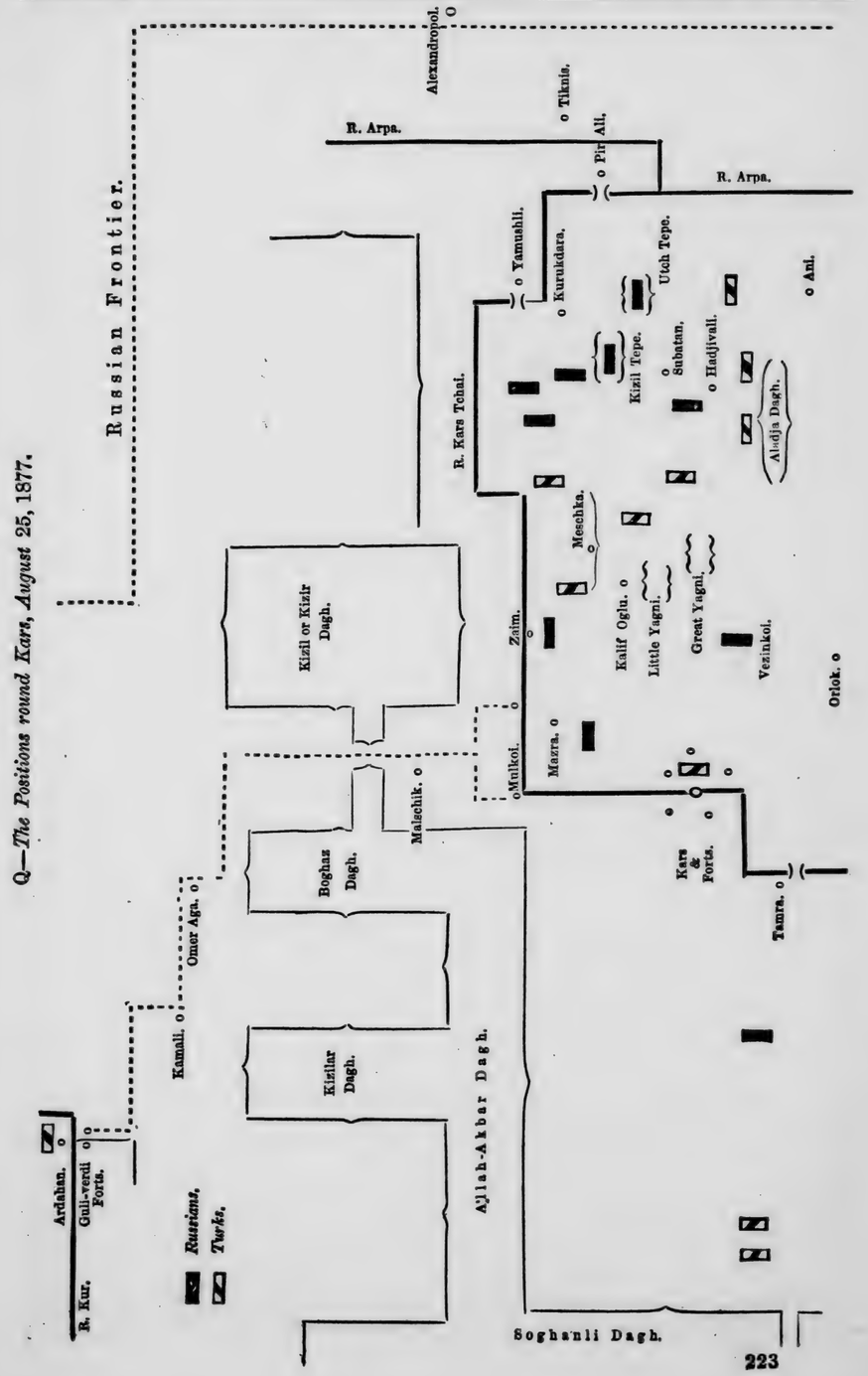
After this signal victory over General Heimann, Mukhtar Pasha boldly crossed the Soghanli mountains, and occupied strong positions commanding both the roads to Kars, in case the Russians should recover themselves from their defeat and essay to retrieve their position. But General Loris Melikoff, the Russian commander-in-chief, judging his army too weak to besiege Kars and resist Mukhtar Pasha simultaneously, ordered the heavy guns to be withdrawn, and suspended the bombardment, or rather the siege, of that stronghold. Then he prepared for an action in the field, and camped at Zaim, where he decided to intrench himself in formidable positions, and to wait for Mukhtar Pasha's attack, till the expected reinforcements allowed him to push forward again.

The expected attack, however, not reckoning isolated skirmishes and *reconnaissances* which had no decided result, was delayed from day to day, the *yavash*, *yavash* (slowly, slowly,) of the Turks, as usual, preventing energetic action on the part of Mukhtar Pasha, who was forced to lose much valuable time in waiting for stores, guns, and munitions.

On August 25th, however, the struggle began again on a larger scale. At about three o'clock in the morning the Russians were roused by the roar of cannon and volleys of musketry. They supposed, at first, that only outpost skirmishing was going on between the Cossacks and Circassians; but the noise growing louder and more persistent, it soon was evident that the Turks, contrary to their usual practice, had attacked in the direction of the camp, situated some eight miles off, to the left of the Kurukdara position behind the Utch Tepe.

The Turkish position on the Aladja mountain extended from the neighbourhood of the ancient city of Ani, now dismal ruins, on the Arpa Tchai River, to the vicinity of Kars, from which fortress the supplies were drawn. The main force, however, rested its left wing on the mountain spur ending in the Yagni hills (as shown in sketch Q). Between the Aladja Dagh and Kurukdara there was another steep hill, the Kizil Tepe (Red Hill), which, in an entirely isolated position, towered above the Kurukdara plateau, almost in the very centre of the military positions. On this remarkable eminence the commander-in-chief, General Loris Melikoff, had established his headquarters on August 17th. It was usually occupied by a single battalion and four field-pieces, and was thus considered as almost impregnable. On account of its commanding position over the surrounding flats and undulating grounds it was well worth particular attention, and the Turks determined to carry it if possible.

It was a bright moonlight night. The mountains and plains were almost as distinctly visible as in broad day-time. Availing themselves of this circumstance, at two or three o'clock in the morning of the 25th of August, about 7,000 Turks crept stealthily, in a compact, noiseless mass, through a dark, deep ravine, without being observed by the careless Lesghian pickets and patrols, till they arrived at the very foot of the Kizil Tepe. Here deploying, they made a sudden rush, savagely yelling their "Allah-il-Allah," on the eight Russian companies which were stationed on the summit. These men, though surprised, defended themselves courageously at the point of the bayonet without yielding an



Q—The Positions round Kars, August 25, 1877.

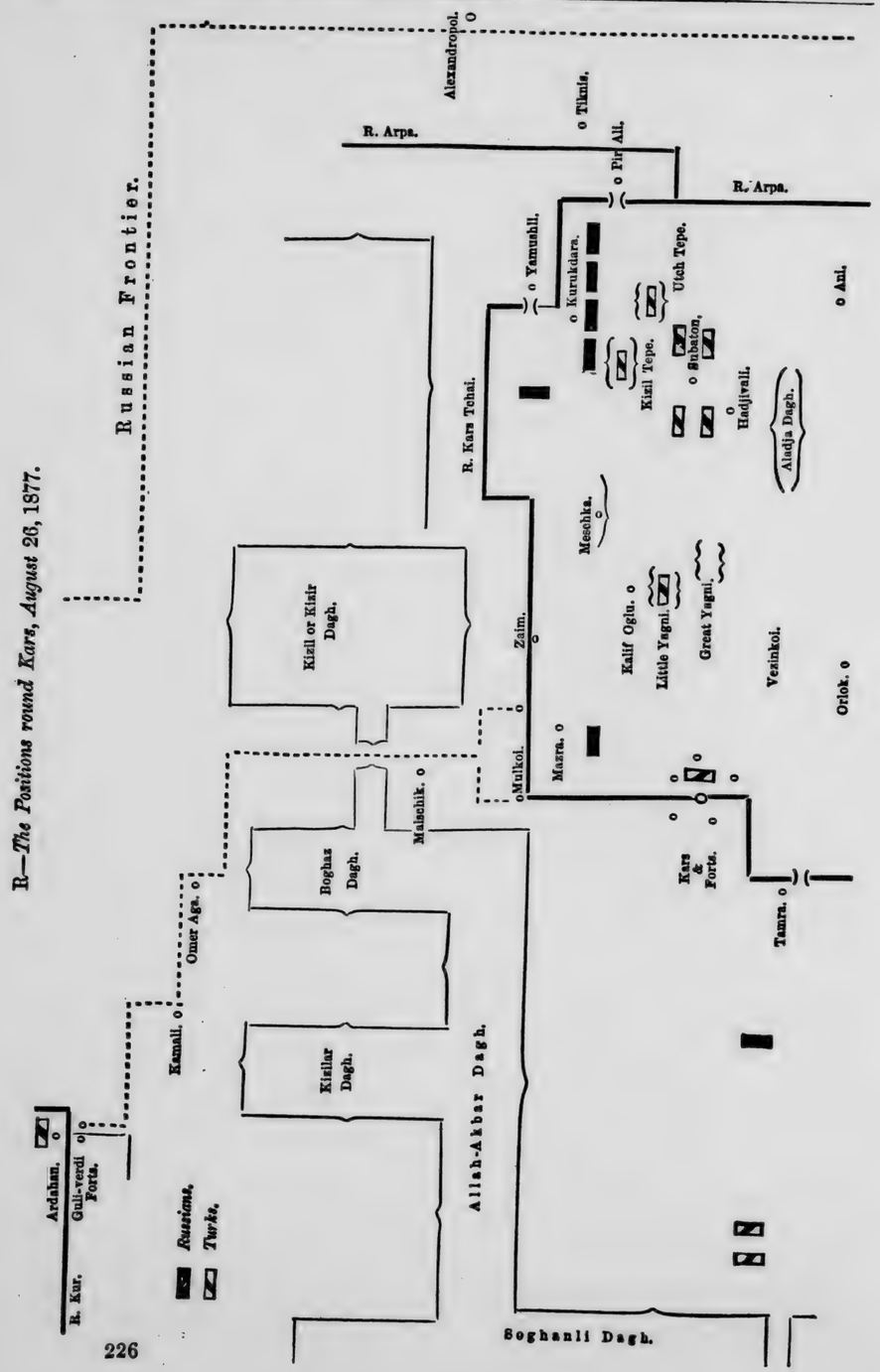
inch. Hundreds of Turks who a few seconds before dashed fiercely on with the rifle in their hands, fell to rise no more. At last, however, as the enemy's fast-increasing force threatened to outflank and envelop them altogether, the Russians were compelled to retreat to the camp, protecting and dragging away their four cannons. Here the alarm was given, and, as quickly as possible, infantry and dragoons marched to the rescue, and stormed the hill with dauntless courage, in the hope of recovering it in the way in which it had been lost. In spite of their heroic efforts, however, they were repeatedly repulsed by overwhelming numbers. The whole hill was like a beehive, thickly thronged with enemies, and had they persisted in their gallant attempt they would have all been exterminated. In the meanwhile the principal Russian forces encamped at Kurukdara had been roused, and battalions, squadrons, batteries, with ammunition carts and red-cross waggons behind, hastened in long columns into the field. At first utter consternation prevailed through the camp, and all was in confusion. Orders were issued to strike tents, pack luggage, and load everything on the numerous commissariat waggons, as the boom of the artillery thundered louder, and the sharp rattling of the breech-loaders grew sharper still. For the moment the Russians thought that they were being attacked by the whole of Mukhtar Pasha's army, and then they began to prepare for a retreat across the frontier. They soon saw, however, that the attack was evidently to gain possession of the Kizil Tepe, and regained their equanimity somewhat in consequence.

Meanwhile the Kizil Tepe, or Red Hill, a dwarfy height of about 800 feet above the plain, was encircled, top and bottom, by two girdles of smoke and flame. On its rocky, bastion-like summit stood thickly crowded Turkish soldiers, under the cover of the opposite slope, and fired their rifles, aiming down into a ravine across which the Russian Tiflis regiment struggled heroically, but in vain, to reconquer the lost position. The very steep, rocky slope of the hill on that side rendered this task almost impossible. The Russians distinctly saw how, in the Turkish ranks, an Imaum, with turban and flowing gown, lifting his hands in fanatical ecstasy above the devoted children of the faith, seemed to be inciting them to withstand the arms of the Moscow Giaour, in Allah's and the Prophet's name. On some other parts of the battle-field Mohammedan priests were equally observed in the foremost lines, apparently animating timid recruits by fervent words of faith. One of these priests was shot. The Turks meant evidently to crush their weakened adversaries by a general attack, and so they employed all imaginable means to secure success. Many battalions, emerging by scores together, and thousands of irregular horsemen, descended the mountain, and were brought at once into action. The whole long line—twelve miles—from the neighbourhood of Ani up to Kabak Tepe, on which lies Meschka, on the road to Kars, was swarming with Mussulmans. On the summit of that eminence, situated two miles to the north of the Yagni Hill, three new battalions and clusters of cavalry appeared, with the view to outflank the Russian army, and capture their camp at Kurukdara. Their general advance, however, was checked as soon as the Russian columns of combined arms, the battalions, squadrons, and batteries which left the camp had the necessary time to march to the enemy's encounter and to deploy before him. In the Russian order of battle the extreme left was held by two regiments of dragoons, then followed the remaining brigade of General Dewel's division, and next to it, in the centre, Colonel Komaroff's five valiant battalions which had seen hard work ever since Ardahan fell. Connected with them, and directing its front line against the Yagni hills, the division of grenadiers operated with one of its brigades (General Cederholm), while the other remained in reserve. The extreme right was secured by three regiments of Caucasian regular Cossack cavalry and their horse artillery. Numerous troops besides protected the camp.

It took some hours before those masses were all able to meet the enemy's lines, on account of the considerable distance which originally separated the combatants. In the meantime the exposed camp was broken up, and thousands of carts and waggons transported the tents and the baggage to Kurukdara. The straw and dung were burnt on the spot. Again and again the Russians tried to reconquer the Kizil Tepe by storming, while shells and shrapnels were showered upon its ridge; but again and again they were repelled by the defenders, who stood, shoulder to shoulder, behind its rocky edge. On a sudden, shortly

after the last assault, which was supported and followed by the play of two batteries, thick white smoke rose on the summit, and a long flame carried it to the skies. Fragments of carriages, limbs of horses and men were scattered in all directions, or flew up in the air. It was clear that stores of ammunition or a powder-cart had exploded, ignited by a Russian shell. Joy and satisfaction lighted up the faces of the officers, and one of them made the sign of the cross. A short time afterwards, as regiment after regiment entered successively the line of battle, from the left to the right, in full array, and advanced, deployed in company columns, preceded by the usual double chain of Tirailleurs, with field batteries between them, the roar of the fighting extended gradually from the left to the centre. It was, however, obvious that before the Yagni Hill the fate of the day was to be decided, because from that part of his position only the enemy might have had a chance of forcing the camp, as it was quite open and unprotected in that direction. Yet long ere the Tirailleurs there had mingled their fire with the boom of their cannon and the cracking of their shells, Colonel Komaroff's brigade in the centre was engaged in sharp infantry fighting. Steadily the Russians gained ground, and drove the Turks over the flats and the undulations till they reached the broad ravine of Subatan, at the foot of the Aladja mountain. In this narrow valley, studded at its opposite side with intrenchments and batteries, the battle came to a standstill, the Russians feeling unable to advance any further, and the Turks satisfied with the advantages they had gained. From advancing beyond, it is highly probable that Mukhtar Pasha's camp might have fallen into Colonel Komaroff's hands. All energy of resistance on the part of the Turks had decidedly been broken; they ceased fighting, and retired in disorder. Their dead lay in rows in the valley. In consequence of this mutual pause on different grounds, the fighting died out there at half-past one o'clock in the afternoon. Komaroff was twice wounded, once in his left hand, and shortly afterwards in his left side. Nevertheless, he continued to exercise his command. Prince Tchadjewadtze, the general in command of the whole cavalry, renowned as one of the ablest and most energetic leaders in the Russian army, was also wounded by the fragment of a shell, which struck him on the head.

While thus the struggle was going on in the centre, the grenadiers, under General Heimann's special superintendence, and led by General Cederholm, fell in with the enemy. After a brisk cannonade with smart shell and shrapnel practice, the deadly rifle-firing was going on in an uninterrupted line stretching two miles on either side, front against front. Like a light morning mist the smoke was wafted over the hostile forces, and prevented them from taking good aim. The Turks had evidently brought forth their picked men—several Arabian battalions, which fought with resolute stubbornness, as they are accustomed to do on all occasions, thus constituting beyond doubt the Sultan's best troops. Notwithstanding their superior numbers, and the bravery they displayed, they could not hold their ground for more than a single hour, and then were compelled to fall back to their rifle-pits and intrenchments at the foot of the Yagni hills. Worn out by the want of food and water, having had all day a sun burning like a red-hot iron over their heads, both antagonists were at last satisfied to see themselves finally separated from each other by intervening hillocks. While the infantry rested, completely exhausted by the heat and the work, the cannons still thundered continuously over the whole line, but with considerably less intensity than in the morning. Finally the Turks moved with three fresh battalions, and over 1,000 horse, down the Kabak hill on the extreme right of the Russians, endeavouring to outflank them. The wild, irregular riders, in their fantastical garments, galloped down until they came unexpectedly in sight of the three Caucasian Cossack regiments. Quietly they stood in the valley, drawn in separate lines, with two batteries of horse artillery in the interstices, whilst the Bashi-Bazouks, one after the other, as they rode on stopped their horses, fired their rifles at the enemy, who did not even reply, and turned back at full speed in order to give to their expectant comrades the dismal news that the time for plundering the Russian camp at Kurukdara had not yet come. They apparently judged that the Russian cavalry was more than a match for them, and in this conviction they united again in squadrons, and thought it prudent to wait, under the cover of a concealed battery, for their enemies' onset. The Russian regiments, however, warned by some shells from above that they were likely to fall into an ambush of artillery and in-



B—*The Positions round Kars, August 26, 1877.*

fantry, did not stir. So the fighting ceased at four o'clock P.M. on the whole line in the same succession as it had begun, from left to right. The result was a complete success for the Turks. Although the Russian troops had repulsed, with great slaughter and remarkable pluck, the general attack of the Turks to cover the attack on the Kizil Tepe, and had remained for four hours on the battle-field, they had been, for all that, unable to wrest the principal position, the Kizil Tepe Hill, out of Turkish hands. Mukhtar Pasha did not hesitate to avail himself of the advantageous position which he had obtained, and shifted next day his whole camp down to the plain, where his soldiers were not exposed to the cold night winds as on the mountain, and found an ample supply of water. Here, as the Turks had systematically done during this war, they began intrenching themselves as strongly as possible, having one wing protected by the Kizil Tepe, and the other by the Yagni Hill. The force which the Turks brought into action consisted, according to trustworthy estimates, of thirty battalions of infantry and 8,000 irregular horsemen, with sixty cannons. The Russian army was somewhat inferior in number. The losses amounted in the Russian army, according to the most reliable information, to 280 men killed and 667 wounded. As the Turks were this time the aggressors, it is evident that their losses must have been more considerable. Spies and deserters affirmed that they lost not less than 3,000 men. Their skirmishing lines were much thicker manned than those of their adversaries; and when they retreated over the Subatan ravine, heaps of dead and wounded encumbered the ground. The chief gain derived from this success was the better camping-ground for the troops in view of the approaching winter, which appears betimes in the highlands of Armenia, and against the cold keen winds of which the men could not have contended on the mountain ranges, covered with snow nearly all the year round, which lie at the foot of Ararat. But in the plain below, sheltered by the accentuated ridges north and south, the conditions changed. Water was abundant. The cavalry horses and mule trains had no longer to be served with water painfully carried in leathern *sacs* to the steep heights on which the Turks had been camped, but could drink in the abundant streams of the plain below. The failure of the Russian attempt to occupy the valley had left immense quantities of uncut corn at the disposition of the army; and the fatigue of transport had been in no small degree diminished in consequence. Still, by some extraordinary fatality, the Turks were unable to make effective use of the advantages they had gained. With the men in high spirits at their successful advance, and continued defeats of the enemy, the chances of successfully dealing a decisive blow had enormously increased, especially as Ismail Hakki Pasha had crossed the Russian frontier near Igdir, with the object of making his way up northwards and cutting off the Russian retreat on Alexandropol.

But with the cold winds of September came also the Mussulman Lent—Ramazan—and at this period the Turk thinks more of fulfilling his religious duties than anything else. During the whole of this period of self-denial and mortification of the flesh, the Turks fast from sunrise to sunset. From the moment the dawn colours the eastern sky until the Ramazan gun booms out into the evening air, not a morsel of food crosses the lips of the soldiers, not even a drop of water. And each of the many times a day as the long-drawn, wailing cry of the Muezzin rises above the murmur of the camp, soldiers are to be seen hurrying eagerly to prayer as to a banquet, and unhappy seems the man on duty who cannot join the serried rows of worshippers who, in company, sometimes in battalion, face toward Mecca, and follow the orisons and genuflexions of the Imaum who stands before their centre. Each man takes his place in the ranks, his hands hanging close by his sides. Then he lifts them to his ears, as if to shut out all worldly sounds. Then he lays them on his knees, and bowing his head forward seems lost in contemplation. After a few seconds he sinks to his knees, and leans back upon his heels, and then bowing with his forehead to the earth, exclaims, or rather chants, "Allah Akbar" (God is great). Three times he thus bows and chants, and then he stands up, bowing forward, chanting three times, "La Illah il Allah" (there is no God but God). The remainder of the prayers which follow consist principally of long extracts from the "Koran."

In all his simple religious exercises the Turkish soldier is devoutness and attention itself, and it is perhaps most in privacy that this is most apparent. Frequently one

comes unexpectedly upon some rugged soldier in one of the wild, lonely ravines that pierce the hill-sides around, standing before the ragged over-coat which serves him for a praying carpet, and going through his rather active religious motions with a zeal which would do credit to the most self-conscious Pharisee. The stranger who for the first time witnesses the united prayer of Turkish soldiers in camp, is considerably puzzled by the selection of heterogeneous articles brought forward to the place of worship when the Muezzin's call has concluded. Religious custom requires that each man be provided with a praying carpet of one description or another, and that he take off his shoes as well. One man brings a jagged sheep-skin, another a goat-hide, a third the saddle-cloth of his horse, a fourth, mayhap, his jacket; every one has something or another on which he may kneel. To see some hundred men thus hurrying to the spot where the blue-robed, white-turbaned Imaum stands, a stranger to their ways might easily be led to imagine them so many persons eager to dispose of superfluous garments, and taking advantage of the fortuitous presence of a dealer of Israelitish nationality.

The Russians, too, seized the opportunity of celebrating national festivals. On September 9th the Turks were startled by the thunder of cannon from Karajal, the fortified hill on which their right flank rests. The marshal's long brass telescope was at once put in position, and every field-glass was directed against the frowning heights along which the heavy white smoke-clouds clung in the morning air. But they looked in vain for the little secondary smoke-bursts that should have indicated exploding-shells. In advanced positions men ran to their arms, and the parapets were black with eager, puzzled soldiers. But it was only a salute of twenty-one guns in honour of the anniversary of the Czar's coronation. "May Allah destroy him!" was the appropriate Moslem exclamation, when, after due search in a Russian military almanack, the cause of the salute was discovered and conveyed to the soldiery. Three or four days after another blank salute sent them again to their almanack. This time it was an imperial birthday, that of the Emperor or Czarevitch. Whichever it was, the object of the salute had the same Turkish good wishes as on the former occasion. Sometimes there was a light cavalry skirmish out in the plain; and on such occasions 'a good deal of artillery fire was apt to take place as the combatants came within range of the guns on either side. As a rule, some five or six men were killed, and twice as many wounded. Rarely did the affair go further.

Towards the end of September, however, the Russians having received considerable reinforcements, there were indications of a renewal of the struggle. These reinforcements consisted of the 1st division of the Moscow grenadiers, sixteen battalions, each fully 1,000 men strong, together with forty-eight field-pieces, and two regiments of cavalry. After almost equally long deliberations, it was decided to make a general attack on Mukhtar Pasha's position on the Aladja mountain and its dependencies of spurs and isolated hills, forming—from the Arpa Tchai river, in the neighbourhood of Ani, to Kars—a continuity of natural strongholds, intrenchments, and batteries. October 2nd was fixed for its commencement. Although deep secrecy had apparently been kept among the superior generals on the subject, enough of the plan of operations transpired beforehand to leave no doubt about the general features of the impending operations. Everybody in the camp knew what was about to go on, to the great astonishment of the staff. At last they became aware that a man of certain consideration, who was in the habit of sneaking through the camps, without professing to follow any honest vocation or business, had disappeared on the very eve of the day of action. Though no conclusive proof of his guilt was brought forward, public opinion adjudged him guilty of being a Turkish spy. He did not return, warned, perhaps, by a bad presentiment or some accomplice.

The general plan of operations was as follows:—General Sholkownikoff, who, in the absence of General Dewel, was in command of the 40th division on the left, was ordered to turn the Aladja Dagh from Ani with five battalions and a battery. He was expected to reach its summit, and, descending from it, to fall on Mukhtar Pasha's rear. A brigade of the same division was to keep the enemy at bay on his right wing, assisted by a heavy battery established there some days before, which, as a mere demonstration, had to cannonade the Kizil Tepe. Here no assault was premeditated, and the object was only to draw the enemy's attention to this point, important for him, but

not for the Russians. To General Heimann, with the Circassian division of grenadiers, was entrusted the task of closing in with the enemy's centre and main force, so as to prevent him from withdrawing his troops from Subatan, in order to reinforce other positions which it was intended to take, if possible. To his right, the 1st division of the Moscow grenadiers, at General Loris Melikoff's direct disposal, had to act against the Yagni hills. The Great Yagni, situated about ten miles from the Russian camp, was a very regular conical hill, with a plateau at the top, towering 750 feet over the plains and smooth undulations stretching from Kurukdara to Kars. A direct assault on that hill, which on former occasions had cost the Russians a good deal of blood, was considered as likely to lead to no good result, and in consequence its capture did not enter into the original dispositions.

The real and most important point, according to the views of the staff, against which all efforts had to be concentrated, was Little Yagni, an entirely isolated, bulky elevation, with a comparatively extensive platform on the top. Though of considerably less height than its namesake, its sides were quite as steep, while a rocky crest, very much like that of the Kizil Tepe, bordered its extended summit. This, however, did not consist of a uniform level, but was separated by an intervening flat depression, so as to form three distinct terraces, of which the southern one was about 200 feet higher than the northern. This hill, situated at a distance of about nine miles from Kars and two from the Great Yagni, completely stopped the road from Kurukdara to that fortress. It is very probable that the information upon which it had not only been strongly fortified and garrisoned by Turkish infantry, but was also armed with twenty cannon of heavy calibre, was received from spies. The honour of taking by assault this commanding point was conferred upon the 2nd brigade of the Moscow grenadiers, under Major-General Count Grabbe, and eight battalions detached from Ardahan for that purpose, under General Komaroff, who had been slightly wounded on the 25th of August, but had since recovered. His fellow-sufferer, General Tshadtchewadze, wounded on the same day, had also reassumed his command of the whole cavalry. Three battalions, which, as a rule, garrisoned the fortress of Alexandropool, had also been ordered to Karajal, to cover the camp and head-quarters, and to form the reserve of the 2nd brigade of the 70th division, which had nothing to do but to check an improbable offensive movement of the Turks against the Russian left wing opposite the Kizil and the Yagni Tepes.

The general object apparently was to carry out a complete turning movement on both hostile wings, either to surround Mukhtar Pasha entirely, or to cut off his communication with Kars. Could this have been effectually managed, no doubt he would have been compelled to surrender with his army within a few days; for, his supplies of ammunition and provisions being in danger of immediate exhaustion, he must either have broken through the Russian lines, or tried to make his way with disbanded troops across the Russian territory, in the hope of joining his comrade, Ismael Hakki Pasha, who was still intrenched before Igdir.

The troops ordered for the advance started from their camps at eight o'clock in the evening of October 1st. At three o'clock precisely the next morning the staff followed, riding at a moderate speed, to the south-west, on a country track over the vast plain. The way was lit by the waning moon and countless stars shining with intense brilliancy. A cold wind made the trip by no means pleasant, as it brought the temperature near to the freezing-point. The staff consisted of about fifty persons—general officers, aides-de-camp, and servants—escorted by three sotnias of Cossacks from the Caucasus, not armed with lances, but accoutred and dressed like genuine Circassians. The ground, in appearance almost level, was, in fact, cut through at intervals by a few rocky ravines, between which lay long-stretching undulations rising gradually towards the south. After two hours and a-half of wearisome riding, they arrived at dawn of day at an eminence some 150 feet above the flat-topped ridge of the rising ground called the Kabak Tepe (Pumpkin Hill).

Hitherto no reports of fire-arms had been heard. But from the top of this commanding point, at half-past five, sharp and general firing suddenly began. To the right and left, the roar of the cannons, and the sharp, dry, knocking, rattling of the musketry came down, sounding in the distance like the noise produced by the work

of some hundred road-makers, breaking flint-stones in a re-echoing hall. The principal object of attack, the Little Yagni, rising now clear in sight, frowned over the plains of Kars like an impregnable fortress. Its summit was surrounded with breast-works, ditches, rifle-pits, and batteries. The Moscow grenadiers and the Ardahan division were already supposed to be at work, but in fact they were not. There were only some forty guns firing, with a range of three miles, at earthworks which were prudently left empty by the Turks. Had the infantry been led immediately to the assault in tirailleur lines before the dawn of day, without firing a single round they would have carried that hill, in all probability, within half-an-hour. In the way the attack was conducted, it was obvious that the enemy, who had there about 3,000 men, had time to bring all his available means to the defences.

As it was, the twelve hours' cannonading did no harm whatever to the earthworks, and inflicted only trifling losses on the garrison, for they had, for the most part, retired to the sides of the hill that were out of range. Meanwhile, on the centre, the impetuous General Heimann had already hurled his division in skirmishing lines against the Aladja mountain, and its northern continuation, the Olya Tepe, separated from it by the upper part of the ravine running down to Subatan. The incessant sharp volleys gave evidence that the Turkish main force had been concentrated there. It was soon clear, also, that a direct assault on those rocky steeps and terraces, strengthened by numerous intrenchments and stone barricades, had no better chance of succeeding than on previous occasions. Within the first half-hour it was clear that the carefully elaborated plan of operations again combined all the faults of previous tactics, magnified, moreover, by the absence of that dash which, at the beginning of the present campaign, was characteristic of the Russian army.

Some one seems to have suggested, and brought others to believe, that in this breech-loading time an assault by infantry is obsolete and unnecessary, and that all war might, with less effusion of blood, be just as well, or better, done by the artillery alone. Such seemed to be the erroneous idea at head-quarters. Yet, of all the shells fired during this, or any other war in recent times, by way of preparing an infantry attack, but very few, indeed, ever caused serious damage. During the battle of Aladja Dagh, when they burst in the earth, it was at such a depth that their weak charges were unable to overcome its resistance, and, consequently, the fragments did not fly off. They only exploded properly when the shell happened to strike on a rock or other hard substance; whilst at the ridiculous distances of above three miles from which they were fired, they produced little more than an harmless shower of leaden drops. Anyhow, artillery alone was not capable of dislodging such stubborn soldiers as the Turks, and thus the cannon still boomed at the rocks and the earth, while masses of infantry were either idling as reserves in the depressions of the ground, or were employed in a disastrous but useless skirmishing with the enemy. For hours each tirailleur lay behind a heap of stones, which he had previously piled up for his shelter, and took a deliberate aim at some similarly protected adversary. Such fighting only kills and wounds, without the hope of a useful result. At six o'clock in the morning, this state of things was, on both wings, as clear as the rising sun, whose rays gilded the glorious white crown of Mount Ararat. In the centre stood, three miles off, cutting the blue sky with its regular conical profile, Great Yagni. It covered the front of Mukhtar Pasha's centre and left wing, commanding the plain before them, and enjoyed the reputation of impregnability, since at different times various Russian assaults on its steep slopes had been repulsed with considerable loss. From its foot to its top it was covered with rifle-pits and ditches in three superposed rows, cut in conformity with the configuration of the ground in projecting and re-entering angles.

The prospects of success there appeared, indeed, so very poor, that it was considered, by the Russian staff, useless to attempt the conquest of that natural fortress. Therefore, only a demonstration, supported by a brigade and two batteries, was intended against it, calculated to distract the enemy's attention from the more serious attacks on the Little Yagni. But on examining the Great Yagni, it was found that its garrison was exceedingly feeble. The breastworks on its base and its middle were not manned at all; and even the fortifications bordering the top plateau were only very insufficiently

armed, as was proved by the spasmodic and unconnected rifle-firing and the apparent absence of cannon. On learning this, General Loris Melikoff ordered a general assault on the hill. From three sides the troops advanced in skirmishing lines, with supports and reserves, cheering as they passed their commanding general, who spoke to them some encouraging words. The cannons, redoubling their firing, flung shrapnel after shrapnel to the top. An hour afterwards the whole hill was swarming with grenadiers, who steadily climbed up its steeps, despite the frantic firing of its defenders. At eight o'clock, the Turkish battalion on the summit of the Great Yagni had ceased to exist. The Russians had entirely occupied the impregnable hill, and were waving joyously their caps and muskets.

While this was being accomplished, the indifferent cannonading on the right, between the Russian batteries and those on the Little Yagni, was still going on. It might have continued for a century, and nothing would have come of it. As soon as it became evident that the men on the top of Great Yagni were genuine Russians and not Turks, the staff rode off in order to inspect the conquered position, and to decide the further course of operations now possible through so brilliant a beginning. The hill was rather too steep for the horses, and they rode round it to the right, over the plain two miles wide which separated it from Little Yagni, between which and Kars one of the Russian infantry regiments had already been deployed in skirmishing order, and was engaged with that garrison, whilst strong bodies of cavalry, commanding that plain, challenged in vain the Turkish irregular horsemen. All their ferocious Circassians, disgusted on account of their receiving neither pay nor food, had left Mukhtar's camp in a wholesale desertion a fortnight before. Only worthless, cowardly Kurds remained for the sake of murder and plundering.

Having arrived on the slopes of the Great Yagni, General Melikoff surveyed the field. Opposite to the Great Yagni ran a high barren ridge, sloping gradually upward to the flat-topped summit of the Olya Tepe, which was severed from the Aladja mountain by the Subatan ravine, about two miles above the village of Hadji Velikoi. This commanding point—the most important of the whole Turkish position, and subsequently well fortified — was literally inaccessible from the plain at the foot of the Aladja, towards which it fell off some 1,500 feet in a succession of steep gradients and perpendicular rocks. At its base the Turks had concentrated their main force; and Mukhtar, relying on the strength of Great Yagni, had neglected to occupy the summit with the necessary troops. This fact had been ascertained by the cavalry patrols. Two squadrons of Cossacks had even remained for two hours at Vezinkoi, a village situated to the south of that elevation, right across Mukhtar's only line of retreat, where they met not a single Turkish soldier. The pasha, moreover, was utterly unable to send a sufficient force quickly enough to the Olya Tepe, because he was closely pressed in front by the 2nd brigade of the Caucasian grenadiers, under Major-General von Schack, a Prussian by birth and education. Six of the Russian battalions had just descended the Great Yagni; six others were near at hand; and had they been momentarily withdrawn from the attack on the Little Yagni, it is probable that they would have taken the Olya Tepe, almost without loss, from the side of its totally unoccupied southern ridge. Possibly such movements did not enter the original plan; but plans are worthless when the fighting has once begun, and all depends on the capacity to seize the favourable opportunity.

It seems that General Loris Melikoff asked an officer whether he knew the road to Vezinkoi. The Olya Tepe was obviously the only tactical object worth storming at any cost; it was the magic point from which the fate of the day was suspended by a thread. Its occupation by the Russians would have unavoidably led to the destruction of Mukhtar Pasha's entire army. Its very key, the Great Yagni, was already in their hands. But at this moment, General Heimann, in an interview with Loris Melikoff, was pleased to assert formally that his troops, advancing from the Subatan plain, were quite able to finish taking the Olya Tepe, as they had done with the Great Yagni, and that, therefore, the available force might be advantageously employed against the Little Yagni and the garrison of Kars. This strange opinion prevailed. General Loris Melikoff's genius was impaired by pernicious advice. His whole staff recognised it, but nobody ventured to utter an objection. General Heimann, of course, did not take the Olya Tepe as he

had promised, in his sanguine fashion, but was, on the contrary, repulsed with considerable loss; while the three brigades ordered to assail the Little Yagni had no better chance. Even had the Russians had a reserve of 50,000 men more, they, too, would never have succeeded in the attempt of taking those fortifications and works by assaulting them. This was conspicuous enough at nine o'clock in the morning; and the wisest plan would have been then to withdraw the troops, for the opportunity had been missed.

The staff turned its back to the Olya Tepe, and followed the zigzags of the road which the Turks had recently made for the convenience of the garrison on the summit of the Great Yagni. Company after company, as they descended the hill, cheered the commanding general, who wished them good luck. On the hill-side lay a young grenadier, moaning as he tried to lift his head and rest on his elbow to answer the questions and receive the consolations of the general. Overcome, however, by weakness and pain, he fell back and shut his eyes, while the blood still gushed from the wound in his side. Higher up, a dead Turk, stretched across the narrow track on his face, compelled the staff to make a circuit. On reaching, at last, the level top of Great Yagni, a ghastly sight struck their eyes. All the pits and ditches around were filled with the corpses of Turks. The dead were almost all shot through their heads, because the remaining parts of their bodies had been sheltered by the parapets. Here they lay as they fell, on their backs or faces, side by side, or one above the other. A negro with grinning teeth hung right across a white soldier, and his long arms stretched out over the rocky abyss. Some preserved the ferocious expression which they had borne when still alive, and lay with clenched fists and distorted limbs; others, calm and quiet, looked like stone. In a pit, opposite each other, sat two Softas. Though in the uniform of soldiers, they were easily recognised as religious students by the white muslin band tied around their fezzes. One had his skull laid open by a shell-fragment, and the other was shot through the temple. Both had obviously been killed by the same shrapnel. Some hundred dead bodies encumbered the trenches; others lay strewn over the hill-side.

Meanwhile General Heimann vainly endeavoured to force the position of the Turks on the southern bases of the Olya Tepe, and soon asked for reinforcements. These could not be spared as long as the attack on the Little Yagni was being carried on; and this hill the Russians erroneously looked upon as the key of the position. At one moment it seemed as though success were about to crown the endeavours of the Russians to carry the Olya with success. This was when, at about 1 P.M., General Scholkownikoff's brigade appeared on the heights of the Aladja, in the rear and flank of Mukhtar Pasha's position. But Mukhtar Pasha had taken his precautions, and had posted a force on the Aladja Dagh, which not only effectually checked Scholkownikoff's advance, but also forced him to retreat.

With this failure to force Mukhtar Pasha's rear, the battle was practically at an end.

In its immediate results the success of the Russians was a barren one, as will be plainly seen on consulting sketch S, which represents the field looking from Kurukdara towards Kars. They had succeeded in inserting a wedge between the extreme left and centre of the Turks on the Great Yagni; but were there confronted by the positions on the Olya Tepe, and, moreover, exposed to the fire of the Little Yagni and the battalions on the northern slopes of the Aladja Dagh. The position was clearly untenable, and, if tenable, useless except at a large expenditure of time, and trouble, and blood, in fortifying it and erecting batteries to bear upon the three positions of the enemy around it. Consequently, it is not surprising that the Russians should have withdrawn the troops who had occupied it, as they did on the following day.

But though the immediate results of the day were barren, the indirect gain was great, as the success of General Scholkownikoff in gaining the rear of the Turkish positions, demonstrated the possibility of dealing a crushing attack against Mukhtar Pasha in this direction, if carried out in sufficient force.

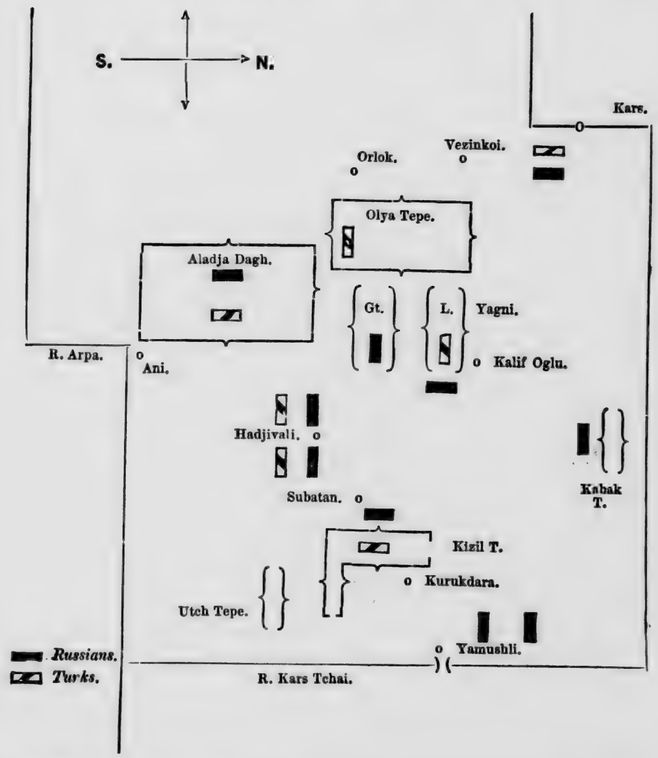
And not only that. It had also been discovered that the Olya Tepe was the best key to the positions of the Turks. As long as that remained in their hands they could always fall back upon it from the Aladja Dagh and the Little Yagni, and thence retreat into Kars. But the Olya Tepe once in Russian hands, the retreat to Kars would be intercepted, and the whole Turkish army

be surrounded if, in addition to the Olya Tepe, the Russians should also gain the rear of the Aladja Dagh in force.

Mukhtar Pasha plainly saw the danger of his position, but he was almost powerless to avert it; for whilst the Russians had been receiving reinforcements daily, his own army had been growing less and less. There were only two courses of action reasonably open to him. These were, to take

At half-past two o'clock, P.M., the Russians saw three strong lines of Turkish tirailleurs, one behind the other, advancing, rifles in hand, at a quick pace. They occupied a front of at least three miles in length, were preceded by two batteries, and followed by compact supports and reserves, all arranged in perfect order. The whole force consisted of about 15,000 men, having their right wing covered by the Kizil Tepe,

S—*First Battle of Aladja Dagh, October* 2, 1877.



a vigorous offensive, and endeavour to strike a decisive blow on the Russian camp at Karajal and Kurukdara, or to fall back with his whole army on Kars, and continue his retreat to Erzeroum.

The latter would probably have been his best course; but he was naturally disinclined to retreat; and so, on the following day, October 3rd, he decided on making an attempt to dislodge the Russians from their camp on the Karajal.

and ready to make a desperate attack on the Karajal camp. They supposed that the greater part of the Russian forces had been brought over to the right wing. They were the more led to believe this as, on the previous day, no signs of troops had been shown at Karajal. General Lazareff, however, with the 40th division, backed by a regiment of the garrison of Alexandropol and numerous horsemen, lay in ambush for them during the course of that day: for the

Russians, having received information, through their spies, of the projected attack, were quite prepared to receive the assaulting foe. Their soldiers lay in rows concealed in the folds of the ground, or behind pyramidal heaps of loose stones. Ostensibly, only two battalions and a battery, together with some cavalry, leaving the Karajal position, marched to the fight. The Turks, encouraged by this apparent weakness, hastened their steps. Their batteries galloped ahead, and opened a brisk shell-fire on those of the Russians, who replied steadily with only eight guns. At the same time the Kizil Tepe flung shell after shell at all moving objects on the field —ammunition carts, red-cross waggons, cavalry, herds, and labourers—but without hurting anything but the soil. The skirmishers, too, rattled away while the Turkish infantry drew nearer and nearer, without firing a round. They dived down into the ravines and reappeared, always resolutely advancing against the Russian cannons, which had in the meanwhile been reinforced by another battery of eight pieces. Although both were exposed to the bullets, they made no preparations for limbering up, but continued their slow firing. The Turkish batteries were soon silenced by the advance of their own men, who masked them.

At last the Turks saw the sunbeams dancing on the levelled rifle-barrels peeping behind stones and sods, and began firing with frantic rapidity, but did not slacken moving ahead. Only stray shots from sharpshooters answered the challenge. Finally, however, the Russians lost their temper, and, returning the fire volley for volley, showed a line of battle of no less extent and power than that of their adversaries. Then they rose together and faced the shower of lead, advancing and firing, firing and advancing, line after line, running from cover to cover, but always moving ahead, right down on the enemy. Every soldier seemed to believe that the grand duke's eyes were especially fixed on him. It was refreshing to see how this division, in contrast with the monotonous unproductive skirmishing of their comrades on the previous day, went on without a moment's hesitation, with admirable and matchless courage. The Turks became demoralised by this unexpected resistance, supported by forces quite equal to theirs, if, indeed, not superior. Their advance was checked, and came to a standstill. Soon they retrograded slowly, but always firing. It was of no avail. They were driven back irresistibly from undulation to undulation, till at last they turned their backs and ran, seeking shelter behind their pits and breastworks. But again and again the Russians followed and dislodged them at a rush with the bayonet, compelling them to recede, either step by step, or in short runs. The Turks became, from minute to minute, more disheartened. Soon they had had enough of the game, and shortly after nightfall were in precipitous flight towards their fortified camp around Subatan. General Lazareff pursued them fast, even through the dark. His lanterns were the incessant sparkling of the long line of firing rifles, and the occasional broad flash of the cannons. When he had lost sight and feeling of the frightened enemy in that pitch-dark night, the firing died, when they took refuge behind their intrenchments; while the Russians, after having thrown up breastworks and pits, passed the night on the ground they had so gallantly conquered. Their losses were severe; the 40th division alone losing over 700 killed and wounded. Altogether, the two days' fighting had cost about 9,000 men.

The failure of his attempt on the Karajal positions, coupled with the intelligence that the Russians were still receiving reinforcements, decided Mukhtar Pasha to draw in his lines; and at the same time, sending orders to Hakki Ismail to recross the frontier and fall back upon Delibaba, he ordered, on October 8th, the evacuation of the Kizil Tepe and the lines at Subatan. This was carried out with complete success; for on the morning of the 9th October the Russians were infinitely astonished at the nocturnal retreat. Still they lost no time in taking advantage of it; and towards eight o'clock the entire Russian army was in movement, advancing straight towards the abandoned positions. Seven squadrons of Cossacks, preceded by a long line of cavalry skirmishers, came first, closely followed by an ominous-looking line of batteries. It was a moment of intense anxiety for the Turks, who believed the enemy was about to make a general assault. The Cossacks entered Subatan, and five minutes after, eight guns were in position on the ridge above the village. Hadji Veli was next occupied, and simultaneously a column of infantry scaled the isolated hill of Kizil Tepe, the capture of which had earned for Mukhtar Pasha the

title of "Ghazi," or "Victorious," conferred by the Sultan, together with a sabre of honour, a decoration in diamonds, and two horses from the Padishah's own stables. The Russians at once opened fire, believing for the moment that the whole army was retreating; but by the evening they became aware of the true nature of the movement.

On the 10th all was still. Not a shot from either side, except from one large position gun which the Russians had established on Kizil Tepe, and from which they threw occasional shells against the redoubt on Lakiridgi Tepe, a conical hill on the extreme right of the Turks. Large masses of Russian troops moved over the plain by Kabak Tepe, ultimately reoccupying the greater Yagni Hill, and erecting a heavy battery on the slope commanding the Olya Tepe, whilst long columns were seen by the Turks, defiling towards their right, marching in the direction of the ruined city of Ani, on the banks of the Arpa Tchai river. They subsequently disappeared, and the Turks were quite at a loss to account for their destination, till in the afternoon the marshal and his staff rode to the summit of Aladja to reconnoitre, and soon divined the nature of the movement. The fact was, that General Lazareff, with twenty-six battalions, forty-eight field-pieces, and six regiments of cavalry, was directing a flank movement from the south-east on Mukhtar's line of communication with Kars, and eventually Erzeroum; General Scholkownikoff's experiences having demonstrated its practicability. At the same time a field-telegraph line was established without interruption from the Karajal head-quarters to General Lazareff's division, following him all along his circuitous march of at least forty miles through a mountainous, hostile country, completely in the rear of the actual Turkish positions: and that this was accomplished without opposition or interruption, fully proves that Mukhtar Pasha was ignorant of Lazareff's flank movement. The telegraphic communication was indeed once interrupted, and much anxiety was felt about it; but within two hours it was re-established. The wind, and not malicious Turks, had thrown down some of the poles. This shows, therefore, that the pasha's hasty retreat from Subatan and the Kizil Tepe was prompted by the comparatively enormous losses he had sustained from the relentless fighting during the week previous to his withdrawal, from wholesale desertions, and the reinforcements of the Russians, and not by General Lazareff's intrepid interposition. Had his valuable Circassian scouts not disappeared, driven away in despair and disgust, they would have assuredly succeeded in fathoming the Russian design, or at least in destroying the telegraph line, which enabled a simultaneous movement of two columns to be carried out, the object of which was to envelop Mukhtar Pasha, and compel him either to starve on his barren cold summits or to surrender, for General Lazareff was directed to attack and occupy the Orlok summit and Vezinkoi, while the main army attacked the same points from the front.

Meanwhile, Mukhtar Pasha took such precautions as he was able against the turning movement being carried out by General Lazareff, and sent Selim Pasha with fifteen battalions to meet him, reinforcing this body of men subsequently with a second division, and entrusting the whole command to Raschid Pasha.

Against this force, however, General Lazareff was marching with twenty-seven battalions, forty guns, and six regiments of cavalry. His march across the mountains was, of course, somewhat hampered by his cannons and military train, which compelled him to seek and follow a rather circuitous carriage road. He was at first guided by the Arpa Tchai river down to Kotchiran. From here he passed over to Dighur, where he left two battalions; and then, wheeling round to the north-west, he chose for his mark the Orlok Hill and Vezinkoi. This village, strongly intrenched, secured Mukhtar's position and his communication with Kars; and Raschid Pasha's duty was to prevent their falling into the hands of the Russians. But after a sharp engagement on the 12th October, in which Raschid was overpowered by the superior forces of the Russians, Lazareff occupied the Oghur Hill, in the rear of the Aladja, on the following day. Then he telegraphed to the grand duke's head-quarters that Mukhtar was before him with superior forces, and he urged, therefore, that a simultaneous attack might be directed against the Turkish lines from the Russian front. This message reached the grand duke precisely at three o'clock on the morning of the 14th. The commander-in-chief at once complied with Lazareff's request. That this was possible was solely

due to the remarkable circumstance that a field telegraph had been established, with laudable celerity and regularity, throughout the length of the circuitous line of operations.

The necessary dispositions were speedily taken, and, on October 14, General Heimann was charged to carry the Olya Tepe at any cost, and had for that purpose the division of the Caucasian grenadiers and fifty-six cannon at his disposal. The Moscow grenadiers, posted on his left, received orders to refrain from acting until that hill was taken. They formed the reserve, and observed the enemy's movements on the Aladja Dagh. Opposite this mountain a heavy battery of 24-pounders had, since the 12th, bombarded the enemy's camp there night and day, at intervals of fifteen minutes, in order to disturb it and harass the Turks. The right wing was covered by the Ardahan brigade, under General Komaroff, and some regiments of cavalry, which were intended to check the garrison of Kars, and that of the Little Yagni. These positions are shown in the preceding sketch, which exhibits the plan of attack and its ultimate result. Early in the morning of October 15, the action commenced with the attack on the Olya Tepe, whilst General Lazareff gradually worked round from the position indicated in sketch T, to the north of Orlok and Vezinkoi.

Soon the Olya Tepe was encircled by two broad rings of white smoke—one around its basis, produced by the incessant firing of fifty-six cannons, and the other, on its summit, by the musketry and artillery of the Turks, and the bursting Russian projectiles. This time the Russian gunners behaved well. They had placed their pieces at the reasonable distance of 1,800 yards, and laying aside the inefficient shells, concentrated a shrapnel shower on that part of the enemy's front which had been selected to be assailed by the storming battalions. Balls of white smoke, waving for awhile in the calm air like balloons, indicated that the terrible messengers of death and destruction had burst at the proper point for sending fragments and bullets among the lines of the defenders, whilst three strong columns of grenadiers lay in clusters on the steepest parts of the northern side of the hill, waiting there for final orders, in comparative security, because the Turks behind the breastworks were unable to hit them. Seeing this, Mukhtar Pasha sent a strong line of Turkish tirailleurs from the Aladja Dagh opposite, to the rescue of the hard-pressed position. But before they could even cross the ravine their advance was arrested by a Russian line, which compelled them to withdraw. At the same time the three columns of Russian grenadiers told-off for the assault on the Olya Tepe moved onward up that hill. These troops at once swarmed on all sides over the yellow hill. Steadily they climbed towards the summit, always firing, in face of the desperate resistance of the Turks, who disappeared in the smoke. Onward the Russians stormed, crowding more and more together as they approached the cone, towards the enemy, while their batteries covered the top level with shells and shrapnels; till suddenly repeated hurrahs sounded through the air, and the grenadiers jumped in crowds over the enemy's ditches and parapets. Then the Turks, relinquishing all hope, ran for their lives, pursued by bullets and bayonets, and the first position on the Olya Tepe was won at last.

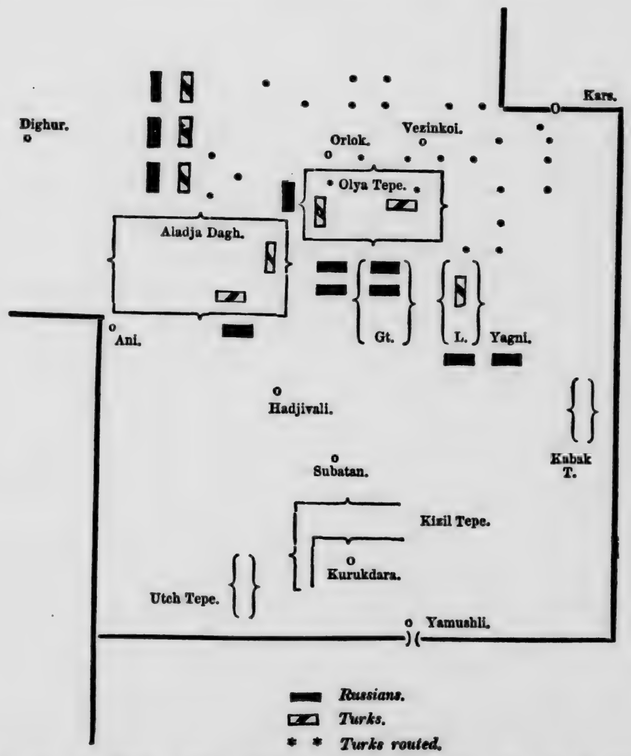
The next fortified plateau to the south-west, situated just before that of Vezinkoi, was also stormed within an hour, and the white smoke rose on the opposite side of that village. There General Lazareff assailed the enemy from his rear, and barred his retreat to Kars. The batteries also closed in with the scattered Turks wherever they perceived them, and covered them with a hail-storm of projectiles. The vanquished foe tried to rally and escape in all directions, but found no issue, and was soon closely hedged in by infantry, artillery, and cavalry. Here it is said that Mukhtar himself was wounded in the hand, and sought for attendance and shelter in Kars, abandoning thus his doomed army. In truth, however, he had not received a scratch. He had commanded the battle from the summit of a hill to the east of the Olya Tepe, and had a narrow escape to Kars with his staff, by availing himself of the opening between the Russian centre and General Lazareff.

Another party of Turks—the bulk of the garrison of the Olya Tepe and its environs—were pursued through a pretty large valley, which is formed by the upper part of the Subatan streamlet and its tributaries; but the garrison of the Little Yagni managed to effect its escape with all its guns and stores. Meanwhile, the troops on the

Aladja Dagh, and a great number of those at Orlok and Vezinkoi, finding themselves surrounded, were obliged to yield. This wholesale surrender amounted to twenty-six battalions, thirty-six cannons, and seven pashas, amongst them Raschid Pasha himself; altogether, about 12,000 prisoners. The losses in killed and wounded, on the Turkish side, amounted to over 5,000 men, whilst the Russians escaped with about 2,000.—On the following day, October 16th, Mukhtar Pasha remained at Kars, where he left 11,000 men, and on the 17th proceeded, with the remnant of his army (about 3,000 men), towards Erzeroum, to effect a junction with Ismail Hakki Pasha, who was threading his way towards Hassan Kaleh, pursued by General Tergukassoff. Kars alone blocked the way to the Russian advance; and held by a defeated, disorganised, disheartened force, and that force even insufficient, it was not to be expected that it would long remain an impediment in the way of Loris Melikoff. Thus the campaign in Armenia, for that year at least, had been decided by the battle of Aladja Dagh.

After this defeat of the Turkish field army, and the flight of Mukhtar Pasha towards the Soghanli Dagh, the iron band round Kars was so tightly drawn, that no living being could go out or in without being challenged and stopped. Every day Turks and Armenians, trying to break the blockade, were arrested, and a heavy artillery fire kept up day and night from the batteries at Metschka and Maghardjik. All this convinced the Turks that the great blow was impending, and that the Russians meant to attack Kars in all earnest; and when, on November 5th, the Russian army marched from Karajal to Vezinkoi, Hussein

T—*Second Battle of Aladja Dagh, October* 15, 1877.



Hami Pasha, the commandant, made a sortie with ten battalions, but was repulsed with such vigour, that the Russians for a few minutes actually penetrated into Fort Hafiz Pasha. The siege batteries were then brought closer to bear upon the eastern and southern faces of Kars and the girdle of forts around, and the cannonade renewed with increased energy, and preparations made for the assault, which was fixed for November 13th.

Now Kars, which had become so celebrated from the stubborn defence in 1855, though strong enough to task any army, was not so strong as it was during the Crimean war; for after its capture by the Russians, many of the works had been dismantled.

The Mukliss works in the north had not been completed, and were, besides, so constructed that they did not sweep the whole of the declivity, nor command the paths that led across the river to the Arab Tabia. There was no ditch protecting it, as there ought to have been according to the plan, nor had the works been constructed which were projected for the highest point of the range—about 200 mètres off—which commands the Mukliss.

South of the Mukliss lay the Ingliz work. It was a closed work, with one issue from its base on the south-east towards the town. It mounted no cannon, and was only adapted for small-arms fire, but was protected by a trench 7½ feet deep.

Veli Pasha Tabia consisted of three bastioned faces, closed up in the throat by a crenelated wall and defence barracks, and surrounded by a trench 7½ feet deep; the parapet had a height of nearly 30 feet. There were two entrances to it—one through the barracks, another into the trench. It had no powder magazine.

The Tschim was simply a battery, without any trench, but protected by a glacis 75 yards in front. It contained a powder magazine of a capacity of 50 cubic mètres.

West of the Tschim—1,200 mètres distant—lay the Takmash—better known to English readers by the name of Tahmasp. The ascent to this work was graduated, and comparatively easy—a sort of mamelon. It consisted of two closed and connected bastions containing barracks and a powder magazine.

Tich Tepesi—500 mètres north-west of this work—was a closed bastion containing a powder magazine, and provided with a trench and a battery in front 25 mètres distant, called the Ai Tabia. It mounted eight 24-pounders. The breastworks and batteries, Laz Tepesi, commanding the hamlet of Massad, completed the line of fortifications west of the river Kars-Tchai.

East of the river, the defences commenced in the north with the celebrated Arab Tabia on the top of the Kara Dagh, which descends in one unbroken steep declivity towards the river, but by three distinct terraces towards the valley on the east. It consisted of a closed bastion with barracks, a small bomb-proof powder magazine, and an open work, the whole surrounded by a glacis adapted for cannon and rifle-fire. The earth had all to be brought up from the valley below, and there were no trenches or traverses protecting the ramparts. Lying higher than the Ingliz work on the other side of the river, it was an important support against any rear or flank attack upon it.

The Kara Dagh group consisted of two open works, the chief one nearly surrounding a plateau of solid rock 20 ft. high, on which the Siaret battery was constructed, commanding the whole group. The chief work contained two powder magazines, the outwork only one.

Hafiz Pasha Tabia was the strongest of all the works. It was closed, the wall only pierced by one gate towards the town. The whole was surrounded by a deep trench, contained a magazine, and was protected on the south-east by an open outwork called Echali.

The Chanly Tabia consisted of a closed lunette, and two advanced redoubts, protected by a deep rock-hewn trench and traverses. It contained a powder magazine.

Suvari, an open work, commanded the road leading from Erzeroum into the town. It contained a small magazine.—So much for the outworks. The citadel was built of brick, with two large and two small towers and a powder magazine. The wall surrounding the old town—no other exists—had no military significance whatever. The bomb-proof accommodation in Kars was limited to shelter for 3,000 men in the barracks. Only one of the provision magazines, holding four weeks' food, was bomb-proof; but there were five bomb-proof powder magazines, protected against vertical but not against direct fire.

The armament of the place consisted of 150 rifled 24-pounders, mostly muzzle-

loaders, and fifty-four smooth-bore guns of the same calibre. The garrison should amount to at least 23,000 men; but the number actually within the walls did not exceed 15,000, with eighteen field-pieces. Water did not exist in any of the outworks beyond what was contained in the cisterns within the closed works.

Now this description of the place shows sufficiently that Kars was not a town to be taken as soon as looked at, especially when the fact is considered that the rocky nature of the ground would make a regular siege with parallels and zigzags a work of months. This was especially the case with the key of the position—the heights of Kara Dagh, with the Arab Tabia and the Siaret battery within the Kara Dagh group, the earth for which had to be carried up from the valley below. The southern defences to Kars were consequently of smaller value: with the fall of Arab Tabia and Kara Dagh, Hazif Pasha in the south and Mukliss in the west would speedily become untenable.

When November 13th arrived, however, the weather had made the ground too slippery for the attack, which was then postponed to the night between November 17th and November 18th.

Referring to the foregoing account, the assault made by the Russians may be easily followed. The columns appointed for the attack silently took up their positions as darkness fell upon the plain. General Lazareff, commanding the right wing, placed himself before the Hafiz Pasha Tabia, situated on a steep valley height, and surrounded by a deep ditch. Count Grabbe, commanding the centre, took up his position in front of the Chanly Tabia, a closed lunette, with two advanced redoubts, also protected by a deep trench. Generals Roop and Komaroff, commanding the left, took their places between the Erzeroum road and the river in front of the Suvari Tabia, the open work commanding the Erzeroum road.

The leading idea in this disposition of the troops was to carry the town and citadel from the south and east, and, by obtaining possession of Hafiz Tabia, to sweep the rocky heights of the Kara Dagh, and allow the storming party to scale them. The attack being carried out by night would prevent the artillery fire from Takmash Tabia and the Tschim battery from flanking the attack on Suvari.—Count Grabbe commenced the attack in the centre on the Chanly Tabia, and fell dead, pierced by a bullet in the forehead, whilst storming the works, which were, however, successfully scaled, in spite of the ladders being a little too short. At the same time, Suvari was taken with a rush, the men pressing onward through the town, driving the Turks before them along the narrow tortuous streets, and carried the brick-built citadel and its four towers, the attention of Takmash, Veli Pasha, and Tich Tepesi Tabias being engaged by smaller parties from the investing lines on the west. Chanly Tabia and Suvari having thus been taken, a portion of the centre was able to co-operate with the right in the assault on Hafiz Pasha Tabia, which fell towards morning, and enabled the men to scale the heights of Kara Dagh, which were only protected by the guns of Hafiz Pasha, and assail the Kara Dagh Fort in the rear, and force the gates that closed it towards the town. With the chief fort, naturally the outlying works also fell, with their open bases towards the guns turned upon them by the Russians, and at the same time upon Arab Tabia, which the Kara Dagh also commanded. The resistance at Arab Tabia, however, was stubborn; but in the morning it was overcome, and the guns played upon the Mukliss and Veli Pasha Tabias, which were consequently also rendered untenable, Takmash Tabia resisting to the last. Harassed thus on all sides in the darkness of night, with not half the men necessary to man the works—to say nothing of reserves—it is not surprising that Hami Pasha, the commandant, was bewildered, or, even were he not bewildered, was powerless to resist the determined onslaughts all along the line. And when the dawn appeared, and he found Chanly, Hafiz Pasha, and Suvari, with the citadel, in the hands of the Russians, the want of traverses and lines of communication would have prevented his concentrating his forces upon any one point even if he had had the men to concentrate. The best he could do was to defend Veli Pasha and Takmash as long as possible, to secure the retreat of his forces westwards. This he did, and the troops succeeded in escaping from the town, but only to be intercepted and overtaken by the enemy's cavalry, and brought back prisoners to the scene of their defeat, where they were set to work to accomplish, under Russian taskmasters, what their own leaders omitted to do—converting the various works, strengthening them, digging ditches,

erecting breastworks, and carrying out all the various measures which the Russians determined to adopt to secure them the possession of Kars for ever—or as long as "for ever" in such matters usually is. The fall of Kars was thus accomplished in one single night; and naturally there were the usual tales of corruption by Russian gold.

Yet the whole proceeding was remarkably simple and easy of unbiassed understanding. It was the very A B C of war; insufficiently manned forts, a dark night, and a simultaneous assault without any premonitory warnings in the shape of a preliminary cannonade to clear the way—a proceeding, by the way, that never accomplishes its object, if the enemy is at all trained to stand artillery fire. The key to the whole mystery—if a matter of course can be called a mystery—lay, firstly, in the fact, that the outworks and forts were not connected, and for the most part not furnished with ditches, whilst the parapets were ill-constructed. Secondly, that the great length of the fire-line—nearly 8,000 yards—required at least a garrison of 24,000 men for its adequate defence; and as the number of troops in Kars, after the defeat of Mukhtar Pasha at Vezinkoi, was barely 15,000 men effective for service, it was abundantly evident that the place could not hold out long against the forces brought up by the Russians, although the latter included the able-bodied men of Kars in the estimate of their prisoners.

Undermanned in this way—and that, too, by at least partially demoralised troops—without water, without traverses, the works cut in two by the Kars-Tchai, what wonder that a previously well-concerted plan, minutely settled in all its details, should succeed, when carried out at night by troops yet flushed with their recent victory? The wonder is that the Turks withstood the assault for so long, and held out for twelve hours against the incessant attacks of the Russians, suffering a loss themselves of about 5,000, and inflicting a loss on their enemies of nearly 3,000, according to their own accounts. The disproportion in the number killed on either side is noteworthy. Had it been reversed, it would have been explicable. As it was, the only conclusion that can be drawn is, that the Russians gave but little or no quarter that night. Nor can they much be blamed for it. Night attacks are curious affairs, and the men generally like to "*mak'sicker*," for there is no knowing what might not be gathering together in front, or on either flank, under the cover of night.

CHAPTER XXII.

PLEVNA AND SCHIPKA.

THE defeat of the Russians before Plevna for the second time, and the consequent disarrangement of the Russian plans, would, in the face of any other enemy than the Turks, and under better transport arrangements, almost certainly have resulted in ending the campaign, at least for the year. This opinion was freely expressed in the most competent military circles; and it is even said that Count Moltke, on being asked by the emperor what his opinion of the situation was, replied that the position of the Russians, judged with a full allowance for the incapacity of the Turks, was highly critical, and that if the Turks were at once to assume a vigorous offensive and make judicious use of their opportunities, the Czar would have to retreat. This was evident to any one; and even the Seraskeriat was convinced that a vigorous offensive would suffice to crush the Russian armies.

Unfortunately for the Turks, their idea of a vigorous offensive consisted in hard fighting and brute force. Capable enough of striking hard and furiously for the moment, they appeared unable to take the preparatory steps, and assist, by vigorous strategy and tactics, the blows which their men were able and ready to deal on the battle-field itself. Thus they were glad to listen to Suleiman Pasha, whose successful march through Montenegro had excited their admiration, and they quite believed his assurances that he would be able to force the Schipka Pass, the key-stone of the Russian arch resting upon the Danube;

and that then it would be easy for Osman Pasha and Mehemed Ali Pasha to crush in the two sides.

Henceforth, till the end of the campaign, this idea dominated the authorities at Stamboul; and all exertions, all supplies, all reinforcements, were devoted to Suleiman Pasha.

But to insure the success of this plan, the co-operation of Osman Pasha and Mehemed Ali, by joining in the attack on the two Russian flanks, with an equally vigourous offensive, was an imperative necessity. But it was hopeless to expect such unanimity of action on the part of the Turks. Vanity, contempt for their enemy, want of mobility, and want of concert between the three commanders, prevented it. The commanders were not thoroughly independent, but had to refer to Constantinople for orders, and for the sanction of their plans before they could act. Not only was time lost by this roundabout method of intercommunication, but the execution of their proposals was either delayed by the consultations held at the Seraskeriat till it was too late, or the proposals themselves were so modified and tinkered, that nothing or little was left of the originals.

Meanwhile the Russians, fully aware of their critical position, lost no time in filling up the gaps which had been cut in their ranks. Nothing was more significant of the fears entertained by the Russian staff, than the retreat of the Grand Duke Nicholas from Tirnova to Biela; and subsequently, on August 13th, to Gorni Studen, where he was soon afterwards joined by the emperor himself. The inhabitants of Tirnova, as may be imagined, were terrified at this retrograde step of their liberators, and momentarily expected to see the Turkish host of Bashi-Bazouks and Circassians, regulars and irregulars, sweep, like an avalanche, down the mountain slopes, and crimson the Yantra with Bulgarian blood.

But, beyond pushing forward a cloud of irregulars to Selvi, Osman Pasha did nothing. There was, of course, a good reason for Osman Pasha not to advance. In the rear of his left flank, and immediately on his left flank, there were considerable forces. At Nicopoli there were Russians and Roumanians combined; and at Korabia and Kalafat there were also strong divisions of Roumanians, ready and free to cross the Danube at any spot between Widdin and Nicopoli. In addition, there were the Servians in his rear, who, although nominally at peace with the Porte, were ready to obey the orders of the Czar at any moment, and cross the frontier to his assistance. Had Osman Pasha thus moved forward, there is no doubt but that in a short time there would have been a formidable army in his rear, ready to fall upon Plevna the moment he left it, and to co-operate with the Russian forces confronting him.

But, in spite of this, the Turks ought to have been in a position to deal a decisive blow before Roumanians and Servians could get ready to carry out the above-mentioned movements. Three or four days of a rapid simultaneous offensive have often decided a campaign. In fact, every campaign is thus decided at one moment or the other; and, missing this one grand opportunity, the Turks never had another equal to it.

But though, for many reasons, the Czar did not wish to avail himself of Servian or Roumanian assistance till the very last moment, the critical position his armies were in obliged him to waive all such considerations, at least in the case of the Roumanians. Whilst calling up the two corps stationed between Odessa and the Crimea to the Danube, mobilising the guards, the grenadier corps, and calling out 185,467 of the reserves and militia, he also issued decrees for the levy of 206,000 recruits; and at the same time concluded a convention with Roumania, after much negotiation as to the precise position to be occupied by the Roumanian army and Prince Charles, who insisted that he should retain the command of his forces. For some time no result was obtained, as the Russian staff objected to an independent factor in their arrangements; but, at last, a compromise was arrived at, whereby Prince Charles was invested with the command-in-chief of the Russo-Roumanian army before Plevna; whilst General Zatoff was appointed chief of his staff.

Meantime, whilst these arrangements were being carried out, the campaign assumed a different character. From taking the offensive, the Russians had to hold themselves on the defensive, and concentrated all their efforts on the fortification of their positions before Plevna and at the Schipka Pass. At the same time, it was clear that it was absolutely necessary to cut off Osman Pasha from his line of communications with Widdin and Sophia. For the former purpose the Roumanian troops were

to be employed, whilst General Gourko and his cavalry were to accomplish the latter.

But before either of these steps could be effectually carried out, it was necessary to take Lovatz, which blocked the way to the high-road from Plevna to Sophia. With this object a preliminary *reconnaissance* was executed by General Skobeloff.

Leaving the grand duke's head-quarters, he took five battalions of infantry, his own brigade of cavalry, and two batteries of horse artillery, and came out on the Selvi road, half-way between Selvi and Lovatz. His right wing, composed entirely of cavalry, advanced and occupied several villages encircling Lovatz, from the Plevna road to the Selvi road. He then advanced his artillery on the Selvi road to the heights a mile distant from Lovatz, overlooking the town, opened fire with sixteen pieces of artillery, and pushed forward his infantry.

It was evident, however, from the moment the heights were reached, that the *reconnaissance* could not be turned into an attack. From 15,000 to 20,000 troops camped in and about the town, while the low hills immediately surrounding the town were strongly intrenched. There was a strong redoubt on a low hill overlooking the Plevna road, while a high, steep hill on the Selvi side was covered with trenches. There were also twelve guns in position, and a considerable number in reserve. All this was apparent to General Skobeloff, who, nevertheless, resolved to feel the enemy, and the hills soon resounded with the roar of artillery and the noise of shells. The Turks replied at once, and, for a time, there was a lively artillery fire. The Turkish artillery practice was very fair; several shells fell near the Russian guns; but, as the ground was very soft—the battery being planted in a vineyard—they rarely exploded, and when they did explode they only threw up the earth a little, doing no harm beyond killing one man.

The same was the case on the right flank, where the cavalry advanced within point-blank range of the Turkish guns, and opened fire with two small pieces of horse artillery. The Turks replied, and shells fell continually among the horses and men of the battery without doing any harm, owing to their not exploding until too deep in the ground. There was a panic on the Turkish skirmishing line at first; but they soon perceived they had only cavalry to deal with, and were not long in recovering their positions. But they did not attack, nevertheless; whilst, on the other hand, General Skobeloff pushed forward his infantry. From where his guns were placed the road led down a narrow hollow, whose sides were covered with woods, down to the foot of the steep hill which was occupied by the Turks in intrenchments. The infantry went down partly under cover of the woods, but not unperceived by the Turks, who poured a heavy fire into the woods. The Russians pushed forward, however, and in much less time than could have been thought possible, had reached the foot of the hill. They announced their arrival with a shout, and began to dodge up the hill two or three at a time, under cover of the bushes and little hollows with which such hills are usually covered, till the *reconnaissance* began to look like a real attack. The Turkish fire grew heavier and heavier, until it was one continuous roll, far more terrible than the heaviest artillery fire, because a hundred times more destructive.

It was evident, from this fire, that the Turks were three times as numerous as the Russians. An assault under such circumstances would have been madness; and when Skobeloff began to perceive that the attack was growing far too serious, in spite of his orders, he went forward to stop it. The soldiers were, however, determined on an assault, and the officers maintained, when reproached by Skobeloff, that they could not restrain them. Skobeloff himself, whilst stopping to give an order, had his white horse shot under him; and his escort, which had been composed of six Cossacks, was reduced to three, the others having been more or less seriously wounded—one mortally.

The fire was still raging along the Turkish intrenchments, and the Russians were still pushing forward. Skobeloff, mounting another horse—a sorrel this time—again galloped forward. He reached the foot of the hill shouting and gesticulating, while his trumpeter sounded the retreat, at last with effect, for the skirmishers began to withdraw. Then he went down again, horse and man together, fairly under the Turkish intrenchments, and within easy range of the Turkish fire, which was growing stronger and stronger. They were getting reinforcements from the other side, where they were only threatened with cavalry. The roar was continuous, and rolled up and down the hollow like one continuous crash of thunder, only broken by

the heavier booming of the artillery. The bullets fell about Skobeloff like hail, but in a few minutes he was up again on another horse, fresh as ever, coming back up the road at a trot. He had not received a scratch. The *reconnaissance* was over. The troops retired as they came, through the wood under the Turkish fire, which was not very effective, for the whole loss of the Russians was only five killed and twenty wounded on this side.

The *reconnaissance*, however, had succeeded in showing that Lovatz would have to be seriously dealt with, and was not to be carried during a cavalry raid, or by a *coup de main* with small forces. For the moment, therefore, action in this direction was limited to an expedition of the 4th corps, under General Gourko, for the purpose of stopping the communications with Sophia across the Balkans, by way of the Orkhanieh Pass (see sketch X, p. 268), preliminary to the complete investment of Plevna, and its ultimate conversion into a Sedan for the Turks.

Meantime, whilst the Russians were strengthening themselves and their positions with reinforcements and intrenchments, the Turks began to exhibit considerable activity.

On the 16th of August there was a general *reconnaissance*, in some force, by the Turks all along the Russian left flank. From the Danube to beyond the Balkans, from under the guns of Rustzuk, from Rasgrad, from Osman Bazar towards Bebrova, and at half-a-dozen intermediate places, the soldiers of Mehemed Ali Pasha beat up the Russian positions confronting them. There was not much hard fighting, and little loss on either side; but the significance of the business was, that the Turks took the initiative. On the same day, a column of Suleiman Pasha's force attempted strenuously to force the Hainkoi Pass, and a Turkish column did, indeed, force its way into the defile, but was there so roughly handled by the Russian artillery in position and by a regiment of the 9th division holding the Pass, that it was compelled to retire. A day or two later, a Turkish division made a threatening demonstration from Grivitza, the redoubt in front of Plevna. The Turks by no means rested after this work, and continued to display a modified activity. They struck out from Rustzuk; and the same day there was fighting, although not serious, before Osman Bazar, whilst there was an artillery skirmish in front of Skobeloff's position, near Lovatz, where the Turks began the ball; and the Cossacks under Skobeloff's command were harassed, day and night, by forepost work. Meantime, the 2nd division, having crossed the Danube, was massed there preparatory to marching in the Plevna direction. Suleiman Pasha was threatening to attack the Schipka Pass with forty battalions. The defenders of the pass consisted of but twenty companies under General Stoletoff, consisting of the relics of the Bulgarian legion, and three battalions of the 9th Russian division. The 2nd division had, therefore, been diverted from its intended destination, and was being marched on Selvi to relieve a brigade of the 9th division ordered to the Schipka. On the Plevna front, few reinforcements had reached the Russian troops holding it. Compared with before the battle, there was but the addition of the Roumanians and the 16th division: but on August 22nd, eight thousand reserves crossed the Danube to fill up the gaps made by the war in the ranks of the 9th corps, which restored that corps to its full strength. On the other hand, Schahofskoy marched his brigade of the 32nd infantry division back to his original position at Kosarevac, confronting Osman Bazar, and was thus relieved from continuing the work he found so hard. Thus, on the Plevna front, the Russians were to have two full army corps, the 4th and 9th; two Roumanian divisions of infantry, and the 11th cavalry division; Skobeloff's detachment, consisting of a brigade of Circassian Cossacks, with some infantry and artillery watching Lovatz; there was also the 9th cavalry division: the whole Russo-Roumanian force confronting Plevna, thus amounting to from 65,000 to 70,000 men. In this estimate was not included the 4th cavalry division, whose line of detached operation was toward the road through the Balkans from Sophia.

But whilst these preparations for the capture of Plevna were going on, interest became centred in the Schipka Pass, which Suleiman Pasha was preparing to attack. The people of Tirnova naturally did not feel comfortable under these circumstances. The grand duke had ridden into Tirnova amid the plaudits and the glad weeping of a population beside themselves with joy. Flowers were showered down from the windows, and strewed his path; priests and girls struggled for the honour

of kissing his hand. To be with the Russians in Tirnova, then, was to be a welcome guest, for every door stood open. The strains of triumphal music swept along the quaint narrow streets; and the precipices, amid which the town hangs, rather than is built, sent back a melodious echo. But after that came the retreat, and strong was the contrast. The road up the steep into the town was blocked by a double row of vehicles, one driven by weary and somewhat irritable Russian soldiers, the other by sullen Bulgarians, who had found out with great alacrity that they had rights since the Russians came, and were not only no longer subservient, but even, in a tentative way, inclined to be uncivil if they could but harden their nerves. The place was never clean, but it had become fouler than ever. Above the entrance stood, gaunt and ugly, the skeleton of a triumphal arch with just the last shred of decoration, looking like the gallows mourning the abolition of capital punishment. The narrow street was a disheartening chaos of vehicles, whose horses scrambled over the filthy stones; of miserable fugitives squatting listlessly wherever they could find a corner, or trying to push through with their donkeys laden with clothes and children; of Bulgarian civilians, foolishly drunk and reeling about over the stones, amid the jeers of the Russian soldiers; of limp Bulgarian lads in uniform, of whom the Russians persisted in trying to make soldiers—a service for which they lacked alike heart and stamina; of time-worn men of the original Bulgarian Legion, who, having come somehow out of the pandemonium of Eski Zagra with uncut throats, had drifted back demoralised and disgusted; of German-Jew chapmen, selling everything, from bad champagne to rubbishing boots; of marketenders seeking shops whereat to replenish their waggons; and of Bulgarian priests walking about in long petticoats.

Nor was the alarm at Tirnova unfounded. On the 19th of August, Suleiman Pasha, after having made himself master of the whole valley of the Tundja, had already occupied the village of Schipka after a continued struggle against the advance positions of the Russians, till they had fallen back on the head of the pass. The Schipka Pass is not a pass at all in the usual sense of the term. There is no gorge, no defile; there is no spot where 300 men could make a new Thermopylæ; no deep-scored trench as in the Khyber Pass, where an army might be annihilated without ever coming to close quarters. It has its name simply because at this point there happens to be a section of the Balkans of less than the average height, the surface of which, from the Yantra valley on the north, to the Tundja valley on the south, is sufficiently continuous, although having an extremely broken and serrated contour, to afford a foothold for a practicable track, for the Balkans generally present a wild jumble of mountain and glen, neither having any continuity. Under such circumstances, such a crossing-place as the Schipka Pass afforded was a godsend, although, under other circumstances, a road over it would be regarded as impossible. What was a mere track was made by the Russian pioneers into a really good and practicable, although steep, high-road. The ground on either side of the ridge is depressed sometimes into shallow hollows, sometimes into cavernous gorges; but these lateral depressions are broken, and have no continuity, otherwise they would clearly afford a better track for a road than the high ground above.

The highest peak is flanked on either side, behind the lateral depressions, by a mountainous spur higher than itself, and, therefore, commanding it, and having as well the command of the ridge behind, as is shown in sketch U. The higher one—that is to say, the western of these two spurs, marked A in the sketch—raked the road leading up to the Russian positions. These spurs break off abruptly and precipitously on their northern edge, and therefore afforded no access into the valley north of the Balkans. Their sole use to the Turks, therefore, was in affording positions whence to flank the central Schipka ridge, along which ran the road from Gabrova to Schipka. It was possible also for troops to descend from them, struggle through the intervening glens, and climbing the steep slopes of the Schipka ridge, give the hand to each other on the road which runs along its backbone to its summit, where the Russians had constructed a fort, to which they gave the name of Fort St. Nicholas. This done, the Schipka position would, of course, be turned, but the advantage would be of little avail till the road had been opened by carrying the fortified positions on it. Without the command of the road, an enemy might indeed send bands down

the road on to which he had scrambled, into the lower country about Gabrova, to burn and plunder; but unless he carried the whole of the road, his communications with the Balkans would not be secured.

Much has been said of the strength of the Schipka position; but unless strongly held with wide extending arms of defence, it was easy to be attacked, and very difficult to be held with any security. The strength of a position does not depend wholly on its elevation, or even on the difficulties of access to a direct attack, but on the clear range around it which its fire can sweep, and its ability to concentrate its fire on critical points. Herein lay the defect of the Schipka as a defensive position. It could not search with its fire the jumble of lateral valleys and reverse slopes which hemmed it in. A brigade of light infantry might have massed in a hollow within 100 yards of the Russian first position, without exposing itself to the artillery fire of that position.

Such being the positions, the Turks began the attack on the 21st, pushing on directly up the steeps above the village of Schipka. The Russian garrison in the works of the pass then consisted of the Bulgarian legion and one regiment of the 9th division, both weakened by previous hard fighting, and reckoning little more than three thousand bayonets, with about forty cannon. No supports were nearer than Tirnova, a distance of forty miles—a grave omission. The garrison fought hard, and hindered the Turks from gaining any material advantage beyond forcing the outer line of the Russian shelter-trenches on the slopes below the position of Mount St. Nicholas, the highest peak of the Schipka crossing, and marked E E in the sketch. The Russians had laid mines in front of their trenches, which were exploded just as the head of the Turkish assaulting parties were massed above them, and a large number of Moslems were blown up into the air in fragments. The loss to the Russians on the first day's attack was but 200, chiefly of the Bulgarian legion. On the second day, the 22nd, the fighting was not heavy, the Turks being engaged in making a wide turning movement on the right and left flanks of the Russian position, and these attacks were next day developed with great fierceness and pertinacity.

On this day, August 23rd, the Turks assailed the Russian position on the front and flanks, and drove in the defenders from their outlying ground. The radical defects of the position became painfully apparent—its narrowness, its exposure, its liability to be outflanked and isolated. Fortunately for the Russians, reinforcements had arrived, which averted the mischief which had otherwise imminently impended. Stoletoff hit his hardest; but after four long days of intense mental and physical strain, he could not perform impossibilities with 30,000 men thundering on his front and flanks. But there had come to him, swiftly marching from Selvi, a brigade of the 9th division, commanded by General Derozinski, and this timely succour had been of material value to Stoletoff. The fight lasted all day; and at length, as the sun grew lower, the Turks had so worked round on both the Russian flanks, that it seemed as though the claws of the crab were about momentarily to close behind the Russians, and that the Turkish columns climbing either face of the Russian ridge, would give a hand to each other on the road in the rear of the Russian position, as shown in sketch U.

The position was critical in the extreme; but the two Russian generals, General Stoletoff and General Derozinski, expecting momentarily to be environed, had sent, between the closing claws of the crab, a last telegram to the Czar, telling what they expected, how they had tried to prevent it, and how that, please God, driven into their positions and beset, they would hold these till reinforcements should arrive. At all events, they and their men would hold their ground to the last drop of their blood.

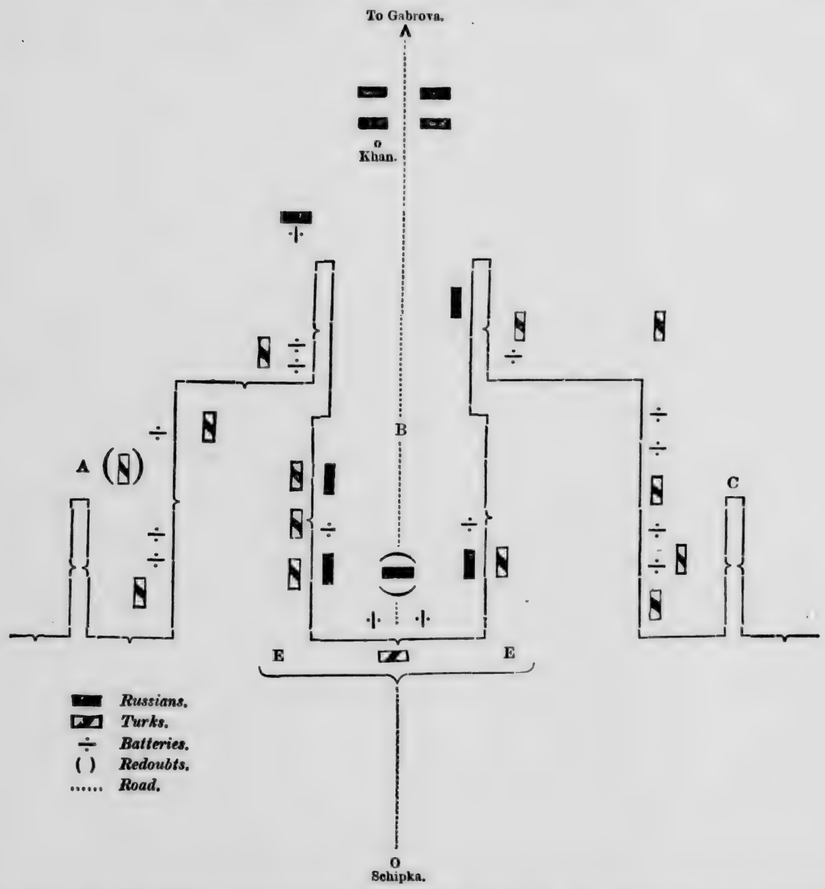
At six o'clock there was a lull in the fighting, of which the Russians could take no advantage, since the reserves were all engaged. The grimed, sun-blistered men were beaten out with heat, fatigue, hunger, and thirst. There had been no cooking for three days, and there was no water within the Russian lines. The poor fellows lay panting on the bare ridge, reckless that it was swept by the Turkish rifle-fire. Others doggedly fought on down among the rocks, forced to give ground, but doing so grimly and sourly, whilst the cliffs and valleys sent back the triumphant Turkish shouts of "Allah il Allah!"

At this time two Russian generals were on the peak which the first position half encloses. Their glasses anxiously scanned the visible glimpses of the steep brown road leading up there from the Yantra valley, through thick copses of sombre green, and yet more sombre dark rock. Suddenly the

head of a long black column was plainly visible, like a long serpent coiling up the brown road. Through the green copses a glint of sunshine flashed and danced on the glittering bayonets, and such a gust of Russian cheers whirled and eddied among the mountain tops, that the Turkish warcries were wholly drowned in the glad welcome which the Russian soldiers sent to the comrades coming to help them. Gradually the head of the column drew near the little plateau in front of the khan, where they at once brought a mountain battery into action against the Turkish artillery on a wooded ridge, by the occupation of which the Turks were flanking the right of the Russian position. At the same time a column of Russian infantry advanced with a swift tramp up-hill till they got within firing distance of the Turks on the right.

They were a battalion of the rifle brigade, hurried up on Cossack ponies: the brigade itself was not three kilometres behind. They were led to the attack by General Radetzki himself, who thus saved the day, and then left the attack to develop itself. It was the same rifle brigade which followed General Gourko in his victorious advance and chequered retreat. The brigade had marched fifty-five kilometres straight on

U—*The Positions in the Schipka at* 7 P.M., *August* 23.



end without cooking or sleeping, and now was in action without so much as a breathing halt. Such is the stuff of which thorough good soldiers are made. Their general, the gallant Radetzki, accompanied them, and pushed an attack on the enemy's position on that wooded ridge on the Russian right. But Radetzki, who himself marched on up the road with his staff at his back, ran the gauntlet of the Turkish rifle-fire, and joined the other two generals on the peak, hard by the batteries of the first position. As senior and highest officer present, he at once took command, complimenting General Stoletoff, whom he relieved, on the excellence of his dispositions and stubbornness of defence.

In the night there was a renewed attempt to carry the Turkish positions threatening the right flank, for it was felt that there was no safety, far less elbow-room, for the Russians until the Turks should be driven off the dominating wooded ridge looming so ugly on the right flank. The left flank, which the Turks assailed the previous day, was comparatively safe.—The next day, August 24th, the fighting began at daybreak with a renewed attack of the Russians on the position threatening their right. The Bulgarian peasant boys displayed singular gallantry in the same work as that in which the despised Indian bheestie has so often done good service to our soldiers, by going down into the actual battle, right into the first line, with stone crocks full of water for the fighting-men. This water was fetched from far in the rear, along a bullet-swept road—for there was no water in the position itself. One lad, who had had his crock smashed by a bullet, wept, not for joy at his fortunate escape, but for sorrow at the loss of the article which enabled him to be of service.

The fighting hung very much in the valley, and the reinforcements of the 9th division, sent down, effected not much perceptible good. About nine Dragomiroff arrived with two regiments of the 2nd brigade of his own division. The Podolsk regiment he left in reserve near the khan; with the Jitomer regiment he marched up the road to the first position. There was no alternative but to traverse that fearfully-dangerous road, for the lower broken ground on its left was impracticable, and reported besides to be swarming with Bashi-Bazouks. The Jitomer men lost heavily while making this promenade, and having reached the peak, found no safe shelter, for the Turkish rifle-fire was coming from two quarters simultaneously. So the infantry were stowed away till wanted in the ditch of the redoubt. Radetzki and his staff remained on the slope of the peak, and here Dragomiroff joined, and was welcomed by his chief.

The firing in the valley waxed and waned fitfully as the morning wore on to near noon. The Turks were very strongly established in their wooded position, and there was an evident intention on their part to work round their left, and edge in across the narrowed throat of the valley, towards the Russian rear. About eleven the firing in the valley swelled in volume. It was almost wholly musketry fire. The Russians had their tirailleurs in among the trees of the Turkish slope, where the battle waged to and fro—now the Russians, now the Turks, gaining ground. Occasionally the Russians, at some point, would be hurled clean back out of the wood altogether, the Turks following them eagerly to its edge, and lying down while pouring out a galling fire. It seemed an even match; the Turks and Russians alike accepted valiantly the chances of battle. The Russian tirailleurs, finely-trained skirmishers, looked out dexterously for cover; and the Turks displayed fine skirmishing ability; but the soldiers of the Brianski line regiment were not so good at finding cover. There was clearly no thought among them of quailing, but they stood up in the open and took what came.

Round the peak, on the slope of which the generals and staff were surveying the scene, bullets were singing like a nest o angry wasps. One struck on the right knee General Dragomiroff, who had been standing calmly in the face of the fire, looking down upon the battle. One of the best generals in the Russian army was thus *hors de combat.*

Meanwhile the tirailleurs and Brianski regiment were not making headway in their difficult enterprise of attacking direct in front the steep Turkish slope, with its advantage of wooded cover, although they foiled the efforts of the Turks to work round by their own left into the Russian rear. The Russian staff could see, on the sky-line, the Turkish reinforcements as they came up out of the valley by the road close to their mountain battery, on the bare spot near the edge of their left flank. It was determined, at twelve o'clock, to deliver a

counter flank attack on the right edge of the Turkish ridge, simultaneously with a renewed strenuous attack of the tirailleurs and the Brianski men from below. The two battalions of the Jitomer regiment, each leaving one company behind as supports, emerged from the partial shelter of the peak of the Russian first position, and marched in company columns across the more level grass land at the head of the intervening valley. They had no great dip to traverse, and their way was good marching ground; but the Turkish mountain guns, from the battery high up on the wooded peak of the Turkish position, were ready for them, as also was the Turkish infantry on the Turkish right edge of the ridge. The fire swept through them, and many a gallant fellow dyed the grass with his blood. But the battalions pressed steadily on, and dashed into the wood at the double. The Russian artillery had done its best to prepare the way, for their battery on the peak had fired hard while they were crossing over, and a reserve battery near the khan down below had come into action. But soon the artillery had to cease, for there was danger in blind firing into the wood when the men were in it. The arbitrement had to be left to rifle and bayonet.

The crisis of the battle had arrived. The fighting of the infantry on the Turkish front and flank lasted for a long hour, and raged with great fury, but the Russians gradually gained ground. The Turks first withdrew their battery of mountain guns near their right flank. Then the left battery followed their example, for the tirailleurs and Brianskis were gaining the ridge on the Turkish left also. There remained but the central peak of the Turkish position. That carried, the ridge would be in the hands of the Russians, and their right flank set free from the dangerous pressure on it.

The fight was on the balance. The Russians, as they stood, could all but succeed, but not quite. It was an intensely critical period, but Radetzki was equal to the occasion. The Jitomer battalions had left two companies in reserve when they marched out from behind the peak. Radetzki himself took one of these companies; the colonel of the Jitomer regiment placed himself at the head of the other; and thus led, the two companies set forward to throw themselves into the fray.

Thus headed by their favourite leaders, the Jitomers, who had been chafing at their inaction, advanced rapidly, and ringing cheers rose high above the rattle of musketry as they dashed across the grassy slope at the head of the valley, and precipitated themselves into the wood.

Fortune, thus energetically wooed, yielded. There was a concentric rush on the peak. Its rude breastworks were surmounted; there was some hot bayonet-work, and in a short time they had reached within fifty yards of the redoubt. Here they found obstacles which, for the moment, were quite insurmountable. The Turks had cut down the trees around the redoubt, making an abattis over which the Russians found it almost impossible to pass. They gathered around the edge under cover of the trees, and suddenly made a rush for it, but were driven back with fearful loss. The soldiers became entangled in the masses of brushwood, trunks, and limbs of the trees over which they were obliged to scramble, while the Turks poured in a terrible fire upon them at this short distance, and mowed them down like grass. Of the first assault launched against the redoubt, very few got back under cover to tell the tale. It was very evident that the assault, under such conditions, could not succeed. Only one battalion had been sent to attack. The force was insufficient, and of this one company sent to the assault was nearly destroyed. Reinforcements were sent by Radetzki, who had returned to his position on the central peak. The attack began again, but dispositions were made to place a large force in such positions that it could pour a heavy fire into the redoubt to cover the assault until the assaulters were almost up to the parapet.

This attack seemed almost on the point of success, for the colonel in command said, that if reserves were given to him he could take it. The officer in command of the reserves let them go; but they were nevertheless repulsed. Then Radetzki mounted and rode to the ground, followed by part of his staff. The chief of the staff, General Dimitriofsky, on foot, bareheaded, and supported by two men, with an expression of extreme suffering on his face, had put himself at the head of a battalion to lead the assault. A shell had struck the ground beside him, covering him with earth, knocking him down, and rendering him senseless for a few minutes. The attack still went on. The fire became terrible. From among

the trees rose a large column of smoke, marking the place of the Turkish redoubt, which was dimly seen through it, while the thick woods were full of the roll of the Russian musketry fire.

The Russians advanced steadily. They rushed over, or through, the abattis; they even got into the battery, and actually held it for a few seconds, but were driven out again. They surrounded the place on all sides, pouring into it a terrible fire, but were again driven back. In the meantime, the Turks, to support the defence, began to attack in front and rear. Musketry and artillery were heard coming up from Schipka, mingling with the nearer din around the redoubt in a most sinister way. The wounded came trooping steadily back, with wounds in their heads, arms, and bodies. Some were on litters. One was carried by his companions. Some were limping along by themselves, presenting a most pitiable spectacle, covered with dust, smoke-begrimed, haggard, wretched. The fight continued until late at night, the wounded coming back steadily all the time, till it was seen that the capture of the redoubt could not be effected that day.

Still, though the redoubt remained in the hands of the Turks, the ridge and slopes on the Russian right had been cleared, and it was no longer death to ride along the road from Gabrova to St. Nicholas. The conflict was continued during the following two days, the reinforcements which the Russians had received enabling them to strengthen the grip they had acquired by the timely arrival of General Radetzki.

The redoubt and ridge on the Russian right was abandoned during the night by both combatants, on account of want of water, there being none on the Russian side; and the road to it on the Turkish side having been threatened by the Russian advance, and reoccupation of the trenches on the southern and western slopes of the peak on which stood Fort Nicholas. On the 26th the Turks returned; but finding the way effectually barred towards the Gabrova road, they again, and for good, abandoned the position which had been so hotly contested. On August 27th the positions were as shown in sketch V. By that day solitude reigned amongst the woods to the right of Fort St. Nicholas and the Gabrova road, where, for days, such furious fighting had raged. The Russian soldiers at last could walk along the road, from the khan in the rear of Radetzki's position, right along to the final peak of the Balkans on Mount St. Nicholas, and thence down into the shelter-trenches, without once hearing the whistle of a bullet, where once the air vibrated with the hum of them.

Suleiman Pasha had had enough for the time of the Schipka Pass. For five days he beat out the brains of his gallant stubborn soldiers against its defences and its defenders, repeating, on a smaller scale, exactly the same errors he knew the Russians had been committing at Plevna during their first assaults on that place, in the face of superior weapons, superior men and defences. Terribly had the Turks struggled; but their valour had proved unavailing, and 5,000 Turkish corpses festered in the blazing sunshine between the Schipka village and the fringes of Mount St. Nicholas. All Suleiman Pasha's Montenegrin soldiers had been removed; and there remained, confronting the Russians, only a few battalions of Egyptians, with some cannon on the heights, and a few more miscellaneous battalions in Schipka.

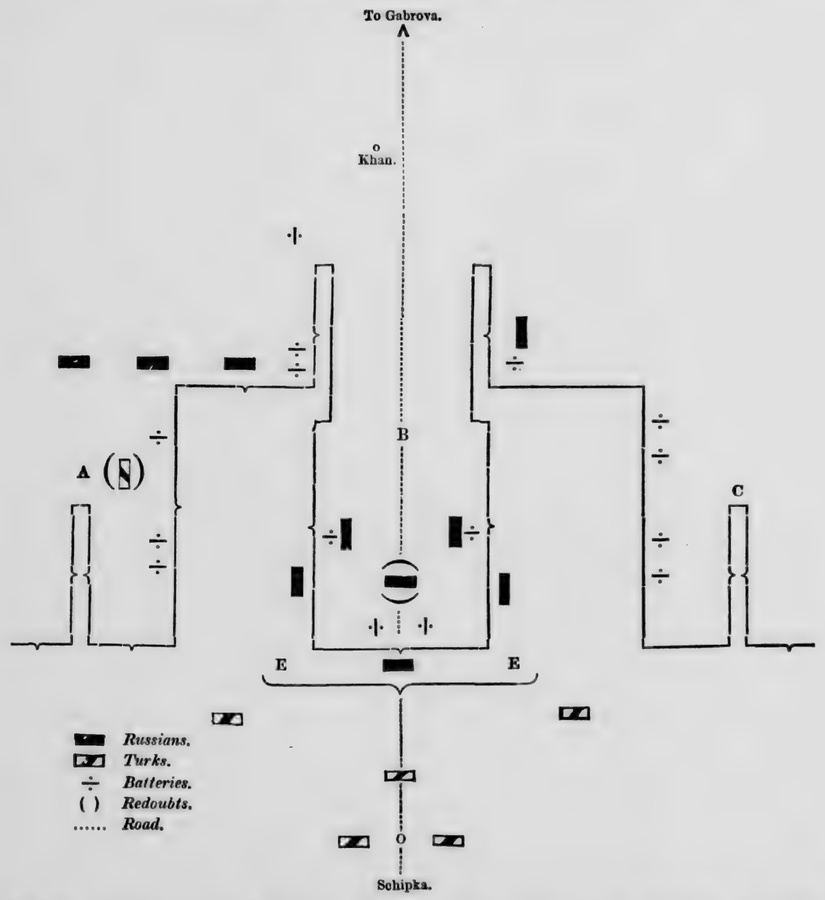
The Russian losses were also very heavy, amounting to over 4,000 killed and wounded. They had, however, just managed to save themselves from the danger threatening them, whilst the Turks had gained nothing at all.

It is a strange feature of this war that the commanders all struck isolated blows. Scarcely had Suleiman Pasha been repulsed, when Mehemed Ali commenced an attack all along his line confronting the Russian left. From August 28th to August 30th he made a general advance, and there was continuous fighting along the front of the centre and right flank army of the Czarevitch from Nisova on the White Lom southward over Solenik, Gagovo, Sultankoi, Popkoi, Mehemedkoi, and beyond, in front of Osman Bazar. Here Mehemed Ali Pasha was personally in command. Great masses of Turks everywhere drove in the Russian forepost line, and at several moments it seemed as if an important battle was imminent; but the tactics of the Turks resembled those of the combatants in the American civil war. When they gained any ground they sat and fortified themselves in it by intrenchments before moving to acquire any more. On the other hand, the Russians abandoned the Popkoi position also after having intrenched themselves in it. The reason was stated to be the discovery of its ineligibility as being commanded by higher

ground within cannon range, whilst the new position was behind the old one. Here the combatants remained looking at each other, whilst there came a *parlementaire* from Mehemed Ali Pasha on the subject of the treatment of the wounded and the Bulgarian civil population. He was singularly incoherent as to the objects of his mission, had escort myself when I must pass through their camp."

With this the attempts of Mehemed Ali to break through the Russian left came to an end, and Osman Pasha then took up the ball, and directed a serious and well-sustained attack against the Russian left centre, almost directly in front of Poradim.

V—*The Positions in the Schipka, August* 27.



no definite proposals to make, and there were suspicions that, in reality, he was a spy. On some subjects he was charmingly frank. Speaking to him of the Bashi-Bazouks, the grand duke called them "wild beasts." "Oh," said the envoy, "I am not expected to defend them. I always take an

At six o'clock in the morning of August 31st, a large force of Turkish cavalry advanced beyond the Turkish foreposts between Radisevo and Grivitza, and drove in the Russian advanced posts on the line between the villages of Pelisat and Sgalince. This done, at eight o'clock the Turkish

leader developed a regular attack in force in a direction already prepared by his cavalry. The Turkish infantry engaged were estimated by the Russians at 25,000 men, with more than a proportionate quantity of artillery. The Russian force engaged consisted of three regiments of the 16th division, which was not engaged in the previous Plevna battle, and two battalions of the 30th division in reserve, which division took part in the battle of the 30th of July. The Uhlans and Hussars of the 4th cavalry division arrived in time to be of some service.

The Turkish attack was in some degree a surprise. General Zatoff was away from Poradim, making a formal visit to Prince Charles, and in his absence nobody was in a position to make comprehensive dispositions; but he returned in time to take the direction of affairs before the fighting was over. It was stubborn, and in places desperate. The chief struggle took place between Pelisat and Sgalince.

In front of, and beyond Pelisat, the ground rose in a lazy incline for a distance of a mile, and on this ground stood a Russian redoubt. A mile and a-half to the right was the village of Sgalince, the Russian centre, before which was another redoubt, and a series of trenches. Forward towards Plevna the ground still rose higher, so that the Russian positions were commanded by the positions taken by the Turks in their forward movement. The disadvantage could not be avoided by the Russians without falling back several miles. The Russian redoubt, a mile in front of Pelisat, was taken by the Turks early in the fight, and the Russian left wing driven back on Pelisat, in front of which trenches had been dug and lined with troops.

Within an hour the Pelisat redoubt was taken by the Turks, retaken by the Russians, and retaken again by the Turks, who, encouraged by their success, then went straight at the Russian trenches before Sgalince.

The battle here was terrible, but the Turks were repulsed, and again they retreated up the hill. It will hardly be believed that they went at it again; and yet they did so. To those who had watched the two preceding assaults it seemed madness, because the Russian fire never slackened an instant, and the Russian line never wavered, while the Russian reserves, which had been told-off in view of such a contingency, were waiting behind ready to fall in at the least sign of wavering.

The scene of carnage was again repeated, but it only lasted a moment. The Turks, completely broken, withdrew, sullenly firing, and taking time to carry off their wounded and many of their dead. Still they held the redoubt, upon which they fell back apparently with the intention of holding it; but they were not allowed to remain long there. The attack on the Sgalince redoubt in the Russian centre had been equally unsuccessful with that on the Russian trenches on the left. The Russians pursued them with a murderous fire, and then six companies went at them with the bayonet and swept them out of the Pelisat redoubt like a whirlwind. At four o'clock the Turks were in retreat everywhere. The Russians occupied the whole of their first positions, besides pursuing the Turks a short distance with cavalry. The Russians were about 20,000. Their loss was estimated at 1,800, and the Turkish loss at 2,000 killed and wounded.

After this ineffectual attempt to break through the Russian line, Osman Pasha again relapsed into inactivity, the Russians taking advantage of the discouragement always following a repulse to deal a decisive blow against Lovatz. The Russian force engaged consisted of the 2nd division and a rifle brigade which had returned from Gabrova, marching ninety kilometres, with one brigade of the 3rd division under Prince Imeretinski, and Skobeloff's brigade of Circassian Cossacks. None of the Russian troops, except the last brigade, had been previously engaged. Altogether they numbered about 22,000 men; whilst the Turks, in and round Lovatz, had no more than 7,000.

Skobeloff, on the previous evening, marched from Kakrind, his previous defensive position, and carried a position on the north-east of Lovatz, which rendered the place virtually untenable. In the night, therefore, the Turks fell back on the fortified range of heights behind the town, and there awaited the attack. This was begun with artillery at sunrise, and the Russians' advance was so conducted that their artillery, passing south of Lovatz, took up a position enfilading the range of heights held by the Turks, and also cut off their retreat into the Balkans over the Trojan. Nevertheless, the Turks resisted stubbornly, and were only driven out by hard infantry fighting, which lasted till near sundown, when they tried to

retire upon Plevna; but Skobeloff's Cossack horse artillery stopped the way, and they went away due west, pursued by Skobeloff's Cossacks and part of the imperial escort.

The seizure of Lovatz having thus prepared the way for a renewed attack on Plevna, by September 6th there were gathered together before Plevna a total of about 90,000 men, supported by 250 field-guns, and twenty heavy siege guns.

The plan of the attack, which was fixed for the following day, differed but little from the previous plan, with the exception that the left wing was no longer open to attack from Lovatz, and consequently secure against a *déroute* like that of July 31st.

The Russians had the ground to the left, the ground of Schahofskoy in the previous battle. The Roumanians had the section of the environment to the right of the centre, being the ground on which Krüdener fought so stubbornly, although ineffectually, on the 30th of July. The front of each section was of about equal extent. The Turkish positions opposite the Roumanian section were the stronger both by nature and art. But there were only 28,000 Roumanians to 50,000 Russians, although it was decided that they should bear the brunt of the attack on the Grivitza redoubt. To the left of the Roumanian right, also menacing Grivitza, stood the Russian 5th division, prolonged toward the left flank by the 31st division. On the downs above Sgalince and Pelisat, where General Krüdener, commanding the 9th corps, made up by the two divisions just named, had his head-quarters, the alignment was still further prolonged by the 30th division and the 16th division, reaching from the touch of the 31st division to Bogot, where the 16th division was chiefly massed, and where General Kriloff, commanding the 4th corps, had his head-quarters. Prince Imeretinski, from Lovatz, detached one brigade south to Trojan to guard against trouble from that region, and then marched north along the chaussée, in the direction of Plevna, with three brigades—viz., one brigade of the 2nd division, one brigade of the 3rd division, and the Tirailleur brigade, whilst Skobeloff was with his Cossacks reconnoitring in the south-west of Plevna.

In the early morning, before it was light, the various batteries were moved forward, and brought to bear chiefly on the Grivitza redoubt and on the works above Radisevo. The firing began at half-past six, and continued, without intermission, the whole day, the Turks replying leisurely; whilst the 270 Russian guns thundered at their works to prepare the way for the assault by the infantry, who were lying under cover before Grivitza and Radisevo, awaiting the order to advance. Prince Imeretinski and General Skobeloff were also cannonading the Turkish positions between Krishine and Radisevo, both of these positions being strongly supported by the isolated hill, or mamelon, south-east of the town, and which the Russians considered a key to the position.

This bombardment of the outer works of Plevna, during which each gun fired once every quarter of an hour, thus making 12,480 shots during the day, did not produce much effect; and when the cannonade recommenced the next day, September 8th, it was not easy at first sight to recognise that the Russians had gained any advantage by their profuse powder-burning. The night before, the parapet of the Grivitza redoubt had seemed a good deal jagged by the Russian shell-fire; but, under cover of night, all its defects had been made good, and it looked as trim as if never a shot had been fired at it. But the Russians had been at work also during the night. They had gained a large slice of ground in the direction of Grivitza; that is, their working parties had been pushed forward in the darkness, and a battery of siege guns had been built and armed on an elevation comparatively close to and overhanging Grivitza village, and within easy battery range of the irrepressible redoubt.

As soon as the sun rose that battery came into action against the redoubt, supported by isolated big guns. Away to the right, and further to the rear on the left in rear of the advanced battery, the original battery of siege guns sent its fire sweeping down the valley, and over traversing undulations into what, in the previous battle, was called the Turkish first position, the redoubt and intrenched village in the central swell. This position was also receiving the fire of two or three batteries of field-guns stationed on the heights beyond Radisevo, the height where Schahofskoy's cannon stood so long. The redoubt could not reply to the siege battery, the range of the latter being too long, so it accepted punishment from that quarter, and pounded away in reply to the field batteries on the ridge.

The Russian siege battery firing into the

Grivitza redoubt made admirable practice; shell after shell burst in the parapet or went slap into the redoubt. Every now and then the guns were silent for ten minutes or so at a time, and sanguine people began to think that the stubborn defence had been abandoned, and that the defenders had departed bag and baggage. But when the Turk is in a place, and means to stop there, he is a difficult customer to dislodge. The pause had been but a short interval to repair damages, and presently the Grivitza gun-fire would recommence in its old jaunty fashion. It was not the key to the position, but its reduction would be a valuable gain; and instead of spreading their fire as they did, the Russians should have concentrated upon it the whole weight of their bombardment, and made it untenable by dint of a hailstorm of shells. As it was, they might bombard it for a week, sacrifice a whole brigade of infantry, and then, after all, not succeed in taking it. The assault was intended to have been begun the day before, at five in the afternoon; but owing to late starting and delays by the way, the troops were not quite all in position by the appointed time, and so the attack was postponed. Everywhere on the 8th, however, the infantry were in position waiting for the word. Behind every swell, in the hollow of every depression, lying down behind the screen of Indian corn, were the soldiers, some far away out beyond the batteries, and the Russian shells and Turkish shells whistling over their heads without disturbing them. Others were snugly stowed to the right and left of the batteries, lying on the reverse slopes so as to be clear of the hostile shells. All round the edge of the horizon, from the river Vid on the north, to the Lovatz-Plevna road on the south, rose up against the pale blue sky the white smoke of the cannon-fire. The Turkish horseshoe was girdled by a cincture of cannon-fire and armed men; but the Turk hardened his heart and gave back shell for shell, as, in the impending fight, he had made up his mind to return cheer for cheer, rifle-shot for rifle-shot, and bayonet-stab for bayonet-stab.

Thus the bombardment went on without doing over-much damage, whilst the villagers of Grivitza down in the hollow between the batteries, with shells interminably whistling over their heads, were actually engaged treading out their barley, on the primitive threshing-floor of hardened mud, the men shaking the straw, the women driving the ponies in the endless round.

The Roumanian guns, too, were firing steadily into the Grivitza redoubt from the position at the corner of the wood on Krüdener's right; but it was a long range, and the shells fell short of the redoubt on to the slope more to the left instead. Near them, in a little valley, and on a little hill, was the Russian great battery of the right flank, a battery containing twelve siege guns. The emplacement in which these were lodged was rough enough, but strong. This battery had three faces: one armed with six guns looked down the valley towards Plevna, and gave its fire to the redoubt and fortified village known as the Turkish first position. The centre face, with three guns, looked toward a Turkish redoubt behind the Grivitza redoubt, and connecting it with the great Plizitza position on the due north flank of Plevna. The right face, armed with three guns, looked across at the Grivitza redoubt itself.

Meanwhile the Turks developed a wider range of artillery fire than they did when Schahofskoy and Krüdener in vain dashed against their positions. The Turks were very careful in marking time—fired no harder than they found necessary, but replied steadily and deliberately in reply to a fire which, to all appearance, was not materially injuring them.

The Turkish camps on the most northerly ridge were full of men all the way back from the Grivitza redoubt to the Plizitza scarped height. On the central swell masses of their infantrymen were lying in the hollows, having turned out for the sake of safety from the shell-scourged redoubts.

Meantime, whilst the Grivitza-Radisevo positions were being ripened by the shell-fire, the same process was going on in the south and south-west of the Russian line, where Prince Imeretinski and General Skobeloff were directing the attack. On this side, from the hills bordering the road from Plevna to Lovatz, a fine view was afforded of the line described by the Russian and Roumanian positions round Plevna, which began opposite Bukova, extending nearly parallel with the Sistova road until beyond Grivitza, then curving round past Radisevo until within two miles of Plevna, nearly on the Lovatz road, then extending along the Lovatz road on the ridge as far as opposite Krishine. The line thus described was exactly in the form of a reaping-hook, with

the point opposite Bukova, the middle of the curve opposite Grivitza, the junction of the handle close into Plevna, and the end of the handle at Krishine. The point nearest Plevna, it will be perceived, was near the Lovatz road, at the junction of the handle with the blade.

In this direction the Russian batteries were within a mile of Plevna, and were shelling one of the redoubts behind Plevna in a corner formed by the course of the Sophia road. Columns of white smoke were rising to the sky, and the sharp whip-like cracks of these field-pieces were mingling angrily with the dull heavy roar of the siege guns in the big battery above. At this moment, about 4 P.M., Prince Imeretinski considered the first position of the Turks ripe for preparations, at least, for an attack, if, indeed, not for the assault itself, and pushed forward the infantry towards the first Turkish position amongst the trees at the foot of the hill on which stood the redoubt, in the bend of the Sophia road, which the Russians hoped to carry.

The fire was opened on both sides with much vigour, the infantry arriving in line and beginning the attack. The Turks were posted in the trees at the foot of the mountain, and probably half a mile in front; but the Russians gradually advanced down the side of the mountain through the trees, driving back the Turks, part of whom retired upon Plevna, but the greater part upon the redoubt. The Russians pushed down to almost the bottom of the hill, the Turks retreating up the smooth slope leading towards the redoubt by hundreds, and from the redoubt itself began to be poured forth a heavy fire upon the Russians on the opposite slope. The Russians pushed down steadily, nevertheless, in loose order, firing as they went; but as they neared the foot of the slope the Turkish fire became terrible. From the parapets of the redoubt poured forth a steady wave of flame, and the redoubt itself was soon hidden in the thick fog of white smoke that rose over it. The roar of this tremendous fire was simply fearful, and lasted about twenty minutes. Then the Russian skirmishing line, which had already reached the foot of the slope, began to withdraw, and in a few minutes they had retired to a position half-way up the slope, where they halted, and the slackening of the fire told that, for the moment, the attack upon the redoubt had failed. The Turks then came down again from the redoubt, and re-entered the woods at the foot of the slope where the Russians had been, and likewise those who had retreated towards Plevna came out again into the maize-fields, on the other side of the ravine, pushing along as though they would turn the right of the Russian attack. This was impossible, however, because the Russian infantry were lying close behind the ridge, and would have effectually prevented any movement of this kind.

During all the time this fight lasted, the Russian batteries, which had been advanced far down towards Plevna, were quite silent; and, encouraged by this, and seeing that the Russians remained in the positions to which they had withdrawn on the slope of the mountain, the Turks began to swarm out of the redoubt down to the foot of the slope, attacking in their turn, and bent upon driving the Russians back to the point which they had originally occupied in the morning. But the Russians had already been strengthening their positions by digging, and poured a fire from the line they had occupied, which, in steadiness and fury, was only equalled by the Turks from their redoubt. The Turks had already advanced a considerable way up the slope before the Russians opened fire, and they did not stand a moment under it. They retreated through the trees, and again up the slope to the redoubt, hotly pursued by the Russians, who followed them to the foot of the slope.

The fire on both sides then became dreadful, and the Russians having received a considerable number of reinforcements, their advance was far more steady and swift, more self-confident than the previous one had been. They swept down into the little hollow between the opposite slopes, and then poured a terrible fire on the Turkish redoubt from behind the trees, and under cover of the banks, stones, earth, and anything they could find to shelter themselves. This time the attack was, moreover, supported by the batteries on the right, which now advanced still nearer Plevna, and concentrated their fire on the Turkish redoubt.

At the time the Russians were advancing down the hill, the whole valley was filled with smoke. The town of Plevna, as well as the Turkish redoubts, and even part of the wood where the Russians were, had become invisible. The sun was just setting behind a mass of clouds, but it was seen for a few minutes like a fiery blood-shot eye,

which tinged the smoke hanging over everything with the colour of blood. Soon after sunset the firing, after a few sudden spurts, ceased for the night, with the exception of a casual alarm. The Russians remained in their positions at the foot of the slope till about 12 P.M., when they withdrew to the summit of the wooded hill whence they had made their attack. During the next day, September 9th, the operations were again limited to artillery fire, the batteries opposite Grivitza gaining ground a little, as well as the heavy siege guns in front of Radisevo. September 10th was passed in the same fashion—a languid, objectless cannonade, with the only result of advancing the batteries a few yards. The fact is that the staff, wishing to compliment the emperor, had commenced the bombardment on September 7th, the anniversary of his coronation, and intended to take Plevna on September 11th, the anniversary of his saint's day. This was, no doubt, very pretty; but the expenditure of fireworks, to say the least, was somewhat costly.

However, on September 11th the supreme effort began. The attack was concentrated on three points—the Grivitza redoubt, the Radisevo ridge leading to the mamelon, and the outlying redoubts of the great Krishine redoubt. The Roumanians were entrusted with the first task, General Kriloff with the second, and General Skobeloff with the third. It had been decided that the attack should be ushered in with the obligato artillery fire, and commence at 2.30 P.M. A skirmish, however, on the Russian left, between the Turks and Skobeloff's forces, suddenly developed at 11 A.M. into a regular engagement, which soon became general along the whole line.

In addition to this *contretemps*, a thick fog, which lasted the greater part of the day, also impeded the operations, and caused a great deal of confusion. The battle thus began on the extreme left, and thence ran round to the right, opposite Grivitza.

Skobeloff and Imeretinski, in order to begin the attack on their side upon the redoubt, had to advance their troops on to the hill immediately fronting the redoubts in the bend of the Sophia road. It was from this hill that the attack had been made upon Skobeloff four days before, and the hill had since been abandoned by the Turks, except a few skirmishers. Skobeloff advanced at eleven o'clock to take possession of this hill. The Turks immediately opened fire upon him. This was the beginning of the Turkish attack, which spread from the Lovatz road over Plevna, and up the Radisevo ridge, a position which has already been described. In the middle of this ridge was a low hill, or hump. From this point down to the end of the ridge, scarcely a mile from Plevna, the Russians had planted twenty-eight guns, the greater part of which were not more than 1,000 or 1,200 yards from the Turkish redoubts and trenches, and were a continual menace and danger to the Turks, who suddenly decided to try and carry the Radisevo ridge, and the attack here was directed principally against the above hump or hill, opposite one of their own redoubts. It was impossible, owing to the fog and smoke, to see the position of the combatants on either side. The fight lasted until nearly two o'clock. The Turks made three attacks upon Skobeloff, which were successfully repulsed, and two on the Radisevo ridge.

The three fights with Skobeloff were short, quick, and sharp, neither lasting more than five or ten minutes. This was owing to Skobeloff's manner of defence. He ordered his troops to reserve their fire until the Turks came within a hundred yards, then to open upon them a sudden and terrible fusillade, against which no troops could stand This drove them back almost immediately. Three times they came to the charge, and three times were they repulsed in the same sudden and furious manner.

The two attacks upon the Radisevo ridge lasted longer, and were repulsed with less ease. Not until about two o'clock did the fire die away, showing that the fight for the moment was over. Then the fog lifted slightly, and the position on both sides could be seen. The Turks in the trenches down towards Plevna were trying occasional shots, distinguished by little puffs of smoke, with masses here and there in the redoubts, showing, with an occasional shot from their cannon, that they had been repulsed with heavy loss—how much it is impossible to state; but as the loss of the Russians fighting under cover was more than 500, that of the Turks must have been between two and three thousand. The three days' artillery fire had evidently done them, however, very little harm, and it showed how strong they felt themselves to risk a repulse, knowing, to a certainty, that it would be followed almost immediately by a Russian attack. Indeed, this attack and

repulse of the Turks did more to prepare the way for the Russian attack than the whole three days' artillery fire had done. They had suffered severely, and must have been more or less discouraged and demoralised, as troops, even the best, always are at such a moment. It was most favourable, therefore, for the Russian attack, which was begun almost immediately, and exactly at the time originally intended; so that the fire had hardly ceased half-an-hour when it began again with unexampled fury.

Whilst General Kriloff attacked the redoubts down near Plevna, there was little to be seen along the crest of the Radisevo ridge, where the Russian guns could be perceived at work, with figures flitting round them, dimly seen through the smoke, strangely magnified by the intervention of the fog, until the gunners appeared like giants, and the guns themselves, enlarged and distorted by the same medium, appeared like huge uncouth monsters, from whose throats at every instant leaped forth globes of flame. There were moments when these flashes seemed to light up everything around them. Then the guns and gunners appeared for an instant with fearful distinctness, red and lurid, as though tinged with blood. Then they sank back again in shadowy indistinctness. The uproar of the battle rose and swelled until it became fearful to hear—like the continuous roar of an angry sea beating against a rock-bound coast, combined with that of a thunderstorm, with the strange unearthly sounds heard on board a ship when labouring in a gale.

This continued, without ceasing, for nearly two hours. The Russian guns were pouring their fire into the redoubt, and the Russian infantry hailing theirs into the trenches, while the attacking columns were advancing cautiously under cover of the smoke and fog, and standing corn, to get a position as near as possible before making the final rush. At about five o'clock the smoke lifted again, carried away by a gust of wind. At this moment, close before the redoubt, down near Plevna, a mass of Russian soldiers rose up in a field of Indian corn, and pushed forward with a shout. The Turkish fire just then seemed to have been dominated, nearly silenced, by the terrible storm of shot and shell poured in by the Russians. The moment seemed favourable for the assault; but the Russian shout had scarcely died away when there flashed along the parapet of the redoubt a stream of fire that swayed backwards and forwards, while the smoke rose over the redoubt in one heavy white mass. One continuous crash filled the air with bullets, from which, to the spectator, it did not seem possible for even a rabbit to advance. And, as it proved, the fire was too heavy for the Russians to make way. There were not enough of them to overpower the Turkish fire—not enough to suck up the Turkish bullets and leave sufficient to carry the parapet. A few struggled up on to the glacis, where they soon dropped, and the whole force remaining was repulsed, and had to fall back. At this moment General Kriloff sent two battalions to pick up the discomfited assailants, and lead them on again; but they had to fall back, and thus his second assault was also repulsed.

The stupidity of this method of attack was simply criminal. It was a mere matter of calculation. If a thousand men attack another thousand at close quarters for ten minutes, that means that, with breech-loaders, each thousand will be exposed to an initial shower of 4,000 bullets per minute. Two-and-a-half per cent., at least, of these bullets take effect upon the attacking party, of whom 100 men drop in the first minute, whilst the defenders under cover, at most, lose only 5 per cent. During the second minute the attacking party are exposed to 3,800 bullets, whilst they themselves can only fire 3,600. This time they lose over 10 per cent.—say 11 per cent.; whilst the defenders lose less than 5 per cent.—say $4\frac{1}{2}$. Thus, at the end of the second minute, the attacking party lose 95 men, reducing their force to 800 men, whilst the defenders lose only 43, so that they still have 907 men to oppose to 800. In the third minute the assailants have to face 3,628 bullets, and can only give 3,200. This reduces the assailants to 682 men, and the defenders to no more than 827. In the fourth minute the assailants can only give 2,728 bullets to the defenders' 3,308; this leaves 598 assailants to 756 defenders. In the fifth minute the assailants are reduced to 523 men; in the sixth minute to 447; in the seventh to 337; in the eighth to 310; in the ninth to 247; and in the tenth to 187 men; whilst the defenders still have, at least, 619 left. In the eleventh minute, the assailants would be reduced to 127; in the twelfth to 67; and in the thirteenth to 10, against 585 of the defenders.

This is supposing equal numbers face each other; and, at first sight, it would appear necessary for the assailants to number 2,000 only to carry the position. But this is a fallacy, because 2,000 men offer a better mark than 1,000, and 3,000 still better; so that the loss would be much greater in proportion. To fill up this loss, and render it harmless, therefore, a much larger number than 2,000 men would have to be detailed off to carry the position held by 1,000. Four thousand, at least, would be necessary—and perhaps even 5,000. Likely enough, 2,500 would fall, as against the 1,000 assailed; but if, as we have shown, 415 of the defenders cost 990 of the assailants, the bargain is a fair one. But then 1,000 men would never show the same front to 5,000 as they would to 1,000; so that the loss on 5,000 men would, probably, be far less than the loss upon 1,000.

This view, however, did not recommend itself to General Kriloff; and whilst he was frittering his men away, Skobeloff was preparing the ground for the attack on his side.

At four o'clock he brought down twenty pieces of artillery to the spur of the ridge overlooking Plevna. To not more than 1,000 yards distant from the redoubt he advanced his artillery, determined to make a desperate effort to capture the redoubt in front of him. This was a double redoubt in the bend of the Lovatz road, down near Plevna. He had advanced his troops down the slope of the mountain to within easy range. As the Turks immediately opened fire upon him from the redoubt, he returned the fire with steadiness and precision, putting his men under cover as much as possible, his cannon pouring a steady stream of shell and canister into the redoubt as well. In fact, he worked his cannon so much that several pieces were spoiled. He had determined to risk everything to capture this redoubt; and if Plevna were not taken, it would not be his fault. For three hours he kept up this fire; and just after Kriloff's second repulse, the Turkish fire having somewhat relaxed, dominated by the Russian, he thought the moment had come for making the assault.

He had four regiments of the line, and four battalions of sharpshooters. Still keeping up his murderous fire, he formed, under its cover, two regiments in the little hollow at the foot of the low hill on which was built the redoubt, together with two battalions of sharpshooters, not more than 1,200 yards from the scarp. Then placing himself in the best position for watching the result, he ceased fire and ordered the advance. He ordered the assaulting party not to fire, and they rushed forward with their guns on their shoulders, with music playing and banners flying, and disappeared in the fog and smoke. The advancing column was indistinctly seen—a dark mass in the fog and smoke. Feeling, as it were, every throb of the battle, Skobeloff saw this line begin to waver and hesitate. Upon the instant he hurled forward a rival regiment to support, and again watched the result. This new force carried the mass farther on with its momentum, but the Turkish redoubt flamed and smoked, and poured forth such a torrent of bullets that the line was again shaken. Skobeloff stood in this shower of balls unhurt. All his escort were killed or wounded, even to his little Kirghiz servant, who received a bullet in the shoulder. Again he saw the line hesitate and waver, and he flung his fourth and last regiment, the Libansky, on the glacis. Again this new wave carried the preceding ones forward, until they were almost on the scarp; but that deadly shower of bullets poured upon them; men dropped by hundreds, and the result still remained doubtful. The line once more wavered and hesitated. Not a moment was to be lost if the redoubt was to be carried.

Skobeloff had, however, only two battalions of sharpshooters left, the best in his detachments. Putting himself at the head of these, he dashed forward on horseback. He picked up the stragglers; he reached the wavering, fluctuating mass, and gave it the inspiration of his own courage and instruction. He picked the whole mass up, and carried it forward with a rush and a cheer. The whole redoubt was a mass of flame and smoke, from which screams, shouts, and cries of agony and defiance arose, with the deep-mouthed bellowing of the cannon, and, above all, the steady, awful crash of that deadly rifle-fire. Skobeloff's sword was cut in two in the middle. Then a moment later, when just on the point of leaping the ditch, horse and man rolled together to the ground, the horse dead or wounded, the rider untouched. Skobeloff sprang to his feet with a shout, then with a formidable savage yell the whole mass of men streamed over the ditch, over the scarp and counter-scarp, over the

parapet, and swept into the redoubt like a hurricane. Their bayonets made short work of the Turks still remaining. Then a joyous cheer told that the redoubt was captured, and that at last one of the defences of Plevna was in the hands of the Russians; but at what a sacrifice! In that short rush of a few hundred yards, 3,000 men had been left on the hill-side on the glacis, the scarp, and the ditch—one-fourth of his whole force. Skobeloff himself regarded such attacks upon such positions as almost criminal, and disapproved highly the whole plan of attack on Plevna; but he believed that if an attack was to be made, it could only be done in this manner, and that although the loss of men might be great, as we have just shown it must be, it was better that the loss should be incurred, and the victory won, than half the loss with a certainty of defeat.

But having gained the redoubt, the question was, how to hold it. It was dominated by the redoubt of Krishine on the left, exposed at the Plevna side to the fire of the sharpshooters, to the Turkish forces in the wood bordering on the Sophia road, and open to the fire of the intrenched camp. There was a cross-fire coming from three different points. At daylight next morning, September 12th, the Turks opened fire from all sides. The distance from the redoubt at Krishine had, of course, been accurately measured, and the guns dropped shells into the redoubt with the utmost precision on the exposed sides. The back of the redoubt was a solid rock, on which it was impossible to erect a parapet. All the earth had been used for the construction of the parapets on the other side. It was evident that the position was untenable unless the intrenched camp on the other side of the Plevna and Krishine redoubt could be taken. Skobeloff renewed his demand for reinforcements made the evening before. Although his losses had been great, the spirit of his troops was so good that, with another regiment, he was willing to undertake to capture the Krishine redoubt and the intrenched camp, or he would undertake to hold the positions until something could be attempted in some other quarter. Could one or two more positions be carried during the next day, say the Krishine redoubt and one intrenched camp on the same ridge as the Grivitza redoubt, the fall of Plevna might be considered certain. But at sunrise the Turks began an attack upon the captured redoubt, and the storm of battle again raged with fury there, while all was quiet everywhere else. The desperate attack of the Turks was repulsed. Another attack was made and another repulse; and this continued all day long, until the Turks had attacked and been beaten five successive times.

The Russian losses were becoming fearful. General Skobeloff had lost 2,000 men in attacking the redoubt. By the afternoon he had lost 3,000 more in holding it, while his battalions shrivelled up and shrank away as if by magic. One battalion of sharpshooters had been reduced to 160 men, and one company which had been 150 to forty. An immense proportion of officers were killed or wounded. Only one commander of a regiment was alive; scarcely a head of a battalion was left. Two officers of the staff were killed, one of whom was Verastchagine, brother of the great artist. Another brother was wounded. General Dobrovolsky, commander of sharpshooters, was killed. One officer was blown to pieces by the explosion of a caisson. Captain Kurapatkin, chief of the staff, standing beside this officer, had his hair singed, and suffered a severe contusion. Only General Skobeloff himself remained untouched. He seemed to bear a charmed life. He visited the redoubt three or four times during the day, encouraging the soldiers—telling them help would soon arrive; Plevna would soon be taken; victory would soon crown their efforts; telling them it was the final decisive blow struck for their country; for the honour and glory of the Russian arms; and they always replied with the same cheery shouts, while their numbers were dwindling away by hundreds. He again and again sent for reinforcements, and again and again informed the commander-in-chief that the position was untenable. The afternoon wore away and no reinforcements came.

General Levitzki, however, formally refused reinforcements, either because he thought the position, in spite of General Skobeloff's representations, was tenable, or because he had no reinforcements to give. General Kriloff, on his own responsibility, sent the remnant of a regiment which had attacked the redoubt; but of the 2,500 there were barely 1,000 left, so it was utterly incapable of going into action that day; and even this regiment arrived too late. General Skobeloff had left the redoubt at four o'clock to go to his tent on a woody hill opposite.

He had been there scarcely an hour when he was informed that the Turks were again attacking the right flank on the Lovatz road, immediately above Plevna. He galloped forward to see, and was met by an orderly with the news that the Turks were also attacking the redoubt a sixth time. He dashed forward towards the redoubt, in hopes of reaching it in time, but was met by a stream of his own men flying back. They were exhausted by forty-eight hours' incessant fighting, and were worn out, hungry, and dying of thirst and fatigue. Owing to the inactivity of the Russians during the day, the Turks had been enabled to collect an overwhelming force, which had made one last desperate effort, and had succeeded in driving Skobeloff's force out. One bastion was held to the last by a young officer with a handful of men. They refused to fly, and were slaughtered to the last man.

This temporary success of Skobeloff's, which cost him three-quarters of his forces, was all that the Russians had to show for their endeavours on the extreme left. In the centre, Kriloff had been less fortunate in point of success, and but little less unfortunate in his losses. The great attack had been signally repulsed along the whole Russian line, at an immense loss.

The only enduring success, purchased at a similar cost, had been obtained by the Roumanians, assisted by the Russians, who carried the formidable Grivitza redoubt in the evening.

At half-past two P.M. the attack was made by the Roumanians, but, by some mistake, the Russians arrived half-an-hour too late. The Roumanians attacked from the east and south-east, the Russians from the south and south-west by a line of skirmishers, with men carrying scaling-ladders, gabions, and fascines among them. The latter had their rifles slung on their backs, and were ordered in no case to fire, but merely to run forward, fill up the ditch, and place their ladders behind. Then followed the second line, in company column formation for the attack, followed by the third line to support the assault.

The Turkish fire directed against the assailants was incessant, though it did not do so much damage as might have been expected, owing to the assailants being more or less under cover of the parapets. But in spite of this the assault was repulsed, and the storming party all fell back except two companies of infantry, which had found cover and kept up a brisk fire against the redoubt.

At half-past five the attack was renewed by a battalion of the Roumanian militia, followed by two Russian battalions of the 17th and 18th regiments. The redoubt was then carried, and the Turks withdrew to another redoubt in the rear of the captured one, whence they poured such a withering fire into the Russo-Roumanian party, that before reinforcements could arrive they were able to return to the attack, and drove the victors out of their newly conquered positions.

Meantime, however, the Russian reinforcements had arrived, together with three battalions of Roumanians. Then followed a third assault, and the work was finally captured at seven P.M. Four guns and a standard were the trophies of the feat of arms. More than once during the night did the Turks advance with shouts of "Allah!" but no serious attack was made, and in the morning the Turks in Plevna saw the flag-staff defiantly exposing the Roumanian flag in the hitherto dreaded Grivitza redoubt. Thus the capture of this redoubt was the only result of the great assault of September 11th, which cost the Russo-Roumanian forces no less than 14,000 men. And even this success was of no value, for the Grivitza redoubt was commanded by the Plevnitza redoubt in its rear, whence an increasing fire was kept up, against which, however, the Roumanian garrison held its ground to the last.

But, like Loris Melikoff, the Russian commanders in Bulgaria knew how to derive service from their experiences.

The success of the Roumanians, or let us say, the success of the operations at Grivitza, showed them the proper and only way to capture Plevna. They had worked up to the redoubt by sap; and by sap and starvation, Plevna, they at last saw, could only be taken. Plevna, they at last became convinced, had been turned into a vast fortress, against which they would have to conduct operations in the same way that the allies proceeded against Sebastopol, or the Germans against Paris.

And in these circumstances it is not surprising that the Russians should think of the veteran general who had rendered them such services twenty years before—of General Todleben. His advice was plain, simple, and to the point. It was to invest Plevna

with a series of earthworks and redoubts, and cut off Osman Pasha from his communication with Sophia and Widdin. Instead of going to Plevna to attack Osman Pasha, the Russians were to make an outer Plevna of their own, and force Osman Pasha to attack them. This advice was not heroic, but it was sensible; and having due regard to the probable course of future events, it was certain of success.

This was so clear, that every one, except Osman Pasha, foresaw the end. Or, as it may not be fair to hold Osman responsible, we may say everybody except the authorities at the Porte.

As soon as it became apparent that the Russians had changed their plan of action —which speedily became apparent to all the world—Osman Pasha should have changed his, and have evacuated Plevna, which had done all the damage to the Russians which lay in its power. What Osman Pasha might have done is of course, more or less, barren speculation. But it is conceivable that, having a small garrison in Plevna, he might have withdrawn all the forces in Western Bulgaria with him across the Balkans, and, uniting with Mehemed Ali, have offered a determined front to the Russians on the Lom, and taking the offensive from Kezanlik to Rustzuk, at any rate have succeeded in forcing the Russians further back from the basis.

However, Osman Pasha did nothing of the sort, and remained in Plevna to be smoked out like a badger out of his hole. The Russian errors before Plevna lasted from June 11th to September 11th. The Turkish errors in Plevna began on September 11th, and continued to the bitter end. Grivitza was the turning-point for both.

But if Plevna was the stone wall against which the Russians ran their heads in vain, the Schipka Pass was equally the stumbling-block of the Turks. Here the endeavours of Suleiman Pasha still remained barren of results, although Fort St. Nicholas, the high rock frowning upon the mouth of the pass, which, to the Czar and Sultan, was of equal importance, had an exceedingly narrow escape of changing owners on the 17th of September. At one time, indeed, soon after the attack commenced, which was shortly before daybreak ("the darkest hour before the dawn" being well chosen as best for all night attacks), it was fully believed that it had fallen. Had the attacking force been supported by the efforts of those upon whom devolved the duty of co-operation, all might have been well with the Turks, and the standard of the Prophet have again assumed its place in the entire range of forts, forming so insuperable an obstacle to the capture of the celebrated pass. Suleiman Pasha had waited until he had succeeded in forming as handy an army as any of his brother generals could boast of; and, from all that can be gathered, it was no fault of his that the plan he had formed was not crowned with success. The causes have not even yet been fully ascertained; but there can be no doubt it was in no way his intention to dream of capturing the Russian positions by a direct attack upon the principal one of them. A threatening demonstration on some or one of the chain of forts in the rear of Fort St. Nicholas, and parallel with the main road through the pass, might stand a very fair chance of success; and this would appear to have been intended on the 17th of September. The troops told-off to commence the attack (nearly 3,000 in number), did their duty admirably, and succeeded in obtaining a firm foothold upon the rocky fort, a considerable portion of which soon fell into their possession. Exposed for hour after hour to a galling fire on their front and on both flanks, it is marvellous how they stood their ground so long; seeing, with their then advantage in point of numbers over the enemy in their immediate front, that they could not, unless a diversion were made in their behalf, hope to maintain their ground even if the entire fort fell into their possession. Upon whose shoulders the blame rests (and certainly Suleiman Pasha himself ought to be freed from it), is not an easy matter to ascertain. The only reason which can be assigned for the failure is, that the points chosen by the right and left attacks were found to be too strong; still, to capture them was one matter, but to make an important auxiliary movement was a far easier one. Very feeble flank attempts were made by the generals to whom the duty was assigned; and scarcely credible accounts were bruited about of the inefficiency, and even absence altogether from the fight, of the officers with these troops. The action lasted until nearly mid-day, when the unsupported troops in the centre, having no hope of co-operat on from the east—for instance, through the Travna Pass—or from the west, and having actually seen a large body of the enemy rapidly coming up to attack

them, were very properly ordered to retire. Disappointed and galled as they were, it was not to be wondered at that they fled in disorder down the side of the steep rock which it had cost them so much to gain. And great was Suleiman Pasha's good fortune that the fear occasioned by their flight did not communicate to the rest of his army. A useless sacrifice of life and limb was alone the result of the day's work. About 1,000 were killed, wounded, and missing; and there was scant hope of the Turks finding the latter taken prisoners, the bayonet having been actively employed during the retreat. Still, after a defeat, the next thing naturally to be expected is a panic among the troops to whom the fortune of war has been unfavourable. Such was the case on the night following the attack, when, from some unknown cause—possibly owing to the soughing of the wind, which had risen high as the sun went down, and predisposed the nerves of the pickets to believe every crackling branch a Russian footstep—the alarm was given, and the greatest excitement prevailed amongst the horde of irregulars who formed the rear in advance and the van in retreat of Suleiman Pasha's numerous army. They cared not to wait until the cause could be ascertained. The fact of the alarm being given was enough, and the Russians might be on their heels. At every step as they rushed pell-mell down, generally laden with the booty they had succeeded in plundering on the march, they added to the confusion, especially amongst the swarm of camp-followers and the great numbers of Bulgarian peasants, who were enforcedly employed in the transport service. It was not for more than an hour after the panic had arisen that any signs of its being allayed could be observed, though the admirable conduct of the regular troops in calmly taking up their assigned positions, should have put to the blush even such poltroons as those who had been the first to fly. A little reflection might soon have convinced the most chicken-hearted of Bashi-Bazouks, with his waist stuck full of an armoury of pistols and daggers, that something more than a few strong shots would herald the Russian advance. He did not, however, give himself the time for thinking, but joined his comrades in the rush to the rear, till he discovered himself to be alone and without a following even of the class who are to be found with all armies in the field. Thus more than a month had elapsed since Suleiman Pasha occupied the heights which gave him such a powerful advantage over the Russians, who were cooped up in the rock and behind the earthworks which lay across the pass, and yet nothing had been effected towards the capture of what had become a veritable stronghold. His telegrams had announced the closing of every inlet of the besieged, with the exception of the main road from Gabrova; and why this was not attempted to be blocked whilst a sufficient portion of the army kept the garrison at bay, was by no means apparent.

As it was, Suleiman Pasha lost, between August 20th and September 20th, over 10,000 men, without reaping the least advantage beyond prolonging the struggle.

To sum up the state of affairs after the repulse of the third attack upon Plevna, the campaign on both sides may be said to have resolved itself into three sieges. There was the siege of Plevna in the west; the siege of the Quadrilateral in the east by the Russians; and the siege of the Schipka Pass by the Turks.

Henceforth, operations were confined to the closer investment of their positions on the one side, and attempts to cut the communications of the besieged on both sides, whether at Plevna, in the Quadrilateral, or at Schipka.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE INVESTMENT OF PLEVNA.

As soon as the Russians had determined formally to invest Plevna, and reduce it as they would a fortress, General Kriloff was placed in command of the cavalry, and sent to the rear of Plevna on the Sophia road, for the purpose of cutting off the Turkish

supplies. As the Turks had few cavalry, and that not good, General Kriloff should have had it all his own way. The country was open, well adapted for cavalry movements, and an active leader with cavalry and horse artillery should have been able to make the passage of convoys difficult. As the Turks had about 50,000 men in the Plevna position, the question of supplies was an urgent one with them, both for provisions and munitions; and the magazines all required replenishing.

News, however, was received at Russian head-quarters that more Turkish forces were coming from Sophia; but it was hoped that Kriloff would meet and drive them back. But soon the Russians were surprised to hear of Hifzi Pasha's arrival at Plevna with a small escort. It was supposed that he avoided Kriloff by taking the by-ways; General Kriloff himself being somewhere between Lukovatz and Teliche.

But in spite of General Kriloff's proximity, the Turks succeeded in passing two convoys into Plevna under his very nose. The first was a convoy of about 2,000 waggons, accompanied by reinforcements for Plevna, consisting of ten tabors of infantry, one battery of artillery, and three regiments of cavalry.

General Kriloff did not discover the presence of these convoys until they had arrived at Teliche, where he went to attack them. He found them already intrenched, with guns in position, and mounted in a battery. An artillery fight ensued, which lasted all day, with no result, Kriloff being unable, of course, to attack so large a force of infantry with his cavalry. That night he retired to the previous position he occupied at Dubnik, on the Sophia road, and nearer Plevna. Next day the Turks advanced upon Dubnik, and attacked him in turn. Another artillery fight ensued, which lasted all day. Towards evening, however, two columns of infantry came out of Plevna, and taking Kriloff in the rear, obliged him to withdraw, thus leaving the road open for the passage of the reinforcements and convoy. He retired upon Trstenik, while General Lascaroff, who had only then succeeded in forming a junction with Kriloff, was obliged to retreat further back across the Lovatz road to Bogot. The Turks, therefore, passed the convoy without the loss of a single waggon.

The whole affair was very feebly managed, partly because General Kriloff's instructions were unsuited to the force under his command. He was told to hold the Sophia road at Dubnik, a thing which was manifestly impossible against infantry, especially at a point so near Plevna, where he could be attacked in the rear. A general in command of such detachments should have no definite instructions except to do as much harm as possible to the enemy, choosing his own time and place. Convoys should have been attacked forty or fifty miles beyond Plevna, and the attack kept up if necessary until under the very guns of the place. In a running fight of this kind, extending over forty or fifty miles, even with a convoy protected by infantry, the greater part of the carriages would be smashed by the artillery, the draught horses and oxen killed, and the drivers frightened away. As the Turks had little cavalry, and that only of the very poorest kind, the Russian cavalry could have scoured the whole district between Plevna, Widdin, the Danube, and the Balkans with impunity, the country being so open that there was not the slightest danger of being cut off by infantry. But General Kriloff was not a cavalry man at all, and he handled cavalry as if it were infantry, was afraid of being cut off, and thought he must keep his communications open, forgetting that cavalry in a perfectly open country can only be cut off by cavalry, of which the Turks had none worth speaking of. General Kriloff, instead of retiring upon Trstenik "to keep his communications open," should, on the contrary, have cut loose from the Roumanian right wing, and advanced on the Sophia road to the Balkans with half his forces to meet the next convoy, while the other half might have moved in the direction of Widdin to meet supplies coming from there.

Upon retiring, Kriloff left two regiments of Cossacks at Etropol to watch the Sophia road, and another convoy slipped through the fingers of this detachment on September 24th. But Etropol was too far from the Sophia road, in the first place; and, secondly, the Russians did not place outposts sufficiently advanced to give warning in time. This convoy, besides, did not come along the Sophia road, but on another alongside it, which the Russians had not discovered. By the time they had received information of its coming, and had reached the scene of action, the convoy was almost under the guns of a protected bridge over the Vid.

But had they charged even then, they might have captured the greater part of the convoy, as it was only protected by cavalry that ran away. They waited, however, several minutes for the artillery to come up, and then the officer in charge lost about fifteen minutes in writing a report to General Kriloff, to say that he meant to attack. By that time the convoy, for the most part, had got safely over the Vid, either by the bridge or by a ford, so that the report was superfluous. The Russians threw a few shells at them, to which the guns protecting the bridge instantly answered. Then, as it was quite dark, they retired to Etropol, the whole spoil being one pair of oxen.

It was perfectly clear that, as long as Osman Pasha had the back-door open, it was no good for the Russians to sit down before the front door and side entrances. It was absolutely necessary to close the ring, and extend the sides of the horseshoe across the river Vid, to the west of the beleaguered place.

Meanwhile the Turks had been fortifying the road from Orkhanieh to Plevna, and had occupied a strong position at Gorni Dubnik, half-way between the rivers Vid and Isker. Here they had erected a large redoubt, flanked by two smaller ones—the whole held by twelve battalions. Further towards the Isker the Turks had another strong position at Teliche, and a third between Gorni Dubnik and Plevna, at Dolni, or Lower Dubnik. Practically, these positions formed part of the Plevna defences, for without them Plevna could not be held. Once in the hands of the Russians, Chebket Pasha, who was commanding the army of supply for Osman Pasha, could no longer throw his convoys and reinforcements into Plevna.

It was therefore absolutely necessary for these positions to be in the power of the Russians. Till then the investment could not be completed; and thus General Gourko—Kriloff having amply demonstrated his incapacity — was entrusted with the task, and the command of what was called the West Army. He at once made a series of demonstrations against all these positions. On October 24th, the Russians round Plevna opened a furious cannonade, in order to mask what was going on to the west, and to prevent Osman Pasha making any sortie against General Gourko. This general, after marching in force against Teliche, suddenly wheeled round, leaving a division of the guards to attack Teliche, whilst he himself fell upon Gorni Dubnik with twenty-four battalions of infantry, one regiment of cavalry, and sixty guns. The attack lasted from six in the morning till six at night, when the Turks, utterly exhausted, hoisted the white flag after five of their battalions had escaped to Plevna. The remnants of the remaining seven surrendered. The guards at Teliche were not equally successful, and were signally repulsed; but on October 29th, Gourko having reinforced the assailants, Teliche also fell. Thence General Gourko wheeled back again upon Dolni Dubnik with a division and a-half and sixty-four guns, before which the Turkish garrison of 5,000 men at once retreated into Plevna during the night before the attack had commenced.

With this operation the line of investment round Plevna was completed by a cordon of infantry and artillery, besides the army of the west under Gourko pushing on towards Sophia, and preparing to cross the Balkans far to the west of the force checking the Russians at Schipka.

From Grivitza round to the Lovatz road the line was just where it was at the moment of giving the assault at the last attack on Plevna. The artillery occupied the ridge before Radisevo, with the guns extended down the line towards the Lovatz road to not more than a mile from Plevna. On the Lovatz road General Skobeloff was not so far advanced as he was at the time he made his assault. The Turks, taking advantage of the moment after the battle when the Russians had withdrawn, and warned that their lines were not invulnerable in this direction, constructed four new redoubts; so that Skobeloff, instead of three redoubts, had seven before him. When Skobeloff first attacked here, when Krüdener was defeated, he found no defences at all, and he even entered Plevna, but with only one battalion. As it was, his line had been removed to the front of a village called Brestovetz, on a cross-road to Lovatz. From here the line extended to the Vid. It then crossed the Sophia road about a mile from the bridge over the Vid. From here it passed parallel to the river until just below Opanes, where it again crossed the Vid, and curved round to the Grivitza redoubt, about a mile in front of Grivitza. The Russian line of investment was then thirty miles long. The

Turkish position measured from the Grivitza redoubt to the bridge over the Vid, eight miles; from the Krishine redoubt to the Bukova redoubt was about five miles. The line was of an irregular, oval shape, with a circumference of about twenty miles.

With the force the Russians had in the beginning of November (120,000 men), they were able to fill two lines of continuous trenches around the whole line of investment as full as it was convenient for men to lie in trenches. This was, however, one weak point in the investing lines which it was necessary to strengthen. This was the position in front of Brestovetz.

After the battle of Plevna it was thought unsafe for Skobeloff to remain in his old positions on the Lovatz main road, and he was ordered to fall back on Tucenitza, completely abandoning the Lovatz road, and placing an impassable ravine, which runs parallel to the road about a quarter of a mile distant from it, between him and the Turks. When he again advanced to occupy his old positions, he found, as above stated, that the Turks had considerably advanced theirs, and had constructed four new redoubts. He succeeded, however, in occupying Brestovetz, on the left of the road, and in constructing a redoubt in front and on the left of the village, and the line of trenches across the road to the ravine already mentioned. The Brestovetz redoubt was just opposite the Turkish Krishine redoubt, from which it was distant about 1,300 yards. But this Brestovetz redoubt formed a kind of angle projecting into the Turkish lines, and was somewhat exposed and dangerous. It became necessary to strengthen it, in consequence of the continual casualties. This could be done by seizing the small wooded hill immediately in front of the right wing between the Lovatz road and the ravine already spoken of.

It was most unfortunate for the Russians that these positions were ever abandoned, for they were about as high as the Krishine redoubt; they completely commanded Plevna; and the two redoubts captured by Skobeloff in the last affair, and fortified, would have rendered the Russian positions here much stronger than they could afterwards be made. The Turks had since then constructed a strong redoubt on the summit of the hill between the Krishine redoubt and the Lovatz road, the very spot where Skobeloff planted two batteries during the last affair. It was not the hill with the redoubt which Skobeloff resolved to capture, but one between the Lovatz road and the ravine. It was defended by trenches, and held by about fourteen tabors, perhaps 7,000 men, though Todleben believed there were a great many more, as the position was most important. The combined movement was arranged with General Gourko, who was to open fire all along the line, and likewise advance and occupy the position in front of him towards the bridge over the Vid, in order to shorten his line likewise.

The attack was fixed for five o'clock. By that time it was so dark that nothing could be seen more than five feet off. Skobeloff reviewed his troops that were destined for the attack—the battalion of sharpshooters. He then got down from his horse, went about among the men, talked to them, told them, especially the under-officers, just what they were to do, and finished by informing them he would lead the assault in person. This regiment was one which attacked and carried these same heights during the last affair of Plevna, on the second day of the bombardment. The regiment, having taken these heights, slipped out of the hands of its officers, and, as will be remembered, pursued the Turks to the foot of the glacis of the redoubt afterwards captured by Skobeloff, with the result that two-thirds of the regiment were destroyed. It was the recollection of this event that decided Skobeloff to lead the attack himself. It was important that the men should be stopped at the right moment and at the right place, and that the intrenchments which he intended to throw up should be properly laid, as a little mistake easily made might end disastrously. It was not, therefore, mere bravado which made him decide to lead the assault himself.

At half-past four he mounted his horse, put himself at the head of his troops, and disappeared in the fog. At five o'clock the fog began to turn dark, showing the approach of night. The Turks must have thought there would be little call for further vigilance that day. On the approach of darkness the roar of eighty guns was heard that vomited splashes of flame upon the murky fog, and then were silent. Then came the scream of eighty shells seeking their destination in the obscurity. Then there was the crash of the infantry fire along the whole line, except on the point of the attack, for it was Skobeloff's design to use the fog for cover, and take the Turks by

surprise. The infantry fire rolled along in front of Brestovetz, and soon the bullets began singing overhead, telling that the Turks were replying; but there was little firing on the right wing, where the attack was to take place. Finally, after about a quarter of an hour, there were two or three volleys in this direction, followed by a Russian shout, and the position was carried.

As it turned out, the Turks were surprised, and did not discover the approach of the Russians until they were within 100 yards. By the time they had seized their arms and fired two rounds, the Russians were on them with the bayonet, and it was all over. In a moment those who did not fly were bayoneted. The attack was led by two companies of sharpshooters, followed closely by the 9th battalion and the Vladimirski regiment. Every man was provided with a shovel, and immediately began making trenches, as indicated by Skobeloff. In a very few minutes they were under cover from a heavy but ill-directed fire, poured into them from the next hill, not distant more than 250 yards. Skobeloff stayed until about ten o'clock, when he thought the men had made the place secure, and returned to Brestovetz to supper. He had scarcely washed when the fire broke out again with fury on the right flank. Skobeloff mounted again, disappeared in the darkness and fog, and did not return till morning. He found the Turks making a desperate attempt to recapture the position, and arrived on the ground in the nick of time, as some confusion had ensued; for the reserves, who lost their way in the fog, coming in the wrong direction, got fired into from their own side. There was also a report that Skobeloff was killed, which discouraged the troops. He arrived in the middle of the Turkish assault, one fellow having leaped into the trench with the cry of "Allah!" where he was bayoneted. The attack was repulsed; but the Turks made a second and third one, and each time were driven back with ease.

With this successful movement of General Skobeloff's, the circle of investment was now drawn as close as could be without actually besieging the Turkish positions. Nevertheless, in only two places, at the Grivitza redoubt and on Skobeloff's position, were the combatants within speaking distance of each other. There was very little of artillery fire during this period; and Todleben, having abandoned his plan of concentrated volley-firing upon specified points, only put it in practice once in forty-eight hours.

The Russian lines were completely connected by a telegraph encircling the place, so that they could concentrate immediately upon any point of the circle that should be attacked. This was further facilitated by the peculiarity of the ground, which enabled the Russians to see every part of the Turkish positions from some point in the Russian lines. Any concentration of the Turkish troops could therefore be seen, and the numbers estimated, unless such concentration were to be made at night. Even then the exact numbers could be seen at daylight as soon as the movement began; so that it was impossible for Osman Pasha to gain time by making feints. If he wanted to break through, he would simply have to gather his troops together during the night, and throw them in a mass upon some point of the Russian lines at daybreak, and get through. The result could hardly be less than disastrous; though less so, perhaps, than capitulation.

Much speculation was indulged in as to the direction in which Osman Pasha would try to break through. It seemed scarcely likely that he would attempt it by the Widdin road, where, although the Russian line was weakest, he would be certainly thrown back upon the Danube, and taken in flank besides, if necessary, by the Servians and Roumanians, still at Kalafat and on the Danube.

In point of fact, Osman Pasha had lost all chance of escaping from Plevna as soon as General Gourko had occupied Teliche and the two Dubniks, and the infantry had closed round to the west of Plevna. Unless the siege of Plevna could be raised by an army marching to its succour, it was doomed to fall, and Osman Pasha and his army predestined to surrender.

But where was external help to come from? As will be remembered, the Turkish commanders were incapable, or incapacitated from making any simultaneous movement. After the second repulse of the Russians by Osman Pasha on July 31st, he quietly sat down and waited for "something to turn up." Then Suleiman Pasha executed his attack on the Schipka, August 23rd. This was repulsed, and then Suleiman Pasha sat down and waited for something else to turn up. Thereupon Mehemed Ali also made a series of attacks along the line during the days from August 27th to

August 30th; and, having gained a few yards of ground, he also sat down and waited for something more to turn up. Hereupon Osman Pasha suddenly awoke, and, finding that nothing had turned up, resolved to try and turn it up himself, and made his unsuccessful sortie on August 31st. This alarmed Suleiman Pasha, and he, too, went forth to find the will-o'-the-wisp of something to turn up, and made his second futile attempt on Fort St. Nicholas September 17th. This equally alarmed Mehemed Ali, who suddenly discovered that there was nothing to turn up on the Lom lines, and returned to his old positions, much to the astonishment of the Russians and the disgust of the Seraskeriat, which marked its displeasure by recalling him and appointing Suleiman Pasha to his place, in hopes that he, at least, would try and do something to break through the Czarevitch's lines, and thus assist Osman Pasha. But neither Suleiman Pasha nor Mehemed Ali could do or have done more than they did with the means at their command. Thus Mehemed Ali insisted, time after time, on the absolute necessity of a thoroughly well-organised telegraph service in the field, and connecting the head-quarters of the different armies amongst each other, as well as with Constantinople. Still, in spite of all his endeavours, the Seraskeriat would not consent to this, being afraid that, if permitted, it would place too much power in the hands of the commanders, who might be tempted, by the facility of communications, to concert measures and plan attacks without the previous permission of the authorities at Constantinople. Then, besides this great drawback, there was the lax manner in which even the existing telegraph service was carried out. There was not only an insufficient number of clerks, but even they were, with very few exceptions, incompetent to do their work with the exactitude and promptitude requisite. This was perfectly well known to the authorities; but so great was their antipathy and distrust of foreign assistance, that they preferred exposing their conntry to real danger, rather than run an imaginary risk. Battling continually and energetically against such abuses and prejudices, it is not surprising that Mehemed Ali accomplished so little, but that he accomplished so much, and, by a judicious display of the forces and means at his command, to impress the Russsians with an idea of power which he himself was far from possessing.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CLEARING BULGARIA.

After having been closely invested, and all the precautions taken to prevent Osman Pasha from effecting his retreat and cutting his way out through the Russian lines, the bombardment of Plevna recommenced all round on November 22nd, the Turks replying energetically to their enemy's fire. Already, on November 12th, the Russians considered the position of Osman Pasha quite hopeless, and on that day summoned him to surrender. Though this was denied at the time, good authorities still contend that it was the case. But at any rate, with the capture of the Montule Verde—or Green Hill—by Skobeloff, Osman Pasha's chances of escape were reduced to a minimum. And these chances were still further reduced to zero when the Roumanians crossed the Danube and captured Rahova and Dzibra Palanka, driving the weakened garrisons into Widdin, and occupying the main road from Lom Palanka to Sophia, which cut through Osman Pasha's line of retreat.

If Osman Pasha had seized the opportunities he still had during the month of October, he might have saved his army of 40,000 to 50,000 men. But from whatever cause—whether because of his orders from Constantinople, or because he wanted to gain time by engaging and holding fast an army of over 100,000 men, in order to allow the Porte to form a fresh army south of the Balkans—he omitted to do this, and had no further chance of forcing the enemy's lines, unless he heard the thunder of Mehemed Ali's artillery coming to the rescue

whilst Fazli Pasha on the Lom line, and Raouf Pasha at the Schipka, engaged the troops of the Czarevitch and General Radetzki. That things were rapidly approaching a crisis was apparent from the arrangements the Turkish commanders were making at the last moment. Mehemed Ali was still at Sophia, but had sent forward an advance column, which reoccupied Berkovtcha. Raouf Pasha opened a heavy fire on the Russian lines in the Schipka Pass; and Suleiman, having made all the preparations he could, and set the troops going, had returned to his command in the Quadrilateral.

Here, on November 19th, a determined attack was made by the Turks, fourteen battalions strong, under the command of Salem and Dilaver Pashas, to force the Russian positions extending from Pirgos to Trstenik, along the high-road from Rustzuk to Biela. The accounts of the action given by the Russians and the Turks differ, but it is easy to reconcile them. The Russians acknowledge that Pirgos was burned to the ground, and that the troops holding it had to retire to Metchka. On the other hand, the Russians stated that they threw the Turks across the Lom, and pursued them; and this is borne out by the Turkish statement that the Russians attacked Kadikoi, on the Rustzuk side of the Lom, but were repulsed.

The course of the action was as follows:—Salem Pasha advanced with his infantry from Lipnik, and crossing the Lom under cover of the guns of Sary Bair, fell upon Pirgos whilst the regular and Ciscassian cavalry, under Dilaver, advanced from Bazarbova and cut the lines between Trstenik and Metchka, thus enabling Ibrahim Pasha to carry the heights of Metchka until the whole of the 12th Russian division was launched against them, and forced them to retire back across the Lom, pursued in turn by the Russians as far as Kadikoi, where they at last effected a stand, and the Russians withdrew to their old positions. The attempt to break through the Russian lines was therefore a failure. Nor was the cannonade at the Schipka Pass productive of any result.

This was on November 19th. On the same day the news arrived in the Russian camp that Kars had fallen. Then there occurred one of those episodes so highly characteristic of military Christianity. A *Te Deum* was sung in the Tucenitza redoubt before Plevna, in the presence of the Czar, and the god of victories satisfied by full salvoes of shot and shell being hurled into the town. In the evening the victims were compensated for their wounds by a grand display of fireworks in honour of the event.

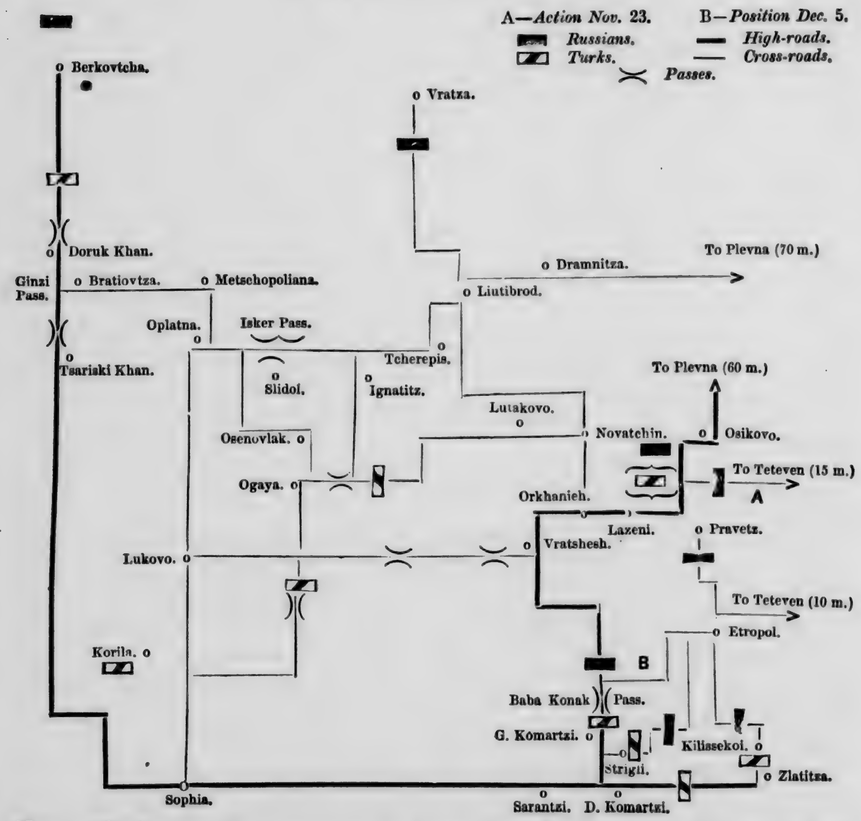
Meanwhile, pending the approaching doom of Plevna, the chief interest centred again round the operations of General Gourko. For the second time he crossed the Balkans to carry the war into Roumelia. He accomplished this operation in the same way as he executed his first march, and with much the same object. By almost unknown roads he secured the Hainkoi Pass, with the intention of turning the Schipka Pass. By equally difficult and scarcely known roads he secured the Etropol Pass, with the object of turning the Baba Konak Pass, and, after that, the Ginzi Pass. He failed in his intention at Schipka because he was not supported. But this time he had the assistance of General Schouvaloff, and a sufficient number of men to secure and hold the prizes he snatched away one after the other from the grasp of the Turks. Having secured the positions at Lazeni and Etropol, he at once continued his advance from Lazeni on Orkhanieh, and from Etropol by the cross-road leading to the northern entrance of the Baba Konak Pass. At the same time he advanced from Etropol by another path. This road—very little known, except to the Bulgarian herdsmen—branched off from the road leaving Etropol, and running to the northern entrance of the pass, curved round, *viâ* the village of Strigli, into the high-road south of the Baba Konak. And simultaneously he pushed forward along the road from Etropol to Zlatitza, and occupied the defiles leading to Kilissekoi and Zlatitza.

By this movement he turned two of the Turkish positions at the same time. Whilst the column advanced from Lazeni on Orkhanieh, the first column from Etropol was marching by the cross-road upon the northern entrance to the Baba Konak and to cut off the retreat of the Orkhanieh garrison, who, when attacked in front by the Lazeni column, and menaced in the flank by the Etropol column, had nothing left but to retreat across the Baba Konak and unite with the bulk of the forces south of Baba Konak, and concentrate between the villages of Gorni Komartzi, Strigli, and Dolni Komartzi. They were obliged to renounce any attempt at holding the pass itself, because of the existence of the road

leading from Etropol to Strigli, to which we have alluded, and could do no more than strongly intrench themselves in the angle formed by the junction of the high-roads from Orkhanieh and Zlatitza to Sophia and at Zlatitza itself. This movement also necessitated the abandonment of the positions at Lutakovo and Novatchin, and also at Liutibrod, the troops of which retired to the Ogaya Pass.

ning more or less parallel with each other, now over and along the heights, now in the valley, and more or less commanding each other. Kanitz made use of one of them, but his visit was too short to explore them all. At about four hours' march from Liutibrod, a path branched off southwards, west of Ignatitz, and debouched in the road from Novatchin and Lutakovo, just east of the Ogaya Pass, where the Turkish garri-

X—*The Ginzi and Baba Konak Passes.*



Now, referring to the accompanying sketch, which has been compiled from the Russian staff maps, the plans of General Gourko become singularly plain, and show to what an extent Sophia was threatened. At almost every turn the Turkish positions were outflanked. First of all, we find a path leading along the Isker, well known to the Bulgarian monks of the Tcherepis monastery. It was difficult but practicable, and splits up into a number of paths run-

sons from Lutakovo and Novatchin had taken up a position. Passing through the Isker Pass, the road, after this cross-path had been left behind, branched off westwards to Opletna, and southwards to Ogaya. From Opletna it ran almost due south to Lukovo and Sophia. From Ogaya, the cross-road curved round into this road, south-east of Korila, where the Turks had taken up a position with an advance guard on the road between Ogaya and Korila.

Now, still referring to sketch X, it will be seen that the Turks did not occupy any position on the Sophia-Opletna road. They, however, possessed one at the entrance of the Ginzi Pass on the road to Berkovtcha. But this pass was tapped, so to speak, in the very middle, by a path which curved round from Opletna and Metschopoliana. At the same time the Ogaya-Korila road was cut through by a road running from Vratshesh to Lukovo.

Along these roads the Russians pushed forward as the Turks retreated. They pierced through to the Isker Pass, where the Turks had occupied no position in any force. They advanced by the cross-road past Ignatitz, by the road from Novatchin, and by the road from Vratshesh, on the Turkish position at Ogaya. Thus the Ginzi Pass was threatened from Berkovtcha in front and by the Isker Pass column in the rear, whilst the Ogaya position was menaced from three sides likewise.

These columns, conducted by Generals Gourko and Rauch, were therefore carrying out a turning movement on the Ginzi Pass and Sophia, whilst General Schouvaloff was engaged in operating against the positions of Mehemed Ali at the southern debouchment of the Baba Konak Pass.

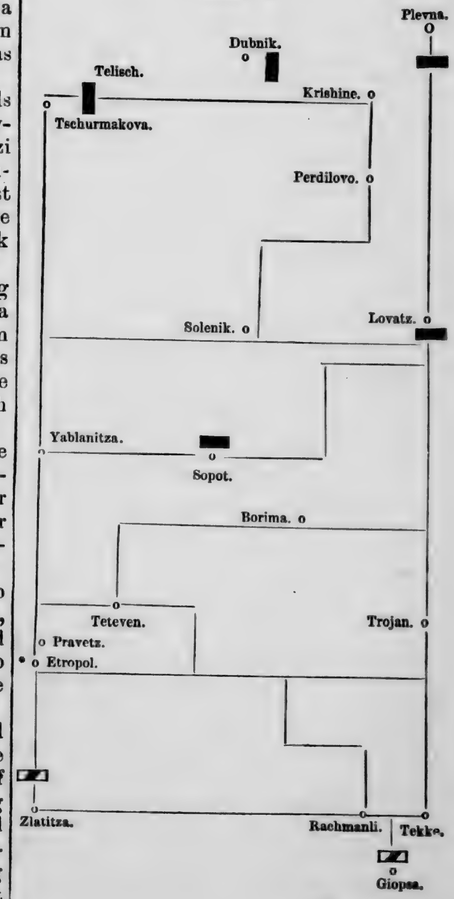
At this point there was also a turning movement in progress. Whilst the Baba Konak was threatened by the columns from Orkhanieh and Etropol, a third column was operating against Zlatitza, so as to gain the high-road to Sophia, and take the Turkish position in the flank at Dolni Komartzi.

With this general view before him, the reader will be able to understand the detailed operations of the Russians in their second passage of the Balkans, and their clearance of the Turkish forces from Bulgaria.

On November 16th, General Gourko started from Dolni Dubnik for Yablanitza, which he reached on November 18th, and immediate'y sent out *reconnaissances* to ascertain the strength of the Turks in the Sophia, Etropol, and Orkhanieh districts.

It soon appeared that the enemy had occupied very strong positions north of the village of Pravetz, four or five miles east of the Orkhanieh road. Here, before entering the valley of the Orkhanieh, it passed through a very narrow, crooked defile, between rugged mountains, whose sides along the road were so steep in most places, that a man unencumbered by arms, and not subjected to the fire of an enemy, would find it impossible to get up. To take such positions by an attack in front was clearly out of the question. It was absolutely necessary to turn them; and this General Gourko, with his experience of the previous passage of the Balkans, and knowledge of the strong and weak sides of the Turkish soldier, was all the more inclined to attempt. It was, however, no easy matter. A reference to skeleton sketch Y, however, will show by what roads General Gourko effected this operation, and also shows the roads by which Osman Pasha would have to effect his retreat if he succeeded in breaking out of Plevna.

Sketch Y.



The mountain paths, however, leading from Yablanitza, so far from being passable for artillery, as reported, were scarcely practicable for a man on horseback, and none but the hardiest riders with the surest-footed horses would think of climbing these steep, slippery paths without dismounting. Nevertheless, General Gourko resolved to make the attempt.

The Turkish positions were nearly all on the right side of the road. Although they had occupied the other side, they had constructed no redoubts, and dug no trenches there, judging correctly, that if they could hold the heights on the right side of the road, that would be quite sufficient to bar the passage. On this side they had constructed two small redoubts, encircled by mountains, every point commanding the defile with their formidable trenches. A glance at sketch X will show that the Sophia road at Pravetz turns abruptly west to Orkhanieh at right angles to its previous course. Just in this angle is a mountain ridge overlooking the road. This ridge the Turks had chosen for their positions; and it was by reaching and attacking the ridge from the southern side, that General Gourko determined to turn them. He accordingly despatched General Rauch, with the whole of the advanced guard, to execute this movement with the Simionowsky regiment of the guard, the first and second battalions of sharpshooters, one battery of horse artillery, and six squadrons of cavalry.

Rauch started from Yablanitza on the 21st, with orders to march all night, as the distance was only forty kilomètres by the map. It was expected he would arrive at noon next day, in time to attack. This was a grave miscalculation. Mountain roads cannot be measured on maps, or the distance should be estimated at twice or thrice that indicated, and the time required for a single horse to make it should be doubled or trebled for the march of an army encumbered with artillery. Rauch, instead of arriving on the 22nd at noon, only arrived on the evening of the 23rd. This, however, was the only miscalculation in the whole movement, and did not affect the result. His road was from Yablanitza to Vidrar, thence down the Mali or Little Isker to Kalugerovo, then up a little stream called the Pravetzka, to the rear of the ridge occupied by the Turks. The road was so difficult and so narrow in many places, that broad-track artillery carriage could only pass with one wheel over the side. They were only kept from tumbling over the precipices by the soldiers holding them by means of ropes passed round the wheels. The heavy munition waggons were worse still, and caused infinite trouble. Rauch, besides, found it impossible to march at night, owing to the dense fog which filled up the valleys nearly every night at that season of the year, and rendered travelling very dangerous, if not impossible.

Meantime, while Rauch was struggling on against these difficulties, General Gourko advanced to Osikovo (see sketch X), and waited for news of him with much anxiety before beginning demonstrations in front. His hope was to surprise the Turks, which could only be done by a rapid movement; but the day passed away, evening came, and with it word from Rauch that he had only got to Kalugerovo, still a long way from his expected destination. The attack would have to be given up for that day at least; but in the meantime General Gourko had not been idle. The Kuban Cossacks advanced along the road and drove the Turks from the hill in front of the main position on the right of the road. The Moscow regiment was sent to occupy the hills on the left of the road, opposite the Turkish positions, which they succeeded in doing with the loss of three or four men. One battery of horse artillery, and another of mountain howitzers, were also brought up and planted on the heights immediately overhanging the road opposite the Turkish works, and not more than one thousand yards distant; and another battery was planted to the right of the road, on the hill, at a distance of about two thousand yards from the nearest Turkish position. These were the only two batteries brought into action on the Russian side. They were put in position on the night of the 22nd, and opened on the Turks on the morning of the 23rd, when the fog cleared away.

The Turks answered but feebly as they had but two guns, and these were poorly served. They did not fire more than ten or fifteen times all day. These two batteries pounded away at the Turks. All day long sharpshooters kept up a lively fire, but there was no infantry attack.

At last, about four o'clock in the afternoon, Rauch's troops were suddenly perceived on the top of the high mountain and the other end of the ridge, on the range just where they were looked for, with the

Turks flying down the mountain side before them. Rauch had seized the key of the Turkish position with a loss of twenty-nine men. As this was the highest part of the ridge or range, it was impossible for the Turks to hold the positions attacked in the rear from the heights that commanded them. It was evident they were beaten, and only the approaching night and the fog prevented Rauch's troops from continuing their march along the ridge and attacking at once.

The Moscow regiment, on the left of the road, then began to descend the height into the valley near Pravetz, and the Turks on the heights on the other side of the road opened a spirited fire upon them; but as the object of the Russian movement was to turn the Turkish position from this side as well as the other, and as the plain was wide enough to get out of range of the Turkish fire, the Russians did not lose a man. They quietly occupied Pravetz, where they were likewise stopped by the fog and the darkness from joining Rauch and cutting off the Turkish retreat.

The Turks were thus surrounded on three sides. As was expected, they retreated upon Orkhanieh during the night, abandoning the whole position. They had enough men to protect their rear; but to judge by Rauch's easy victory, they did not fight as the Turks fought at Plevna, or the victory would have cost the Russians at least ten, or perhaps twenty times what it did cost them. The whole loss was only about sixty men killed and wounded.

If we were to judge of the victory by the loss of men it would be but an insignificant affair; but military events are not to be judged in this way. It was not exactly the passage of the Balkans that had been effected, as there was still a higher range before the Russians; nevertheless, there were several passes or places where a passage could be effected for making a turning movement, and the Turks had not troops to defend them all. It was only a question of time and weather; for these passes, though difficult, could be made passable if the weather permitted; and the weather still favoured the Russians, excepting the fog at night.

The Russians had thus gained the valley of Orkhanieh. Their advance guard was at Lazeni, between which and Orkhanieh the Turks had erected two redoubts. Detailing a force to watch these redoubts, General Gourko turned his attention to Etropol. The capture of this place was accomplished without loss, and by the same kind of movements, on a smaller scale, that gained the positions at Pravetz. The Turkish earthworks were constructed on the pointed mountains near the village; but there were left unoccupied the summits adjacent, which commanded the whole valley and the lower peaks, with the Turkish redoubts. To get possession of one of the highest mountains was the work of many hours for the Russians, who dragged up and planted cannon there by the aid of the Bulgarians, who brought their cattle along that were used to mountain work, and could climb where the Russian horses were helpless.

The first position was gained in a curious way. It was observed that the Turks did not stay in the earthwork, but, in perfect confidence that no one could climb the hill, left an outpost in the redoubt, and the main body remained in the camp back on the hill-side. Some volunteers started to climb the steep at four o'clock on the morning of the 23rd November, and reached the summit near the redoubt at half-past seven, carrying nothing but their rifles and ammunition. When they came within sight of the Turkish camp they were perceived by the Turks, who rushed immediately to occupy the redoubt. The Russians, comprehending at once the importance of first possession, strained every tired muscle to reach the coveted intrenchment before the enemy, and a curious race followed in dead earnest. But the Russians climbed the parapet and were inside just before the Turks arrived, and then the affair was settled in short order. The flanking movement first mentioned having been made, the Turkish force abandoned the town and the positions, and withdrew upon the Zlatitza Balkan to their fortifications between that place and Kilissekoi, leaving behind three Krupp guns. The next day the place was occupied by General Gourko, who transferred his quarters to it from Osikovo.

After the occupation of Pravetz, the Turks remained in force for two days at Orkhanieh and at Vratshesh, a village at the entrance of the pass, which they had fortified with a large and complete line of earthworks extending into the plain in front as far as Orkhanieh. When Etropol fell into General Gourko's hands, these defences of the entrance to the pass became immediately untenable, for Etropol lay within a dozen miles from the road behind Vrat-

shesh, and the Russians threatened to intercept the retreat from the latter place. Hence the Turks withdrew precipitately to the summit of the pass into their forts there. Thus, without anything more serious than skirmishes, General Gourko drove his enemy into their final positions, and proceeded to establish himself at once, parallel to his line of offence along the adjacent mountain tops. The commanding point of the Turkish position was the highest peak of the watershed, about three miles east of the summit of the pass, the largest redoubt occupying a point on the north-east. The line runs from here south-west to the highest point of the pass, just above the baiting station called Baba Konak, and was held by four earthworks. Between the road and the great redoubt and the two earthworks west of the pass, two ridges led up to the Turkish position from the north, and General Rauch established himself on the ridge to the east, while General Dondeville immediately occupied the other. Both joined their summits to the shoulders of the dominant peak; and even one part of this peak, the smaller of the three elevations which composed it, and which was debatable ground at the time of the attack on the earthwork, was seized by the Russians, and cannon planted there within half range of the great redoubt. General Dondeville occupied the line of heights parallel with the enemy's line, as far west as the precipitous descent, three kilomètres from the summit of the pass. Then the line turned north-west to the road, which it crossed to join that held by Count Schouvaloff on the opposite ridge. Several batteries of nine-pounders were placed in position along the Russian line and cannonaded the enemy's works almost continuously. General Rauch, whose guns were within 650 yards of the great redoubt, threw shrapnel alone.

The difficulties of bringing heavy pieces up the rough mountain paths, at the best scarcely practicable for horsemen, were overcome only by great energy and the severest toil. It is impossible to render full justice to the condition of these paths, gullied by torrents of mud and water, paved with loose boulders and slippery ledges, and mounting in zigzags often at an angle of 45 degrees. Four yoke of cattle, and from 150 to 200 men to the gun, were occupied two days and nights in making the ascent. The caissons had to be left in the valley, and the ammunition brought up by hand, 200 or 300 Bulgarians being employed in this work. The prevalence of clouds, which frequently covered the mountains with a chill, impenetrable mist, made bivouacs behind the lines anything but comfortable. Nevertheless, drenching vapour was preferable to the bullets and shells which fell into the camps whenever the air was clear enough to permit the enemy to see the low lines of intrenchments within half range of their rifles.

The Turks had but fifteen guns in position—less than half the number mounted by the Russians, and of much smaller calibre. They worked their guns, however, remarkably well. Except an attack on the great redoubt, there was but one engagement between the infantry, and that was fought on December 3rd, at Count Schouvaloff's position, west of the road. The Russian line here was so situated that it commanded Baba Konak, but at the same time did not occupy the highest point of the ridge.

The Turks began demonstrations, on December 3rd, from their two camps near the Baba Konak earthworks, about eleven o'clock in the forenoon, having meanwhile sent a strong detachment around behind the mountain that dominated the Russian right. This detachment shortly after appeared on the crest of the mountain, and charged in solid lines against the Russian sharpshooters. Count Schouvaloff had six guns planted on the highest point of his position, and the Turks came so near that he sent volleys of shrapnel into the solid masses with the greatest effect, causing them to break and scatter; but still they advanced with the cry of "Allah! Allah!" which was repeated by those in the camps all along the line, evidently to encourage the attack and to give the impression of great numbers. On they came within pistol-shot of the Russians, facing the staggering volleys from the Berdans and showers of shrapnel. At one time they were so near the guns, that those who were watching the fight from General Dondeville's batteries believed the pieces were taken; but the charging lines were seen to melt away and stream backward down the slope, and the first fierce attack was repulsed.

Again and again they assaulted with desperation. The Russian cannon were worked so quickly, that five out of the six pieces became heated and unserviceable, and there was no water for the sponges. The anxious

spectators on the opposite crests, unable to render assistance, believed the day was lost, when the hot cannonade dwindled down to sullen reports from a single gun, and the lines threw themselves against the very bayonets of the defenders of the ridge, with the cry of "Allah! Allah!" and the impetuous rush; but every time they came up they soon broke before the rifle-fire poured upon them by the Russians in their trenches, and retreated, falling by hundreds, while they were running back down the slope, and leaving at the close of the day, when they repeated the attempt to break the Russian lines, the mountain literally black with dead and wounded.

The Turks had a force variously estimated at from ten to twenty tabors. Prisoners reported that 1,300 men were *hors de combat*, including one pasha and two colonels. Count Schouvaloff held his line with two battalions of the Moskovisky regiment, and a small detachment of the Empress Tirailleurs. The Russian loss was about 300.

The attack was renewed again in the morning; but reinforcements had come up to the Russians, and the assault was not kept up long; but still the Turks kept their position close to the Russians, both lines having intrenched, not over 500 paces apart, conversation and the noise of men working being distinctly audible across the interval.

For the moment, all forward movements of the Russians stopped. The Turks still occupied Lutakova, a town at the base of the mountains north-west of Orkhanieh, and it was known that they were in force in the mountains there.

Until, however, the great redoubt in the Baba Konak Pass was taken, either by assault or by a flank movement, the further progress of the Russians southwards was effectually barred. But the Russians had learned to be cautious in attacking the Turks in fortified positions; and Turkish redoubts were to them especially disagreeable. Genearl Gourko, therefore, wisely determined to obey the strict orders given to him not to undertake any rash enterprises; and with his experiences in the Hainkoi Pass and the plains of Kezanlik and Eski Zagra, he was not at all sorry to be relieved from the risk of a repetition of those events.

The Porte, however, was highly dissatisfied with the result of Mehemed Ali's attack on December 3rd, and recalled him, appointing in his stead Chevket Pasha. The fact is, that Mehemed Ali, although a good organiser, does not appear to have been a good fighting general. Had he been associated with a man like Osman Pasha, the two together might have accomplished much. But as things turned out, neither was of any use to the other.

We will now leave General Gourko waiting for reinforcements. These soon came in abundant numbers, for within a few days Plevna was to fall and liberate the armies it had so long detained.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE FALL OF PLEVNA.

TOWARDS the end of November it had become amply apparent to every one, that as all attempts to relieve Osman Pasha had failed, the moment of his surrender or attempt to cut his way out of Plevna was rapidly approaching.

But, in truth, his position was hopeless. The Turkish armies in the Quadrilateral could not force the iron wall drawn across the roads to Plevna by the Czarevitch; Mehemed Ali, Raouf Pasha, and Chevket Pasha were unable to drive away the Russians from the Schipka or Orkhanieh passes; and in the extreme west there were the Servians panting to get at their old enemy who had faced them at Saitschar, and paralysed all their attempts to gain a footing on Turkish territory.

Still Osman Pasha determined to attempt to cut his way out, hoping to gain a start before the forces north, east, and south of Plevna, and try to gain the Balkans in the rear of General Gourko, when, in conjunction with an attack by Chevket Pasha, he might possibly succeed in passing the Orkhanieh or the Ginzi Pass.

The Russians, however, had become aware, by spies and deserters, that Osman was preparing for a sortie, and on their part made every preparation to receive him. The trenches were kept full of troops day and night, divisional and regimental commanders were advised to be on the alert, and all the posts were doubled and trebled. These measures were taken on Friday night (December 7th); but Saturday passed without any movement being discernible among the Turks.

Sunday (December 9th) passed in the same way. The Russians were anxiously on the watch with the usual amount of artillery fire, to which the Turks had not replied for a long time. For the last three or four days the weather had been damp and cold, with heavy broken clouds threatening rain, and about noon on Sunday the clouds thickened, and the dark masses discharged themselves in the first snow-storm of the season. By five o'clock the ground was quite white, and the appearance of the country had completely changed.

The sky was dark and lowering, but the atmosphere white with thickly-falling snow, through which could be caught glimpses of Plevna, with many little columns of blue smoke rising over it, telling of cooking dinners, and giving it a warm, cosy look, much unlike that of a beleaguered city. The huts of the Russian soldiers were soon white, the soldiers themselves going about joyously, some cooking their dinners, others gathering in groups, singing at the top of their voices a welcome apparently to the first snow-fall. Perhaps it reminded them of their far-away homes. There the snow had long since been many feet deep. Now and then the boom of a gun, muffled and indistinct like a low growl, broke the stillness as it came through the snow-laden air.

Across the ravine, at the foot of the Green Hill, where Skobeloff had built an excellent plank bridge, connecting his lines with Zotoff's and Radisevo, the lights of Brestovatz were barely discernible through the gloom; and here at Uzendol, Skobeloff's headquarters, everybody was keenly on the alert.

On Sunday evening a spy came in with the news that Osman had issued three days' rations to the troops, 150 cartridges, a new pair of sandals to each man, and that, to all appearances, the concentration would begin at once. A curious detail which he cited was, that each soldier received a small portion of oil for keeping his gun in order.

At ten o'clock another spy came in, who reported that Osman was concentrating near the bridge over the Vid. The spy had come direct from Plevna, and having given this information he disappeared again in the darkness. A few minutes later there was a telegram, stating that from the other side a great many lights were seen moving about in Plevna—an unusual thing. Evidently there was some movement on foot, and the spies were right.

The night wore slowly away. The snow-storm ceased, and was followed by dark clouds scudding swiftly across the sky, with now and then a blast of sleet. At three o'clock another spy brought news that the men of Skobeloff's command had a position on the side of the Green Hill, and that the Krishine redoubts were being abandoned. He was very sure, he said, that all the positions along Skobeloff's side would shortly be abandoned. Would he go along and lead the way into the Krishine redoubts, at the risk of being bayoneted, if his words should not prove true? Yes, he would; and orders were given by Skobeloff for the troops to begin to move cautiously forward, and feel their way with care. This was done, and the positions were taken.

At last it was certain that the Turks were moving, and that the final decisive moment had come. Skobeloff ordered the captured positions to be instantly placed in a state of defence, in case the Turks, repulsed and not yet ready to surrender, should attempt to re-capture them. The grey light of morning came. It was cloudy, and threatened more snow. Suddenly there was the booming of thirty or forty guns speaking almost together, followed instantly by that steady, crashing roll the Russians had learned to know so well. The battle had begun. The giant, after defending himself four months, hurling thunderbolt after thunderbolt upon his enemies, was struggling through the meshes he had allowed to be thrown around him, and was, in his turn, attacking the trenches and earthworks which he had taught his enemies so well how to defend. It was in the direction of the bridge over the Vid, on the Sophia road, that Osman had decided to break through. Here the country behind Plevna was a wide open plain, into which the gorge leading up to Plevna opened out like a tunnel. The plain was bounded on the Plevna side by steep rocky bluffs, or cliffs, along whose foot flowed the Vid. From these cliffs, for a

distance of two miles, burst here and there, in quick, irregular succession, angry spurts of flame, that flashed and disappeared and flashed out again. Through the covering of smoke could be seen angry spits of fire thick as fire-flies on a tropical night. Now and then, through an irregular curving stream of fire were bodies of men hurrying to and fro, horses, cattle, carriages running across the plain, and, above all, the infernal crashing roll of the infantry fire, and the deep booming of more than a hundred guns.

Osman Pasha had, during the night, abandoned all his positions from Grivitza to the Green Hill, and concentrated the greater part of his army across the Vid, over which he passed on two bridges, one the old, and the other the new one lately constructed. He took part of his artillery, some three batteries, and a train of about 500 or 600 carriages drawn by bullocks. He succeeded in getting his army, the artillery, and part of the train over by daybreak. The Russians said, that to have started with so large a train, is a proof that he was deceived with regard to the number of the Russian forces, and that he believed the Russian line, owing to the absence of General Gourko, was very weak on the Sophia road, and thought another road along the Vid was virtually open. But this train was taken to serve a special purpose in the fight. Indeed, the first thing the Russians perceived when daylight broke was a line of waggons drawn by bullocks, advancing upon them in close order across the plain. The smooth open level offered every facility for such a manœuvre. The Turks were behind these waggons, which, piled full of baggage and effects of various kinds, afforded very fair protection from bullets.

The attack was directed against the positions held by the grenadiers, north of the Sophia road, whose lines extended from the road to a point opposite Opanes, where they were joined by the Roumanian curving line through Susurla.

The Turks advanced as far as they could under cover of their waggons, while the Russians poured in a terrible fire on them from their Berdan breech-loaders, scarcely less destructive than the Peabody, and opened on the advancing line with shell and shrapnel. The Turks then did a splendid piece of bravery, only equalled by Skobeloff's capture of the two famous redoubts. Probably finding their cover beginning to fail them, owing to the cattle being killed, getting frightened, and running away, they dashed forward with a shout upon the line of trenches held by the Sibrersky or Siberian regiment, swept over them like a tornado, poured into the battery, bayoneted the artillerymen, officers and men, who, with desperate heroism, stood to their pieces to nearly a man, and seized the whole battery. The Sibrersky regiment had been overthrown and nearly annihilated. The Turks had broken the first circle that held them in. Had they gone on they would have found two more; but they did not have time to go on, for the Russians rallied almost immediately; whilst General Strukoff, of the emperor's staff, brought up the first brigade of grenadiers, who, led by their general, flung themselves on the Turks with fury. A hand-to-hand fight ensued, man to man, bayonet to bayonet, which lasted several minutes, for the Turks clung to the captured guns with dogged obstinacy. They seemed to have forgotten, in the fury of battle, that they had come out to escape from Plevna, and not to take and hold a battery, and they held on to the guns with almost the same desperation which the Russian dead around them had shown a few minutes before. Nearly all the Turks in the battle were killed. Those in the flanking trenches open to the Russian fire had, of course, very little shelter, and were soon overpowered, and began a retreat which, under the murderous fire sent after them, instantly became a flight. Some took shelter behind the broken waggons, and returned the fire for a time, but the majority made for the deep banks of the Vid, where they found ample shelter from the Russian shells and bullets. They formed there behind the banks, and instantly began to return the Russian fire.

By this time it was about half-past eight, and the Turkish sortie was virtually repulsed; but the battle raged for four hours longer. The losses inflicted from this time forward were not great on either side, for both armies were under cover. The Turks were evidently apprehensive that the Russians would charge and drive them back in a mass into the gorge. The Russians were resolved to prevent another sortie, and so both sides kept it up. Indeed, there seemed at first every probability that the Turks would try it again, though it was evident to any one who knew the strength of the Russian lines and had seen this affair, that escape was hopeless from the

first, even though Osman Pasha had had twice the number of men.

About twelve o'clock the firing began to diminish on both sides, as if by mutual agreement. Then it stopped entirely. The rolling crash of the infantry and the deep-toned bellowing of the artillery were heard no more. It had not ceased more than half-an-hour when a white flag was seen waving from the road leading around the cliffs beyond the bridge. Plevna had fallen, and Osman Pasha was going to surrender.

A long, loud shout went up from the Russian army when the white flag was seen, and its significance was understood—a joyous shout that swept over that dreary plain, and was echoed back sonorously by the sullen, rugged cliffs overhanging the scene. The thrill of gladness in the shout showed how deeply the Russian soldiers had dreaded the long, weary waiting through the winter months amid snow and mud round this impregnable stronghold. It was clear that a load had been lifted from every heart.

A moment later, a Turkish officer was seen riding over the bridge with a white flag in his hand. He rode forward to General Ganetsky, in command of the grenadiers, halted a moment, and then rode back. As it turned out, he was an officer of inferior rank, and returned because General Ganetsky instructed him to send an officer with the rank of pasha to negotiate the terms of capitulation. Then thirty or forty officers and correspondents, headed by General Skobeloff, who had been placed on the Sophia road, rode down the road towards the bridge, within point-blank range of the Turkish rifles, if the Turkish soldiers grouped in masses on the road behind the bridge on the cliffs overlooking the Vid had chosen to open on them. About fifty yards from the bridge, and seventy-five from some masses of Turks on the other side, they halted. General Skobeloff and two or three other officers waved white handkerchiefs. This signal of amity was answered by the waving of a piece of white muslin, about two yards square, attached to a flag-staff. Then two horsemen came forward, each carrying a white flag. They rode across the bridge and approached the Russian group. There was a moment's conversation with Skobeloff's interpreter, and then it was announced that Osman himself was coming out, and the two horsemen galloped back.

"Osman himself coming out!" exclaimed all with surprise.

"At any rate we will give him a respectful reception," exclaimed one Russian officer, in the gallant spirit of true chivalry.

"That we will," said another. "We must all salute him, and the soldiers must present arms."

"He is certainly a great soldier," exclaimed another, "and he has made an heroic defence."

"He is the greatest general of the age," said General Skobeloff, "for he has saved the honour of his country. I will proffer him my hand and tell him so."

All were unanimous in his praise, and the conversation was kept up about incidents of the siege, till it was interrupted at last by shouts of "There he is! He is coming!" Two horsemen were again approaching with a white flag, the bearer of which was apparently merely a common soldier. He wore a fez, a long dirty brown cloak, and very ragged foot-gear. The other horseman wore a bright red fez, which set off the officer's blue cloak. He was clean and natty, and had on fresh gloves. He was comparatively young, with a round, rosy face, clean shaved, light moustache, straight nose, and blue eyes. He did not seem over thirty-five years old.

"This cannot be Osman Pasha," was the general exclamation. In fact it was not he, but Tefik Bey, his chief of staff. Was it possible that this boyish-looking face belonged to Osman's right-hand man, who must have played so great a part in the organisation and maintenance of Osman's mighty defence? It seemed strange, but it was true. The Turks have the merit at least of not being afraid of young men. There was not one tottering grey-bearded officer in this captive host. Every one saluted as Tefik Bey rode up. He halted for a moment and was silent. He then spoke in French with good accent, and said, "Osman Pasha"—then he stopped fully ten seconds from his emotion before he proceeded—"is wounded."

This was the first intimation the Russians had had of this occurrence.

All expressed their regret.

"Not severely, we all hope?" exclaimed General Skobeloff.

"I do not know," was the answer, with a pause of a second between every word.

"Where is his Excellency?" was the next question.

"There," was Tefik Bey's reply, as he pointed to a small house overlooking the road just beyond the bridge.

Then there was a pause while the Russians scrutinised their strange visitor, and he surveyed them with the most perfect calmness, but obvious curiosity. The pause became embarrassing. The Turk showed no hurry to speak, and the Russians evidently felt delicacy in asking if he had come to surrender; besides which, there really was no officer there who had the right to treat with him. The situation was critical, and, if it possessed an amusing element, was also embarrassing. Both armies were watching the little group not more than 500 yards apart, with arms in their hands, for the Russian infantry had gradually moved down toward the bridge. Finally, General Skobeloff stammered out, "Is there anybody you would like to see?—[pause]—With whom did you wish to speak?—Is there anything——?—[pause]—What the devil is the matter with the man? Why don't he speak?" blurted out the general in English, turning to one of the correspondents of the *Daily News*. Tefik Bey remained impassive.

"General Ganetsky is in command here. He will be here presently, in case you should like to speak to him," General Skobeloff finally observed. Tefik Bey simply nodded.

"Osman Ghazi has made a most brilliant and glorious defence," said an officer. "We esteem highly his soldierly character."

The Turk gazed steadily before him, and gave no sign that he had heard.

"We look upon him as a very great general," said another. No answer. The Turk's eyes were bent in the direction of Sophia, as though looking for Mehemed Ali Pasha. There was evidently no use trying to converse with this obstinately silent man, and they gave it up. Fortunately, General Strukoff, of the emperor's staff, soon arrived, with powers to treat. He asked Tefik if he had authority from Osman Pasha to negotiate. It appeared not; and the final result was that Tefik bowed and galloped away back across the bridge. Presently General Ganetsky arrived; and the little group, led by Generals Ganetsky and Strukoff, advanced across the bridge towards the little hut where Osman Pasha lay wounded. The officers waited outside, whilst Strukoff and Ganetsky went in to arrange the terms of capitulation.

The terms of capitulation were easily arranged. The surrender was unconditional. Osman consented at once. If surprise be expressed that he should have so suddenly agreed, it is only necessary to state that he could do nothing else. In order to attempt a sortie, he had to abandon all the positions in which he had defied the Russians so long, and to concentrate his army down on the Vid. These positions once lost were lost for ever, because the Russians occupied them almost as soon as he left them. He was down in the valley; they on the surrounding hills, with an army three times as large as his. He had to surrender without delay, for they were drawing the circle tighter every moment. His position was like Napoleon III.'s at Sedan. The disparity in numbers was greater, and he had not even the shelter of the village. So Osman Ghazi the Victorious surrendered, unconditionally, the gallant army with which he had held the famous stronghold for so long, with which he upset the whole Russian plan of campaign, and with which he defeated, in three pitched battles, Russia's finest armies.

The terms of surrender having been settled, Osman Pasha got into a carriage and drove off towards Plevna. But he had not gone far before he heard that the Grand Duke Nicholas had arrived at the bridge, and turned back in his carriage to meet him. Osman Pasha was escorted by fifty Cossacks, and there followed him twenty-five or thirty Turkish officers, all mounted on diminutive Turkish ponies. They were all, or nearly all, young men. Scarcely one among them seemed over thirty. Most had the faces of mere boy-students. These were the lads with whom Osman Pasha had accomplished such wonders! The grand duke rode up to the carriage, and, for some seconds, the two chiefs gazed into each other's faces without the utterance of a word. Then the grand duke stretched out his hand, and shook the hand of Osman Pasha heartily and said—"I compliment you on your defence of Plevna. It is one of the most splendid military feats in history." Osman Pasha smiled sadly, rose painfully to his feet in spite of his wound, bowed, and expressed his acknowledgments, and then re-seated himself. The Russian officers all cried, "Bravo! Bravo!" repeatedly, and all saluted respectfully. There was not one among them who did not gaze on the hero of Plevna with the greatest admiration and

sympathy. Prince Charles, who had arrived, rode up, and repeated unwittingly almost every word of the grand duke, and likewise shook hands. Osman Pasha again rose and bowed, but this time in grim silence. He wore a loose blue cloak, with no apparent mark on it to designate his rank, and a red fez. He was a large, strongly-built man, the lower part of his face covered with a short black beard, without a streak of grey. He had a large Roman nose, and black eyes. The face was a strong face, with energy and determination stamped on every feature—yet a tired, wan face, also, with lines on it that hardly were graven so deep five months ago; and with a sad, enduring, thoughtful look out of the black eyes.

"It is a grand face," exclaimed Colonel Gaillard, the French military *attaché*. "I was almost afraid of seeing him lest my expectation should be disappointed; but he more than fulfils my ideal."

"It is the face of a great military chieftain," said young Skobeloff. "I am glad to have seen him. Osman Ghazi he is, and Osman the Victorious he will remain, in spite of his surrender."

There may, perhaps, have been some personal exaggeration in the Russian estimate of Osman Pasha. History will judge. But, thrilling with the impression of the great military event just accomplished, the magnificent defence ending in a halo of disastrous glory, there was not one who did not echo Skobeloff's words. Be it remembered that Osman Pasha cannot be judged on ordinary military rules, for the reason that he had not a regular army; technically speaking, not an army at all, but a mob of armed men, with scarcely any organisation, with no discipline, save the natural and passive obedience of the Turkish peasant, and only such military education and experience as were gained in the trenches and on the battle-field. This is the highest form of generalship—to accomplish mighty results with means which most military men would have regarded as hopelessly inadequate. Osman Pasha had scarcely any officers of talent and experience with him. He had borne the weight of this stupendous defence on his own shoulders—a very Titan, defying, with his untrained and scanty levies, the serried legions of one of the greatest military powers of Europe.

After his meeting with Osman, the grand duke rode on to Plevna. By the time the Russians entered the town it was nearly dark, and it presented a most miserable, wretched appearance. Not that there were any ruins to contemplate, for the Russians did not probably throw above a dozen shells into this part of the town during the whole time of the siege—but narrow, crooked streets, a foot deep with thin liquid mud, in which thousands of men and horses were wandering about without knowing where to go, and without any object; lean, cadaverous-looking inhabitants, who stood outside their doors, and saluted timidly, as though not quite sure that the Turks might not yet come out and catch them at it, and looking in the gloaming more like spectres than anything else; houses in which were seen no lights nor fires, cold, comfortless, and deserted, made up a scene that, in the gathering darkness of a bleak December evening, was dreary and depressing in the extreme. Whilst General Skobeloff was riding through the streets on the way to his old quarters on the Lovatz road, he met Tefik Bey, Osman's chief of staff, the same who had come over the bridge with the white flag. He had become separated from Osman, and was wandering about with his escort through the muddy streets, nobody seeming to know where to take him or where to go. General Skobeloff immediately invited him to dine and pass the night at his head-quarters on the Lovatz road. Tefik Bey at first hesitated, as he thought he ought to endeavour to join Osman; but nobody knew where Osman was. It seemed then probable that he had accompanied the grand duke to Bogot; and, at any rate, if he were in Plevna, the task of finding him might be one of hours in the darkness; so that General Skobeloff's persuasions, joined to those of Colonel Gaillard, whom Skobeloff had likewise invited, finally prevailed.

They then proceeded on their way up the Lovatz road, and passed under the two redoubts taken by Skobeloff in September, at last silent and deserted, up across the Green Hill, across the labyrinth of trenches and works where, only twenty-four hours before, the Turks and Russians were still standing foot to foot and bayonet to bayonet. All now was silent and lonely. Arriving on the top of the hill, a short gallop brought the party to Uzendol, General Skobeloff's head-quarters.

A warm fire burning gaily in his mud hut, a glass of vodka, and some hot soup

at once thawed their benumbed hands and feet, and they were soon enjoying a hot dinner, with the appetites of men who had been in the saddle since daylight, with not a morsel to eat. Tefik Bey seemed much depressed and downcast. He spoke little, and was at first almost as taciturn as he had been on the bridge. He brightened up, however, as the meal progressed, drank a glass of red wine, a glass of sherry, and a couple of glasses of champagne, when General Skobeloff proposed the health of Osman Ghazi, and drank to the brave defenders of Plevna. A merry smile broke over his face when Skobeloff asked him who had commanded the Turks on the Green Hill, and then it occurred to him, for the first time, that his entertainer was Skobeloff, the indefatigable, restless, daring spirit with whom he had exchanged so many hard blows on the Lovatz road and Green Hill. Nobody had mentioned Skobeloff's name in his presence, nor had Skobeloff told him who he was; but the fact that he had come out of the Lovatz road, together with Skobeloff's question about the Green Hill, was quite enough to enlighten him. So he said, with a smile, "Ah, it is you who gave such tough work on the Green Hill all this time. You are General Skobeloff." Skobeloff laughed, and said, "Yes." "That was a very good attack of yours that evening in the fog and darkness. Very well done. But you did not get it all." "No," said Skobeloff, "I did not want it all." And they both laughed. But, after this momentary fit of sunshine, Tefik Bey soon again relapsed into melancholy and gloom. It was partly the despondency and sadness natural under the circumstances, partly the reaction on the extreme excitement and tension of nerves during the last few days when preparing for the sortie, and partly extreme lassitude and fatigue. The others had hardly swallowed their coffee, when Skobeloff, taking pity on him, turned them all out, gave up his bed to Tefik, had another hastily made up for Colonel Gaillard, and then retired and passed the night in a hut of one of his officers; and so ended this eventful day of Plevna.

The state of the town and its immediate vicinity after the Russians had entered it, gave a terribly graphic account of the misery which had long reigned there.

When the Turks made the sortie, they were obliged to leave the sick and wounded, of whom there were thousands, entirely without attendants. There was never a regular hospital in Plevna, the sick being transported to Sophia; and the small ambulance corps was at all times insufficient to care for the wounded, even before the town was surrounded. Of course, the attendants at the hospital were ordered to accompany the army when the sortie was made, and they joined their lot with those who tried to break through the Russian lines. The day and night of the battle passed, and the sufferers received no food or water, and their festering wounds were undressed. The following morning the Russians entered and took possession, and made the day one of rejoicing with the visit of the Czar and the imperial staff; but this celebration of the event, however short it may have seemed to the victors, was a long season of horrible suffering for the wretched helpless captives, who stretched their skeleton hands in vain towards heaven, praying for a bit of bread or a drop of water. Neither friend nor foe was there to alleviate their sufferings, or to give the trifle needed to save them from a painful death, and they died by hundreds; and before the morning of the third day the dead crowded the living in every one of those dirty, dimly-lighted rooms which served to shelter the wounded from the cold and wet, but confined them in a foul and fœtid atmosphere of disease and death.

It was only on the morning of the *third* day after these wretched, tortured creatures had been left to their fate, that the Russians chose to find opportunity and means to begin, first, the separation of the living from the dead, and then the care of the former. The mosques, the largest houses, and many of the small dwellings had been filled with sick and wounded. Overcrowded in every case, and, from the first, without proper attention, these temporary hospitals were, at the best, most filthy and pestilential, and the air was tainted with the stench of undressed wounds, and the corpses which lay unburied in the courtyards.

The first room entered in one of these charnel-houses contained ninety odd Turks. Of these, thirty-seven were dead, and many others on the point of death. Piteous groans came from between rigid lips, and painful cries for water, and some made feeble signs for food. One or two of the strongest raised themselves, and fixed their hideous, sunken eyes with such a beseeching

stare on those who had come to free them from the company of the dead, that it would have softened the hardest heart. The small room, dimly lighted by a high window with one pane of glass, was crowded with forms of thirty or forty ragged, filthy, human beings. Many of these forms were motionless, and scarcely audible groans were heard from one or two who raised with difficulty their bony hands to their lips, to signify their need of food. There were faint whispers of "Some water! some water!" piteous to hear. The dim light was concentrated on the half-naked body of an old man stretched across the entrance, whither he had dragged himself in the last hours of his agony in hope of succour, or at least of a breath of fresh air; for, in the unventilated room, the air was thick with putrid odours, which burst out when the door was opened, overpowering strong men, and causing them to turn sick and faint. The old man's hands were clutched in the rigour of painful death on his nude and meagre breast, and his head lay against the very crack of the door, so that it opened only by rude force. Living and dead were lying together undistinguishable along the walls, behind the door, and under the window.

This room was one of fifty where a similar spectacle was presented. The pavement of the mosques was covered with crouching forms, some moving at intervals, others motionless and silent. Here and there the faces of the dead came out in ghastly relief, with a fixed expression of great agony.

Nothing was done but to drag the dead from among the living, let in the light and air, and give water and nourishment in hope of saving some of those who remained alive. Small enough was the force of men who set about this painful task, and meagre enough their means. *Three* open peasants' ox-carts were all that were available for the removal of the dead, and fifty soldiers to carry the bodies from the rooms to the carts, and bury them in the ditches. As fast as possible, bread and water were distributed, and the feeble wretches fought each other with their last breath in their greed for the nourishment. Some, propped up against the wall, slowly ate until the unmistakable pallor came over their faces, and their eyes were fixed in death. Even the effort of eating the long-needed food was too great for their waning strength. The living clutched at the remaining morsel in the dead man's hand, struggled for it with all their feeble power, and cursed each other and wrangled over the spoil, but to fall dead themselves before they could eat the bread.

The three open oxen-carts began the removal of the dead at once. The hospitals daily supplied more freight of this kind than the slow-moving teams could carry away to the ditches outside. The disinfection of the hospitals was promptly effected. As fast as possible, with the small force of men at hand, the rooms were emptied one after another. After a day or two, some of the Bulgarians were compelled to serve in place of the soldiers, and they set themselves about the hated task with a brutality terrible to witness. They dragged the bodies down the stairs by the legs, the heads bumping from step to step with sickening thuds, then out into the court through the filthy mud, where they slung them into the cart with the heads or legs hanging over the side, and so continued to pile up the load with a score of half-naked corpses.

It was horrible to hear the conversation of the men who did this work. They perhaps brought out a body still warm, the heart still beating, and the flush of life on the cheek. One would say, "He is still alive," and propose to leave him without stopping to decide the question. The others would cry, "Devil take him! He will die before to-morrow, any way. In with him." And so the living went in with the dead, and were tumbled into the grave. When the three carts were full, they started away through the streets toward the ditches outside the town. The horrible load jolted and shook, and now and then a body fell out into the mud, and was dragged into the cart again, and thrown down and jammed in firmly to prevent a recurrence of the accident. This heartless proceeding went on in the public streets, crowded with the men, women, and children of the place, the soldiers, the wounded and the sick; and after so many days of the same spectacle, no one any longer paid attention to the transport of the dead.

The care of the sick and wounded was now rapidly systematised. The few Russian doctors that were detailed for the service worked very hard, and also the Turkish surgeons who remained; but the corps was not one quarter large enough to properly attend to the patients. Some

of the hospitals were light, airy, and well purified; but the mosques were still dark, foul-smelling, and crowded. The dead lay for many hours unattended, and the horrible sights and sounds defied description. In the midst of this, the few Russian Sisters of Charity moved about quietly, busy from daybreak till dark, bringing comfort to hundreds, whose wounds they dressed, and whose pains they alleviated.

This is but a slight outline of the scenes that passed in Plevna for days. A long detailed account alone could give anything like an idea of the climax and final act of the drama of Plevna. The town was full of similar pictures. Along the streets were frequently seen one or two wounded who had crawled out from the hospital, and lay dying in the mud. There was no valid excuse for this wilful disregard of human life. The cause is evident—namely, lack of system. The Russians knew that Plevna must fall, and they expected to find thousands of starving men there, and thousands of badly-attended wounded. The exact date of the surrender must have been, as it probably was, a surprise; but the day before the expected event was not the time to prepare for it. There should have been detailed, long before, proper officers to prepare everything for the care of the surrendered troops. There can be no excuse for the fact that only three open ox-carts were found to transport the dead, and only a score of Bulgarians who ran away at every opportunity, to perform the duty of burying the dead. Out on the plain, near the bridge over the Vid, were bivouacked 15,000 or 20,000 prisoners, fighting for bread, miserable beyond description, in the cold, with hundreds of unburied dead covering the ground near the spot where the first attempt was made to break through; and day after day passed, and their condition did not change, simply because there can be nothing like prompt attention in similar cases where there is no idea of system. The story of the hospitals, of the prisoners, and of the Russian disasters, all hang on one thread.

But the horrors of Plevna were not all in the town. Some were in the valley of the Vid. In the redoubts which the Russians stormed, hundreds on hundreds of still unburied bodies lay; the whole ridge of the wooded mountain, the valley beyond, and the hill further on where stood the two redoubts overlooking the town, taken with terrible loss by General Skobeloff on September 30th, were still strewn thickly with the corpses of the Russians who fell on the occasion. Some of these bodies had been partly covered with four spadefuls of dirt, but most of them lay as they fell. Not all as they fell, for the dogs had torn away the limbs of many, and the birds of prey had pecked at the skulls. In the pools of water lay corpses half decayed; pale, withered hands and feet stuck out of the soil on all sides; and horrible, dead, mummified faces stared at one from every little hollow in the ground, and from among every clump of bushes. Some of these bodies had been put in graves within a day or two; but still the whole region was strewn thickly with these dreadful mementoes of the fight there nearly three months before.

Around the redoubts the ground was furrowed and dug with thousands of shells, and tons of pieces covered the earth. It was interesting to observe how few shells went into the redoubts, or struck the edge of the redoubts. The majority plunged into the ground just in front. The Turks built great traverses across the redoubts, and under these dug deep bomb-proof shelters, where they were as safe from harm from the shells as in Constantinople; but the whole surface of the hills was literally riddled with holes large enough to bury horses in, and all about lay great unexploded shells. Even away back in the ravines, where the soldiers' huts were, bullets, fragments of clothing and equipments, covered the ground; in short, Plevna and its vicinity was one vast charnel-house.

CHAPTER XXVI.

RESULTS OF THE FALL OF PLEVNA.

WHEN an adjutant brought the news of Osman Pasha's surrender to the Emperor Alexander, with the words, "Plevna lies at your majesty's feet," the Czar replied, "But the war is not yet at an end!" and complimented Generals Todleben, Imeretinski, and Ganetzky with the words, "This is entirely due to your exertions, and especially to thine, Edward Ivanovitch (Todleben")."

On the following day the Czar made his triumphal entry into the City of Horrors, and received Osman Pasha whilst at breakfast in the house of a wealthy Bulgarian. He restored his sword to Osman Pasha whilst complimenting him on the stubborn defence he had made, and appointed Charkow as Osman Pasha's place of residence during his captivity. Here he was made as much of as though he had been victorious; and victorious he really was, when it is considered that he had done more than the whole of the Turkish generals combined to oppose the progress of the Russians. From July 19th to December 10th he had held Plevna, and cost the Russians at least 30,000 men, besides keeping the whole of their active army in check. He did not surrender until his supplies were exhausted, and a loss of 4,000 men proved to him that all hope of escape was vain.

No less important to the Russians was the fall of the stronghold. Their immediate gain was ten pashas, 2,000 subaltern officers, 128 staff officers, 36,000 men, 1,200 horses, and 77 cannon. But the indirect gain was the greatest of all. Not only did the fall of Plevna set free the whole of the Russian and Roumanian armies, but it also liberated the Servian army which had been kept in readiness to fall upon Widdin and Osman Pasha's army in the rear, should this appear necessary. Had Osman Pasha, at any moment, succeeded in escaping from Plevna, there can be no doubt, that if he had taken the route towards Widdin, he would have been met by an army of 20,000 Serbs, with the Roumanians on his right flank, and the Russians in his rear.

Much speculation was indulged in, at the time, as to the course the Russians would pursue. Some critics imagined that General Todleben would insist upon the Quadrilateral being cleared before proceeding across the Balkans; others held that fear of England would keep the Russians from marching upon Constantinople; but the great majority held that the Turks would concentrate their forces round Adrianople, convert it into a second Plevna, and, if ousted from this position, fall back upon the Tchataldja lines in front of Constantinople.

But neither of these plans were adopted. The moment Plevna had fallen the interest in the campaign ceased to be of a predominatingly military interest, and became one of political interest chiefly. It was clear that the disruption of Turkey had commenced, however it might be disguised under the names of autonomous, feudatory, tributary States, frontier rectifications, or protectorates. Turkey had practically ceased to exist when Osman Pasha was sent into captivity in Russia; henceforth the battle was between those powers whose interests were involved in the fate of Turkey.

First and foremost in this struggle was, of course, Great Britain. Secondly, there was Austria. Thirdly, there was France. Then came Italy and the minor States, Greece, Servia, Montenegro, and Roumania. The interests of all these States were, however, eclipsed by those of Great Britain; and for many weeks after the fall of Plevna, all the world was on tenterhooks, waiting for the decision to be taken by the British government. There were abundant counsels proceeding, chiefly from Germany, but also from France, to the effect that England should draw the sword—if not in favour of the Turk, at least against the Russians; and naturally, nowhere was this more desired than at the Porte.

But not only were there insuperable difficulties which prevented the British government from actively interfering on behalf of the Porte, but it was not to be thought of for a moment, seeing that the end of Turkey had been decreed. British interests were no longer centred in Turkey

as an empire; they were centred in Turkish territory.

Bolstering up the Sultan would simply mean leaving things just as they had been, with an enormous additional influence of Russia upon the course of Oriental politics. As long as Turkey remained in this equivocal state of semi-independence, both Russia and England met on the same ground of ostensible benevolent wishes towards the Porte. That was a fiction which would have to be destroyed. It was absolutely necessary to separate British interests from Turkish interests, and also to separate Russian interests from Turkish interests. As long as Turkey was regarded as a fully independent State, with its conglomeries of tributary States and provinces, the Russians could always say to England, "Why should we disagree? We both of us wish to sustain Turkey; we both wish the Ottoman empire to hold the territory neither of us desires the other to have; and we both of us only desire that the Christian subjects of the Porte should not be oppressed. Our interests are, therefore, identical. Why should we quarrel then?"

Herein lay the absurdity. British and Russian interests in Turkey were far from being identical—they were, in fact, diametrically opposed. But it was impossible to deny any of the above statements taken singly, or to dispute the logic of the whole as a statement, as an assertion. It all depended upon the truth of the Russian assertion, that the above interests were the real ones, and not the cloak to other designs. But to ascertain this for certain, it was necessary to force Russia's hand, to oblige her to follow suit, and play out her trumps.

To accomplish this, it was also necessary to do one of two things. Either for England to lead trumps at once, or let the Russians go on till they had nothing but trumps in their own hands, and would be forced to lead themselves.

Unfortunately, the British government, owing to agitation at home, and the incongruous elements in the cabinet, decided to adopt the latter course, and force the Russians to lead the trump card.

This trump card was Constantinople. The British government had declared that England could not afford to see Constantinople menaced or occupied by the Russians without taking steps to secure her own interests in the East. On the other hand, so long as the Turkish government remained intact in Constantinople, and replied to all proposals for peace with a *non possumus*, the Russians could not wait about outside the gates, at the good pleasure of the Porte, and refrain from dealing the *coup de grace*. They were obliged to bring the war to an end somehow or other; and there was no other way of doing so than by striking at head-quarters, and at least isolating the capital completely from the rest of the country.

This was evident to all concerned; and towards the middle of December, 1877, the advice was given to the Porte to save as much of its armies as possible, and fall back upon the defence of Constantinople and the lines of Tchataldja only. At first it had been intended to make a stand at Adrianople; but it was pointed out to the Turks that such a policy could only delay the crisis, and increase their difficulties without any corresponding advantages. Sir A. Layard insisted that it would be impossible for England to interfere on behalf of Turkey only. She could only do so if her own interests were menaced. That case would not occur until the capital was menaced. Hence the best method to enlist such sympathies and gain such assistance as England was able and willing to give, would be by allowing the Russians—nay, forcing them—to advance on Constantinople itself. Then the moment for British interference, as foreshadowed by Lord Derby, would arrive, and the question no longer be one between the Porte and the Russian government only, but between England and Russia.

To this view the Turkish government gladly subscribed, and were delighted at the prospect of British intervention in whatever shape it might be presented. They at once signified their readiness to accede to the proposal, and gave the necessary orders.

All this occurred between December 15th and December 20th. As early as that, the future policy of the Turks, as carried out to the conclusion of peace, was definitely settled in its broad outlines, as was pointed out at the time in an article published in the *Examiner*, entitled, "A Bold Project." This article appeared on December 22nd, and ran as follows:—

"A plan of campaign, as much of a political as of a military character, has been communicated to the Turkish authorities, and has apparently been accepted by them. Into the origin of this plan, interesting as the inquiry might be, it is scarcely necessary to examine. In whatever fertile brain it

may first have arisen, its suggestion to the Turkish government removes it from the field of fanciful imagination to the practical range of accomplished facts. Nor does it much signify what motives dictated the proposal of this plan. Such motives can be imagined as being of diametrically opposed natures. And equally diametrically opposed may be the possible results. What the actual result may be, will depend upon the energy with which the plan is carried out by the one party, or turned to advantage by the other.

"The original idea of this plan is based on the conviction of the Turks, that, under certain circumstances, they would be able to secure the assistance of one or more foreign powers in the war against Russia. The plan itself is, that the Porte should concentrate all its forces at its disposal in the Quadrilateral and the passes leading to it, thus leaving the road to Constantinople perfectly open. Constantinople itself would be strongly garrisoned, and the Russians practically invited to come and take it, or confine their efforts to the reduction of the whole Quadrilateral, with its fortresses of Rustzuk, Silistria, Schumla, Rasgrad, Varna, and the lines and earthworks which could be thrown up in various points, and defended with the energy of which the defence of Plevna has shown the Turks to be so capable. But the situation in the Quadrilateral would be very different from that at Plevna. Plevna fell on account of the impossibility of keeping open the communications with it. But in the Quadrilateral, the communications with the capital could always be kept open by the Black Sea, of which the Turks have the control, *viâ* Varna, through which any amount of the material at the disposal of the Turks, from all sources, covert and overt, would be poured. It is quite impossible to form any estimate of the time that would be requisite for the Russians to end the campaign if the Turks should adopt this plan. The transport of heavy siege material from Plevna and elsewhere would, it is true, be favoured by the hardness of the roads in winter-time; but this advantage would be more than counter-balanced by the difficulties of constructing siege-works and trenches, &c., in the frozen ground.

"Nor is this all. The matter is to be still further complicated by fresh reinforcements from Egypt, to the number of 20,000 men, for the protection of Constantinople or otherwise, but in all probability for Constantinople, if certain obvious objections of the Porte can be overcome. Further, the policy thus recommended in Europe, it has been suggested, should also be extended to Asia, and the same military tactics adopted there as in European Turkey, with, no doubt, certain modifications, which can easily be imagined.

"This project has received apparent confirmation already from two quarters—from the Russian head-quarters, and from Egypt. On Tuesday, the *Daily News* correspondent at the Russian head-quarters, stated that the military authorities were at first strongly in favour of an immediate advance across the Balkans to Adrianople, 'but that another course has been, at least temporarily, dictated by the more diplomatic element of the imperial head-quarters.' We are in a position to state that this course was dictated in consequence of the above plan having become known to the Russian authorities. The second confimation is contained in a letter from the *Daily News* correspondent at Alexandria, in which he states that the Sublime Porte had sent a demand to the Khedive for 20,000 fresh troops, and that a contingent of 6,000 men is about to leave for Constantinople. These facts, still further strengthened by the arrival of Suleiman Pasha from Varna with 10,000 men, must be considered not so much as confirmatory evidence of the plan we have mentioned, but rather as evidence of the rapidity and energy with which it is being put into execution; and it is probably not too much to say, that the same considerations which dictated its adoption, also dictated the meeting of parliament at so unusually early a period.

"Now, the motives which induce the Turks and their friends to adopt this plan are so clear as to speak for themselves. Either the Russians will be obliged to let General Todleben commence the weary work of digging the grave of the Porte with the spade in the Quadrilateral—as Todleben himself had already advised—or they must be prepared to risk the danger of the war party in England succeeding in entrapping the country into war, with the cry of 'Constantinople in danger!' And lest this should not be sufficient to move those who refuse to believe in any danger to Constantinople from Russia, the renewed assistance of Egypt under these particular circumstances has been determined upon, in order

to force the Russians to identify Egypt with Turkey, and bring on demands for explanations which might result in a *casus belli*, or the fall of the Beaconsfield ministry. Which of the two is the more probable is a matter of serious consideration.

"The importance of this momentous question cannot be overrated. It speaks for itself. Equally important are the views taken of it by the two great powers, besides England, who are most deeply interested in the settlement of affairs in the East; and no less important than the relations existing between these two powers themselves—Austria and Prussia—and their respective and mutual relations towards Russia and England. In effect, the German government states, emphatically, that it cannot separate itself from Russia, or refuse to endorse any claims Russia may choose to make, as long as those claims do not injure German interests. At the same time the German government never wearies in pointing out that it is the interest and duty of England to protect European interests in the East, intensely hopes that the temper of the nation may be roused to the roar-pitch, and incessantly deprecates the idea of the Marquis of Salisbury, that Germany would act under any circumstances against Russia, as a fundamental error. That the marquis might be eliminated from the cabinet is their sincere desire. If that were accomplished, they are convinced that Lord Derby's constitutional characteristics would prevent his remaining any obstacle to the policy they would speedily see Lord Beaconsfield carrying out. In short, no stone will be left unturned to induce this country to declare war, or to induce Russia to make such demands as we have already alluded to, and thus precipitate the catastrophe.

"As regards Austria, her views as to the march of the Russians on Constantinople are rather remarkable, and bear different constructions. The Austrian government has signified that it would not object to an occupation of Constantinople in the same sense as the German occupation of Paris, in order to satisfy the popular and military mind in Russia. That such an event would be regarded as eminently dangerous by the military element in Austria and England is, of course, but natural. But this is a consideration which must yield to broader views. The question to be answered is, whether Germany and Austria would remain passive if the temporary occupation of Constantinople by the Russians should threaten to become permanent. And then the question is, if Austria and Prussia should consent to remain thus passive, whether England could not secure her interests in another quarter without incurring the expenses and horrors of a war. The question as to whether Austria's consent to a temporary occupation of Constantinople may not be the result of a trap laid for her by Prussia, is a matter for her own private consideration. Here, again, broader considerations must prevail; for though Austria might disappear, Germany would remain, and it is immaterial for us whether it is A or B who protects those German interests which Prince Bismarck has declared he will protect, and which also protect Constantinople. It is also conceivable that Austria might be willing to allow a temporary occupation of Constantinople, with the full knowledge that the further the Russian army advanced from their basis of operations, the easier it would be to cut their communications.

"All this is as clear to the advocates of action in favour of the Turks as it is to those who are opposed to it. On public grounds the matter does not allow of argument. But private interests have found a reply to the opponents of such action which may appear very plausible to those in whose hands the decision may be imagined, in some circumstances, to lie. It is said, that much as Germany would like to oppose Russia at Constantinople, she has no option in the matter, and must co-operate with Russia. It is also pointed out, at the same time, that much as Austria would like to oppose Russia likewise, she cannot do so, because she is bound to Prussia, and that, therefore, England—as the only nation which is unfettered—must play a bold and spirited policy. This is a very plausible argument; but bold and spirited as the policy of England ought always to be, it is no part of our duty to assist Germany to keep Alsace and Lorraine, nor to protect Austria against Prussian designs, if any such designs exist. What we have to regard are our own interests in the event of Russia's exceeding her programme of emancipation; and we have to consider whether our interests in the East can best be consulted by fighting Russia single-handed, for the possession of Constantinople, or by establishing ourselves in a position which would effectually secure our interests against attacks."

Thus the *Examiner*. With a few unimportant modifications, the programme here laid down was carried out to the letter. The existence of this plan was communicated to Count Münster, and, within a day, found its way to the Russian head-quarters. Count Beust was also made acquainted with it, and led to his stating what the views of the Austrian government were in respect to an occupation of Constantinople. These views were as expressed in the *Examiner* article.

The result of this premature disclosure of the plans of the British government was, that the Russians determined to accept the challenge, and, whilst not neglecting the Quadrilateral, still not to undertake its reduction, but to follow up the retreating Turks and dictate their terms before the very walls of Constantinople, and thus force the British government also to show its hand, by declaring specifically what the interests were which it considered of paramount importance in Turkey; and also what means it was intended should be taken to secure those interests.

The Russian diplomatists calculated, that if Great Britain were really prepared to support its interests by force of arms, such a proceeding would be synonymous with a partition of Turkey, or, at any rate, to the commencement of such partition; and if such were to be the case, then Russia also would be able to drop her mask of benevolent action towards the Christians in Turkey, and also take her stand upon "interests."

The fact is, that both the governments at St. James's and St. Petersburg, as well as at the Ballhausplatz in Vienna, could no longer refuse to face the fact, that the days of Turkey, as an independent power, were counted, and that the first great blow having been struck by Russia at the very foundations of the empire, they would have to secure what each considered indispensable for its interests.

It was for this reason that Lord Beaconsfield did not allow any intervention immediately after the fall of Plevna, in spite of the impatient appeals of his party and the Philo-Turk party. He knew that intervention at that point would be immediately construed, by the Opposition and by the Turks, as intervention in favour of the Turkish government; and that even if successful, that intervention would only result in the re-establishment of the old order of things, however much it might be disguised. Turkey, he said plainly, must be utterly broken first, so that the clashing interests of Russia and England be brought face to face without the interposition of Turkey in any shape or form. He saw that the end of Turkey had approached, and was determined that England should not suffer by the catastrophe.

This view of the matter was also taken at Vienna, and, there is little reason to doubt, at Berlin also. At both capitals it was recognised that the apple was not yet ripe enough to be shaken down. A few more blows would suffice, and then the moment for intervention would arrive, and the division, in whatever form, of the spoil.

Meantime, however, the fiction of an independent Turkey had to be kept up, and also the fiction of the sanctity of treaties. These fictions were still to cost a vast loss of life, and a vaster amount of misery. It is in consequence of such fictions, that since the close of the American civil war, Europe has presented the aspect of one vast camp. Every nation has already armed or is arming to the teeth; and the relations of one country to the other are more or less framed on the basis of war in abeyance, rather than the basis of actual peace. Practically, there is but an armistice between the most important powers, and a state of things that calls to mind the truces entered into during the Crusades. But this modern peace does not possess the advantages which recommended those of the dark and middle ages. When the Crusaders entered into their truces with the Paynim. it was perfectly well understood that such truces were to terminate at a certain date, after the lapse of five, ten, fifteen, and even twenty years. When the term agreed upon had expired, war recommenced, or the truce was renewed on the same conditions, or with certain modifications, as the case might be, and as experience had judged necessary. But, under all circumstances, peace was actually ensured for the time determined upon, and there was then, at least, so much confidence in the word of honour given by either combatant, that there was no fear of the compact being broken before the period had elapsed.

Now, however, the sacred character of a treaty has practically disappeared, chiefly, indeed, in consequence of the rapidity of the changes which an ever-advancing civilisation entails. These changes are such that they frequently render the stipulations

of peace far more onerous to one or the other party than they were ever intended to be. The natural consequence is, that the nation upon which these stipulations bear with undue severity, chafes under the restraint, considers itself unjustly treated—and with reason—and seeks eagerly for an opportunity to throw off the fetters which changing circumstances have invested with a weight far beyond the original burden.

When, for instance, the treaty of Paris was signed, there was no idea of the Suez Canal becoming a reality. Railways, telegraphs, steam-ships, have increased at a rate which has enormously altered the relations of one country to another. Fresh centres of commerce have been opened up, both for supply and demand; the emission of endless loans has so interwoven the interests of one country with another, that what may have been fit and just ten years ago, is now highly antiquated, out of place, and unjust.

This fact has been fully recognised by practical men, by the mercantile community at large; and it is, moreover, so self-evident, that treaties regulating the commercial relations of one country with the other, are not concluded for a theoretical perpetuity, but for a certain stipulated number of years, at the end of which, either party can give notice of withdrawal for the purposes of confirmation, revision, or modification, according to the change of circumstances.

This principle is undoubtedly a sound one; and if, when sufficiently tested, it works well in commercial affairs, where the sharpness of self-interest attains its acme, there seems to be no valid reason why it should not be followed in purely political treaties, at least in the very great majority of cases. Here and there, and under certain circumstances, cases might arise in which it would be advisable to make the treaty final, as far as finality in matters human can be secured; but, generally speaking, no treaty should be concluded for a longer period than twenty-one years, in order to allow the coming generation to judge of their fathers' work, and allowed to revise it, the understanding being, that at the end of that period the contracting powers should meet, and consider whether the contract should be confirmed or subjected to such arrangements as might be collectively agreed upon. Not only would such an arrangement be best calculated to prevent war from breaking out, but it would also be the first and most important step to the establishment of an international tribunal for the regulation of international questions.

It would have been not only wiser, but more honest, had the powers concerned abandoned the fictions of the treaty of Paris and the independence of Turkey, and proceeded to start from entirely fresh lines, simply considering how their separate interests could be secured to fall in with the welfare of the people concerned, whether Turks, Jews, or Christians.

As it was, however, the war was decreed to go on to the bitter end, and thousands of people to be sacrificed in order to ripen the apple, which so many claimants were waiting to share between them.

CHAPTER XXVII.

"GENERAL WINTER" IN THE FIELD.

WHILST waiting for reinforcements, General Gourko's forces, encamped on the bleak ridges of the Balkans, within range of the Turkish batteries and rifle-fire, had a hard time of it; but still were not in so deplorable a condition as their enemies. Great, however, as were the discomforts, the hardships, under the rule of "General Winter," were not so severe in the mountains of the Balkans as they would have been in the plains of Roumania or in Russia itself, where the icy east blasts across the uninterrupted surface of bare ground, chilling man and beast to death.

In the Balkans the mountains protected the men from the cutting winds, whilst the forests supplied an abundance of fuel, and thus fires blazed on every side where the soldiers had rigged up their shelter-tents between the smooth, straight beech trunks,

and had their garments all hung about to dry; there was a continuous musical ring of axes and sabres cutting fuel, only interrupted by the infernal whizz and angry crack of Turkish shells; rifles were stacked in long irregular lines, or were clustered about the large trees; and crowds of soldiers were gathered about the kitchens or busied with the details of their simple toilettes. Some of the bivouacs were continually exposed to rifle-fire; not that they were in sight of the Turkish lines, but the bullets went over the crest of the hill, and grazing the earthworks, came dropping into the bivouac in the rear, chipping the trees and wounding men and horses. They were not spent bullets either, for they still had force enough to go through a three-inch sapling, and then stick in a tree beyond. The soldiers in their bivouacs dug great holes in the ground, pitched their tents over them, and then piled the earth and sods up on the side towards the enemy, so they had a very good shelter at all times. The fires were also built in little earthworks, for no one liked to have a live bullet in his kitchen; and whenever there was a fusillade nearly every man was under cover. The shells and shrapnel came in, but the men took the risk of these projectiles, and attempted no defence against them. A thin cloud of blue smoke from the fires rising out of the tree-tops, and drifting away to leeward, marked exactly where the bivouac was placed, both to the eyes of friends away back in the town, and to the sharp sight of the enemy near at hand. Thus closely together lay the two armies on the mountain tops, and when the snow covered the ground, the picturesqueness of the mountain bivouacs was without parallel. The tree trunks came out sharply with their deep grey colour against the pure white, and every figure was in distinct silhouette. Before the snow fell, the grey over-coats of the soldiers harmonised exactly with the colours of the carpet of dead leaves, and it was difficult to distinguish the men from the ground they lay on. In the snow, too, was written more plainly than with words, the history of the movements of each man in the skirmish line. One could follow every step of the advance of the Russians as they drove the Turks from tree to tree upon the open summit, and mark just where each soldier sought shelter—the means he took to get nearer the enemy; and one could even judge accurately the state of the soldier's mind as he dodged from tree to tree, whether he was reckless or cautious, enterprising or timid. The tracks of the Russian boots followed up the prints of the Turkish sandals, just as one finds, in the freshly-fallen snow in the country, the track of a cat following the trail of a bird as it goes from bush to bush in the garden, and then a few feathers and a drop or two of blood, which marks distinctly where the prey was taken. Pink stains on the white ground among the trees on the mountain were only two eloquent, and here and there a pool of blood, that had flowed warm and melted the snow in a dark red spot, showed where men had been hit hard, and the impression of the bodies where they fell, the tracks of the comrades who came to carry them away—all was there, unmistakably, even too plainly legible. The Turkish dead, stripped by their friends for the ragged woollen clothes they wore, lay nearly naked on the spot where they had fallen, their bare legs and arms half buried in the snow, the ghastly spectacle all the more impressive in the cruel cold and the desolate landscape. Nothing, in all the previous battles of the war, was so impressive as the sights of a short hour on the mountain the afternoon of the attack, capture, and final surrender again of the redoubt on the summit of the Baba Konak Pass. The majestic solemnity of the mountain scenery; the awful mystery of the wild forest; the cold, the snow, and the driving mist; the freshly wounded and the dead in the snow close by; the living who were telling the story of the fight with their rifles still hot in their hands—these were surroundings to make one realise the full extent of the horrors of the war in the mountains. As for the wounded, they were almost equally badly off on both sides, and with the advent of the severe weather their sufferings increased tenfold. Some of the wounds were wonderfully eccentric. One man was shot through the lungs, and for some days he actually breathed through the hole in his chest, as could be seen by holding a match to the aperture, when it was literally blown out by the man's breath. Another, a Russian, was wounded just above the right knee, whence the bullet, winding spirally, cork-screw fashion up his leg, finally lodged under his left shoulder-blade. A third, a Turk, was struck in the left cheek by one bullet which also traversed the other, and at almost the same moment was hit by a second in his right cheek,

which also sped through the left. Still, though the cold and the snow severely tried both the healthy and the wounded, they were less trying than the sleet and rain, alternating with heavy drenching mists, which saturated everything with water, and filled rifle-pits and trenches. At these times, when a thick curtain of opaque mist hid the enemy, the effect of the talking and bustle in their lines, as it was magnified by the fog, was surprising. It seemed as if one could almost touch them with a sword's point, and there was a consequent incertitude on each side as to what the other was doing that was very trying, quite apart from the difficulties of the position: for bleak mountain tops are not favourable spots for bivouacs; and although the cold had not yet been very intense, the men had had a sufficient degree to give a good idea of what life on the mountains would be when the winter settled down in earnest, and the snow lay three feet or more deep. Even as it was, the mountain landscape had quite an Arctic aspect, peak on peak as white and unbroken as the summits of the highest Alps, and the plains of Sophia in the distance completely snow-carpeted. But the soldiers accommodated themselves to the snow and cold very well. They had plenty of fresh meat and soup, were warmly clad, and, considering the difficulties of the campaign, as well off as could be expected. Still, as may be imagined, they were eager for a change of some sort, and great was the joy when the news of the fall of Plevna reached them. Officers embraced each other, soldiers cheered, and cheered and cheered again, and everybody felt free to give way to the wildest expressions of delight. General Gourko went to the positions with his staff to tell the great news to the troops in the bivouac there. He remained with Count Schouvaloff, and his aides-de-camp went up into the intrenchments with the tidings. The cheers in the bivouacs had announced, long before the aides-de-camp arrived, an event of more than usual importance, and all the soldiers were curious to know what had happened. When they were told the news they jumped upon the parapets and waved their caps at the astonished Turks, who were close by on the opposite ridge, and gave round after round of hurrahs. The sun, which had been veiled for days, just at this time shone out brightly, and the mist dissipated, giving the opposing lines, for the first time for a week, a fair sight of each other. In the batteries the numbers were ordered to their posts, and then, while the parapets were lined with men, all waving their caps and cheering frantically, volley after volley of shell was thrown into the enemy's fortification, for once a joyous and triumphant cannonade. The cheers spread like a wave from one end to the other of the line, down in the ravines, back in the woods—away on the summits went the sound until it became a faint hum in the distance, and died away and was renewed again with repeated energy for a long while. This was the beginning of the *fête*, and that day nothing that could be eaten and drunk to celebrate the tidings was spared, especially as, fortunately for the banqueters, a sutler arrived with an immense train of waggons laden with every kind of groceries, delicacies, and small wares, and began to unpack his goods in an empty shop opposite the general's head-quarters. The news of this arrival spread quicker than even the report of the fall of Plevna, to judge by the crowd of officers of every rank who besieged the entrances to the shop long before the proprietor had any intention of opening the establishment. The covers were off some of the cases, disclosing sugar, preserves, bottles, and stationery; and this attraction was too great to be resisted, so the crowd entered the shop with good-natured shouldering and hustling, and began to pile up the articles they wanted with a recklessness that would have broken the heart of a methodical shopkeeper. They dived into the great cases, bringing out, with shouts of delight, all kinds of *bon-bons* and candies, jams and jellies, which they laid hold of with the eagerness of children, and began to eat on the spot. The sutler and his assistants could do nothing but make spasmodic attempts to regulate the distribution of the stores, which only made the confusion greater, and the happy crowd elbowed and pushed, and continued to help themselves in abundance. As each one gathered his stock of plunder, he was as impatient to pay for it as he had been to get hold of it; and although the sutler calmly took four times the price of the goods at Bucharest, the tariff was never questioned, and bright new gold pieces rattled into his canvas bag in a stream, making music that would have delighted a miser. Doubtless the glitter of the gold blinded his eyes to the scene of indescribable confusion.

It was really an interesting and ludicrous spectacle, this merry attack on the sutler's shop. Colonels and captains, staff officers and surgeons, all jostling one another like so many children at a table full of *bonbons*, burying their arms deep in the cases where the sweets were, loading themselves with bottles and parcels, laughing and talking and joking all the time. Officers splashed with mud, their faces tanned and roughened with exposure, dipped into the pots of jam and broke open boxes of *bonbons* with laughable earnestness, as if they had been denied sweets since their childhood, and their early taste had only grown the stronger from long abstinence. From the bivouac in the snow on the mountain, where black hard bread and sugarless tea had, perhaps, been for days their chief diet, to a shop piled full of delicacies, was a change which must be experienced to be realised in its entire extent, and, notwithstanding the ludicrous aspect of the performance, it had a serious side which no one could fail to remark at the moment. This was the absolute necessity for supplying troops exposed to the severity of a winter with such fat and warmth-producers as sugar, oil, or fat. In a mountainous country sugar is the best stimulant of its kind, either pure or in coffee or chocolate. Chocolate is especially beneficent. During some of the long Carlist marches under Dorregaray, a cake or two of chocolate kept the men in good spirits for the whole day, and effectually staved off the cravings of hunger whilst really furnishing nutriment.

Meantime, trying as was the winter with its snows, rains, and posts for the Russians, it was still more trying to the Turks in the field, and especially to the prisoners. The plains of Roumania presented a vast surface of snow, only broken by the bleak telegraph poles and the fluttering of carrion crows. At times these birds of prey increased in numbers, making almost black the leaden sky. Then afar off, breaking the horizon, a long dark line would come slowly moving in caterpillar-fashion along the road, resolving itself into a column of Turkish prisoners, in front of whom gleamed the bayonets of their Dorobantz guards as they plodded slowly forward under the weight of their miscellaneous kit. Following came a few Turkish officers, either on ponies or on foot. Behind them marched the men who once kept the flower of the Russian army at bay round Plevna. Spiritless and broken they looked as they trudged wearily along the road to their captivity. Half-starved, almost dead with fatigue and the severe cold, many with fever burning in their eyes —mere stalking bones and foul rags—such had become the brave troops who made the fame of Osman Pasha. Suffering from typhus and small-pox, many fell out of the ranks to lie down and die. "One poor fellow has thrown himself on the snow by the road-side; he can go no further. A comrade, loth to leave him, follows and tries to persuade him to struggle once more to join the line. There is no response. He has swooned or is dead. A soldier of the rear-guard now comes up and roughly pushes the living man back to the ranks. Then he kicks with his foot the bundle of rags on the ground. There is no sign. With the butt-end of his gun he turns the head over from the snow. The eyes glare at him with a fixed stare. He is dead. The soldier brutally pushes the body deeper into the snow, shoulders his rifle, and joins his guard.

"Thousands of birds of prey whirl round and settle in front and rear, always following this grim procession like sharks round a doomed ship. A few yards further on lies, half-covered with snow, a nude body of another dead Turk, stripped by his companions for the little warmth of the rags he wore. A crow has just settled on his clenched hand, and the dogs are slinking round their victim. A few paces more brings us to another miserable, lying as he died with upturned face, staring on heaven through the fast-falling snow. We must now be near a village, for there are pigs about, and we have just seen a skirmish between these swine and the dogs, to see which shall be first at this horrible carrion. It is the village of Putenieu, almost lost in the snow and ice. How different the place looked from what it was when I first passed through its streets in the early summer! The Russian advance guard had then only just gone by, and I was in search of Dragimiroff to know where the great crossing of the Danube was to take place. We were then suffering from mosquitoes, intense heat, and blinding dust. Now we were shivering in our furs with cold. Putenieu has become a place of great importance since those days. It is now one of the resting-places for sick and wounded soldiers on the road from the Danube to Fratesti, or to the hospitals at Bucharest and in Russia.

"It is in Putenieu that Dr. H. Sandwith has erected, with funds from the England-Russian Sick and Wounded Society, an Etape or Hospice to shelter one thousand men. Hundreds of the Turkish sick passing through to Russia also find shelter and comfort within its walls from the severe cold weather. The director, M. le Baron de Benckendorff, and for the while our good host, is full of work. Not only do his own sick and wounded appeal to his sympathy, but also the miserable Turks; and they pass through in thousands daily, dead beat, and weary from their long march. 'Four thousand passed through to-day,' said the baron to me the morning I arrived. 'Our little village is over-crowded with the sick they have left behind. This evening four thousand more are expected.' A loaf of bread and a pound of meat are given to each prisoner just before entering the town. Then they are billeted for the night on the inhabitants, choking up their little hovels, breeding vermin and pestilence wherever they go. It is indeed hard on the villagers of Putenieu, for there is an endless stream of prisoners. No sooner has one column left than another enters the village.

"Unfortunately, through this bad arrangement on the part of the Russian and Roumanian authorities, the inhabitants expend their annoyance on the poor prisoners, and the Roumanian peasants are very cruel and brutal. They beat these poor wretches, illtreat the sick, and after the darkness hides their cruelty from the Russian eyes, they turn them out into the cold night, which means in their plight, half starved and semi-nude, certain death, for the thermometer registers sometimes twenty degrees Reaumur below zero. The result is, that the little dead-house opposite my lodgment is well tenanted the next morning with frozen corpses. Dr. Sandwith and myself visited this charnel-house. There are two rooms. In one, ten or twelve bodies were lying as they had been pitched in dead, and others must still have had some life left by their expression and the position of their bodies. In the other room four Turks had sought shelter from the bitterness of the night, and had cleared a space in the mass of dead, and with scraps of rags from the bodies, and some sticks of straw, had lighted a fire, and were crowded round the wretched smoulder for warmth. One poor shivering wretch, nearly naked, crawled from where he was thought to be lying dead towards the group, and feebly struggled with the rest for a place at the fire. Dr. Sandwith remonstrated with them in Turkish for their unkindness to their miserable comrade, and so the poor creature was allowed to huddle in with the cheerless circle. We asked them what we could do for them. They were very hungry, some not having eaten for three days. Major Baker and the doctor, who were with me, sought in the village for food; but nothing, for love or money, could be got but onions and bread. The Russians or Roumanians profess to give them bread and meat for daily rations; but there is no doubt that many in some way get none, and there are hundreds who, through sickness, cannot eat this rough fare. Soup is dealt out to many by order of the kindly baron, but only the stronger who struggle for it receive it. The weaker go to the wall, and die neglected from sheer starvation, as their poor emaciated bodies will testify in the little dead-house. The weather has been more than usually severe for the last two days, and the mortuary is crowded with dead Turks piled up several feet high, and crowding the passage leading into the street. Every morning waggons cart them, unwashed, uncovered, to the huge pit outside the village, and there these brave and long-suffering men find a last resting-place."

Such is the description given by the correspondent of the *Daily News*, as to the way in which the Russians treated their prisoners on the march. Severer still were their hardships when winter set in with all its rigour, and the thermometer sank down to 17 degrees Reaumur below zero. Taken all in all, more perished—men, women, and children—in the months of December and January than during the whole year.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

PASSAGE OF THE ETROPOL BALKANS.

NOT until Christmas-day—fifteen days after the fall of Plevna—had sufficient reinforcements arrived for General Gourko to continue his advance.

It had been evident, for some time, that he would either have to retire from the positions he had taken on the mountains near the Baba Konak Pass, or else cross the range at any cost, for the severity of the weather made it almost impossible to bring up the supplies and ammunition, and life in the bivouacs on the mountain became daily more and more difficult. Scarcely a night passed but frozen hands and feet were counted by hundreds. Thirty soldiers were frozen to death during four days of a great storm, and the number of sick from exposure amounted to more than 2,000. Before the snow-storm the mountain paths had been rivers of mud, and when these froze solid they became quite impassable, and steps had to be cut with axes. The thin shelter-tents, torn by the wind, and with difficulty kept fastened to the ground in the gales, were exchanged for rude huts covered with turf and logs, and holes dug in the steep banks among the trees. The transports containing warm clothing, which had been long talked of as on the road somewhere between Sistova and Orkhanieh, were not even expected to arrive for weeks, and the soldiers made use of the skins of the bullocks and sheep they slaughtered to wrap their feet in and to make jackets of; but with such meagre resources there was little enough alleviation of the suffering from the cold; and then the men in the trenches along the watershed were constantly exposed, not only to the bullets of the enemy near at hand, but to the insidious attacks of the frost, which too often proved a much more dreaded foe.

The Turks suffered in an untold degree; but they had much more skill than the Russians, not only in constructing earthworks, but in building shelters; and often the miserably-clad infantryman behind the breastworks was found stowed away in comfortable little huts of logs and straw, where a small fire kept several soldiers warm; and for the time he remained there he made these huts his home, and defended them as such. The Russian infantryman, on the contrary, rarely considered himself at home in the trenches, because he remained but a few days, and then was relieved and sent elsewhere. This constant rotation added greatly to the comfort of the soldiers; but for actual service in earthworks it was a mistake, for the soldier who lives for weeks in a breastwork learns every foot of the ground in front, and, when the time comes, will advance with confidence or defend his hut with desperation. The trenches at Plevna illustrated perfectly the difference between the Turk and the Russian in this respect. So in the Balkans, while the Russians endured every discomfort on the mountain tops, the enemy, under the same conditions, was comparatively comfortable. The severe cold was not only unexpected, but was quite unseasonable; and when the reinforcements arrived, they found themselves obliged to bivouac in the snow, because every foot of ground in the town of Orkhanieh was already occupied.

The scenes in Orkhanieh during the storm and cold surpassed description. Generals quartered in fireless rooms and in mud houses, and soldiers sheltered behind piles of snow, or clustered in groups about small fires, were patiently waiting day after day. Officers came in at all hours of the day and night, many on foot from Osikovo, exhausted, half frozen, seeking shelter which money could not buy. Salt failed, and bread became scarce; fifteen francs being given for a small loaf. Wood was a luxury which few could obtain in any abundance; for, although there were forests in every direction, all the empty carts were used in bringing wood for the hospitals and ovens, and so there were many cases of frozen feet and hands in the town itself.

Before daylight on Christmas morning the bugles sounded the *réveille* again and again, and soon the infantry crowded the streets on the march towards Vratshesh. It was bitterly cold and frosty. The fog had settled down so densely, that before sunrise

the darkness was absolutely impenetrable; and even after daybreak, objects across the narrow street were vague and indistinct. The fog clung to the houses and trees and the clothing of the soldiers, and froze there, covering every surface with a glistening garment of pure white. At nine o'clock General Gourko and his staff left the town for the bivouac of the dragoons on the chaussée just behind the positions there.

It was a rare spectacle this group of horsemen as they moved slowly along the ice-paved chaussée. The aides-de-camp were dressed in the most fantastic costumes. Some were in great-coats of dressed skins ornamented with embroidery and buttons. Some were enveloped in Circassian cloaks, all doubled up with the weight of additional clothing, and with capuchons and wraps about the head. General Gourko, leading the group, was alone dressed in a simple surtout, without mufflers of any kind. He rode along apparently unconscious that the frost was turning his beard white, and covering himself and horse with frozen crystals. It resembled more a carnival cavalcade than a general with his staff, the effect being heightened by the picturesque Kuban Cossacks in the convoy with their sheep-skin hats and curious weapons.

Before the force had been out half-an-hour icicles hung from the men's beards and from the horses' mouths, and like a procession of so many Father Christmases they rode into the defiles through the chill fog, the view being limited to the snow-laden trees along the road-side. The soldiers began to straggle, several dropped, overcome with cold and fatigue, and some were injured by falling on the ice. Shortly after passing Vratshesh the fog became thinner, and the white mountain tops, glistening in the sunlight, shone through the mist as if hung in the air, for the oases were still hidden by the vapour. The road followed by Generals Gourko and Rauch was the one leading from Vratshesh to Lukovo (as shown in sketch X), and from which the old high-road to Sophia turned off shortly after leaving Vratshesh and crossing the Balkans north of the village of Tchuriak. This road was the principal thoroughfare towards Etropol before the chaussée was made. It had been disused for a number of years, and was never more than a narrow neglected bridle-path. It was almost lost among the trees, was gullied with the rain, and grown over with bushes. A few days before the advance, two battalions of the Praobrajensky regiment began to work on the path, graded it somewhat, widened it nearly the whole extent, and cut steps in the ice in the steepest place up to the summit. A portion of the way was in full sight of the Turkish redoubts east of Baba Konak. Therefore work could be undertaken only at night; and when the advance was made, the path was so good that it was believed that cannon could be brought up with horses. But for a long time, when the road was crowded with men and material, it was completely blocked with artillery and infantry. The soldiers made fires along the path and cooked their suppers, taking matters very easy. Four guns and their caissons were hauled up by hand, and caused great delay. The ropes were short, permitting not more than sixty men to take hold; and even this number worked with exasperating deliberation. They were soldiers of the line that were detailed to bring up the first cannon—small men, unused to such work, and, after a long march from Plevna, did not enter with any enthusiasm into the novel and exhausting labour.

General Rauch stood half-way up the first steep incline, encouraging the men to pull, and spurring up the officers. The whole night long he climbed up and down the slippery path, endeavouring to communicate some of his activity to the officers and men. The distance up the mountain was, perhaps, four miles, and the entire route was lined with soldiers sleeping on the ice, or gathered around small fires in the snow. When they were awakened and ordered to move on, they never showed any impatience, but, with their inimitable *sang-froid*, got up and walked a few paces and then slept again, dropping down like dead men. Towards midnight General Gourko came up the path, followed by his staff. He could no longer endure the delay, and his sleepless energy would not permit him to remain inactive in the rear. A Cossack post was found on the summit of the watershed, and here the general and his staff lay down on the snow around two fires, which were kept low that the enemy might not notice them, and slept like the soldiers. The Praobrajensky regiment had advanced into the village of Tchuriak, which had already for some days been occupied by the dragoon outposts, and with them part of the train of packhorses had descended in the early part of the night, so that there was little to eat,

and meagre comfort in the snow bivouac. Officers and soldiers lay around indiscriminately as near the fires as they could get, for the icy wind was blowing across the peak, and the snow was freezing hard.

The sun rose on a scene of wonderful picturesqueness and a landscape of serene beauty. Generals and aides-de-camp, some wrapped in bourkas and furs, some in overcoats alone, without additional covering, lay there in the snow huddled together about the fires. Cossacks and dragoons were already busy with their cooking, and hundreds of horses, tied to the trees about the bivouac, stamped impatiently in the snow. Southward lay the great plain of Sophia, its pure white face only broken by little dark lines where the villages were; and beyond, half veiled in dense clouds, were the mountains further south, and the great peak Vitosh that towers over Sophia. Through the trees eastward was clearly visible the great bare peak near the Baba Konak Pass, and the lines of the Turkish works were drawn on the snow as plainly as pencil-marks on white paper. General Rauch, always on foot, clambered up to the bivouac for a few moments' rest, and to consult with General Gourko. Then both General Rauch and General Gourko were off again to hasten the movements.

After a hurried breakfast the men again set to work at the cannon; and at last, by noon on the 26th of December, four 4-pounders, with caissons, were placed on the watershed. News had come from the column on the right that the road was well-nigh impassable, and nothing whatever was heard from Dondeville on the left; but the guard had started up the mountains near Etropol, and worked with a will. The road down to Tchuriak, being in sight of the Turkish positions, was closed by patrols, and no movement permitted in that direction. Everywhere all over the mountain top soldiers bivouacked in the snow in picturesque groups, cooking their food and drying their clothing, under little shelters constructed of snow and branches.

When the twilight came on, the whole force started down the mountain, everybody on foot, for the path was so steep and slippery that no horse could carry a rider down. A snow-storm began before they had gone far, and doubled the difficulty of the descent. Part of the way they slid down like so many schoolboys, and afterwards let themselves down through the undergrowth, for the road was one solid sheet of ice. Two or three miles of this work brought them to the head of the valley, and over the Balkans, breathless with the exertion of the descent. They paused a moment, and shook hands in the darkness, and then pushed on to the village, where they slept under a roof as peacefully as if the Turks were twenty miles instead of one mile away. That the Russians were thus allowed to cross the Balkans by so difficult a path, at such a season of the year, was quite inexcusable on the part of the Turks and officers, who, by their carelessness in looking after their outpost and *reconnaissance* services, were guilty of murder, and doubly so when they had such self-sacrificing men as the Turkish commanders had.

Tchuriak is a small village hidden away in a gorge, and a narrow valley winds through the hills to the plain beyond, a couple of hours' ride distant. At daybreak on the 27th, the brigade of Kuban Cossacks was sent down the valley with one regiment of infantry to the left, and one up on the height to the right, against some Turks in a little rifle-pit on the hill, who fired four rounds and then retired.

The enterprising Kubans pushed ahead, and saw, out on the plain, a long transport train slowly moving towards Baba Konak. They received orders to try and capture it. About three o'clock, two squadrons—scarcely more than 100 horsemen—dashed down into the plain and cut off half the train, more than 200 waggons laden with provisions and forage. The two squadrons of Turkish regular cavalry and Circassians retired immediately when the Kubans came down; but finding they were not outnumbered, returned and gave battle. After a short sharp fight, in which ten Turks were killed and two Cossacks wounded, the waggons were left in the Russians' hands. The Cossacks cut the telegraph wires, the infantry took up positions on the hills near the plain, past the village of Potop, and the passage of the Balkans was an accomplished fact.

At the same time, a part of the column of Dondeville was seen descending the slopes on the left, like a great black serpent; but it was a part only—the rest finding it impossible to get the artillery over the heights. A few prisoners were taken, who reported that the movement was a complete surprise; which seems incredible, considering the delays which occurred, and the impossibility of

finding routes which were not in plain sight of the enemy, especially as, on the 26th December, the brigade of Cossacks had raided up to the river Isker, surprised and routed various bands of Turkish Circassians, and cut off part of a large transport, escorted by two squadrons of cavalry and a battalion of infantry, gathered over 600 head of cattle and a large flock of sheep, and returned at night to Stolnik, having killed three-score of the enemy with a loss of three wounded.

In addition to Dondeville's column, General Weliaminoff's column, which was to have operated further west, also descended into the plains by the Tchuriak road, the descent to Zilava having proved impracticable. These troops had undergone the most severe hardships, and reported that the storm on the mountain was terrible. Soldiers who paused for a few moments became indistinguishable from masses of snow. Many strayed away. All suffered from want of food; and when they arrived at Sarantzi, or Tashkessen, after an almost continuous march of five days, and for thirty-six hours without a halt, they were drenched and half frozen together.

The crossing had thus far cost very few lives, and it was accomplished, too, in the face of unusually severe weather, and to the complete surprise of the enemy. The result of the operation was the occupation of the chaussé in force, by a large number of battalions of infantry, with artillery in abundance. Therewith all communication between the forces in the Baba Konak Pass and Sophia was cut off, and the only line of retreat left open for the Turks was that by way of Zlatitza, and thence to Tatar-Bazardjik and Philippopoli; whilst even along this line there was danger to be apprehended from the Russians in the Schipka Pass as soon as General Radetzki forced his way through, or the Turks opened it for him. Meantime the cavalry scoured the plain of Sophia, two regiments circling about as far eastward as Dolny-Kamarli, south of Baba Konak, and every day prisoners and captured supplies were brought in. News came in that Lutakovo was evacuated; and the latest reports from the positions in the pass, declared that the Turks had withdrawn several cannon from the earthwork on the summit of Greota, and were fortifying somewhere in their rear. They were found to have built three redoubts on the hill near Tashkessen, commanding the road at that point; and the first movement in force, south of the mountains, was to drive them from that position.

The attack was ordered for the morning of the 31st; and as this move was planned especially to give the lead to Dondeville, and so complete the chain about the Turks in the positions near the pass, the tidings which reached the force in the evening before the attack, that Dondeville's column had failed to cross the mountains, and had retired to Etropol, was anything but encouraging. The failure to cross was bad enough, but he had been obliged to leave cannon on the summit, and the artillerymen who remained with the guns were all frozen, and buried in the driving snow; and among the infantry the losses were also serious; for there was no shelter on the cold mountain sides, and the snow made a bivouac there quite impossible. So it was with a certain seriousness that the force went forward through the narrow little valley in the grey light of the early dawn.

The valley was crowded with reserves, and the artillery was struggling along the icy road. The valley and the mountains were covered with snow, the masses of pure white only broken by little dark spots of irregular shape, where villages stood, patches of forests on the slopes, scattered trees along the road, and the black straight line of the Russian troops as they marched to attack the positions.

Directly over the little village, on a sharp, rocky peak, was seen plainly the dark line of redoubts, and little camps with tents and huts, and lines of infantry filing down the mountains toward the village. Every man could be seen as plainly as black on white could be, both Turks and Russians; and the smoke from the first gun was waited for with the same impatience as one watches for the curtain to rise in a theatre, though a drama of most intense interest was about to commence, where the action was real, and the performers in all earnest, and the stage a broad landscape where every object was as distinctly visible as if presented on a mimic stage.

The Russian forces were divided into four columns. The extreme right, commanded by General Kurloff, was to cross the road and flank position by advancing over the mountain near where the village of Malkocevo is situated. The next column, and in reality the main force, was to rest on the road,

to demonstrate in front, and to turn the Turkish right flank, near the village of Danskioi, with five battalions, while another column was to cross the mountains between Danskioi and Gorny-Kamarli, and the force of Count Schouvaloff was to advance directly upon the rear of the enemy.

Shortly after daylight two batteries got into position within easy range of the redoubt on the Baba Konak, and began to work. General Rauch's column concentrated behind the hill to deploy right and left, and the sharpshooters stolidly climbed the hill where the redoubts were, and toiled slowly up among the rocks and bushes, whilst the Turkish riflemen stood waiting just in front of their earthworks, two or three together. The great, square, black masses of infantry, that stood just beyond the road, began to string out in long lines, and advance against the skirmishers towards the Turkish left; while two brigades of cavalry, that were sent towards Dolny-Kamarli, moved along in a thin straight line rapidly eastwards.

All the forenoon the artillery was exchanging shots with the two Turkish batteries. Scattered musketry was heard, and then the batteries from the hill in the rear of the Turks began to fire. Towards noon there was a brisk fusillade on the right. Shortly after it began there came the news that General Mirkovitch was wounded there. The column had met with a stubborn resistance. The Turks in the rifle-pits on the mountains defended their left with determination. A caisson exploded in the Turkish battery over the village, giving the signal for ringing cheers that went up all along the line, and Rauch's troops, which joined hands with Kurloff on their right, began to move up the hill between the batteries and the village, and soon were on the crest. The order to attack was given them about two o'clock; and just as they went forward down the slope towards the village, spreading out all over the field, there came a fog, under cover of which they rushed into the village, the Turks running away in every direction. The enemy's batteries ceased firing from the hill, and in a few moments the musketry dropped away into a few straggling shots.

The Russians entered the village before four o'clock. There were a few stray shots falling into the place, and several men were wounded there, for the Turks were still resisting stoutly at the Karaula, half a mile up the road; but the position was evacuated, and only the blood-stained, powder-blackened snow, and a score or two of dead men, showed where the fight had been so hot. In the village were herded hundreds of prisoners. Soldiers were ransacking every nook and corner for plunder. Infantrymen were frisking about on captured horses, and there was the ghastly spectacle of dead and wounded on every side. But the worst was not in the streets, for many houses in the village were filled with dead. There was a station of the British National Society of the Red Cross here, and several hospitals, and dead and alive were found lying together as in the charnel-houses of Plevna.

At dark the fight ceased. A thousand fires twinkled all over the white slopes, and the Russians slept in the houses where fires lighted by the Turks were still burning. The loss, in killed and wounded, amounted to about 300; but it was a victory cheaply gained; for though the key of the position, the mountain on their left, covering their retreat from Baba Konak by the road towards Zlatitza, was still held by the enemy, pickets pushed up the road to the Karaula. The Turks had resisted with great valour, for they were outnumbered three to one. Their communications with Sophia had been cut four days; they had seen the Russians pouring over into the valley, and dragging their artillery by paths which were believed to be impassable; they knew their only hope of retreat from Baba Konak was by the Zlatitza road, and they held their ground like heroes.

One of the first things picked up in the village was a despatch from Baker Pasha, who commanded there, to Chakir Pasha at Araba Konak, dated the same day, telling how eighteen battalions of Russians had descended the mountains, and twelve were attacking him, and that he was surrounded by a circle of fire. General Gourko did not sleep until he had prepared for the probable retreat of the forces from Baba Konak by sending all the cavalry at his disposal to Petricevo, for Dondeville was to make the crossing to Zlatitza with General Brock's column, and thus remedy in part his failure to cross to Mirkova.

New Year's morning was hazy and mild; and as Gourko and his staff rode up the road at daybreak, the mountain tops were all hidden from view. With his ordinary escort of a score or two, some dragomans, and a few Cossacks, the general rode slowly

on, passed the pickets at the Karaula, and down the hill towards the triangular valley south of Baba Konak. Half-a-dozen Cossacks galloped down the road and divided, part following the road towards Araba Konak, part towards Zlatitza. There was perfect quiet, and every one in the small group of horsemen seemed to feel the uncertainty of the imminent future, for there was little conversation, and they went on, passing a dead man here and there, tracing the paths by which the wounded had dragged themselves to the rear, and those who had fought at Tashkessen the day before, had hastily retreated. No *reconnaissance* had been made towards Baba Konak; in fact, General Gourko was making the *reconnaissance* then, riding along as usual at the head of his staff, with only a handful of his escort a short distance ahead of him. A dozen prisoners were soon brought back, and one or two gathered in by the Cossacks came straggling along the road.

Just beyond the place where the road divides, the route towards Baba Konak comes out upon a little knoll, whence the whole of the triangular valley is visible. Here General Gourko halted, and anxiously looked. Near the houses at Araba Konak were several Turkish cannons, and a dozen Cossacks were galloping towards them. All along the further side of the valley were men running through the snow. The Zlatitza road was trodden hard. Cavalry had passed that way, and much infantry; so it was not surprising to see in the village of Dolny-Kamarli, whither a number of waggons were hurrying, the unmistakable black masses of infantry filling the streets. Cossacks of the escort, who went in that direction, wheeled, and crossed the fields to the left. Those who went towards Araba Konak, rushed off after the flying stragglers, and one by one headed them in. It was an exciting chase, for the horses could not go fast through the deep snow, and the fugitives scampered away until fairly run down, though some knelt and threw up their hands whilst the Cossacks were yet a long distance away. Meanwhile the troops on the Zlatitza began to crawl up the hillside behind the town, clustered like ants altogether at the foot of the hill, and then, quite like these insects, filling up and struggling along on either side of the moving masses. Six, seven, eight tabors were counted; but the rest were so huddled together, that it was impossible to separate them into battalions. Artillery had been ordered up, and the Russian infantry began advancing along the mountain which had been so vigorously defended the day before, then formed on the road below.

As the great black masses of fugitives stretched out and filled the road that zigzagged up the hill, it was clear that there were from 10,000 to 15,000 of them, and that they were moving away in a great hurry. They hastily threw up trenches on the summit of the hill, and by noon scarcely a Turk was visible. Two Russian guns were quickly got up, and there was some shelling and a little musketry; but the Turks had had two hours' start, and the pursuit went on over the hills. Before they were out of sight, the thinnest possible black line was observed winding down the White mountain flank beyond, and above Araba Konak. They halted, and then the small knot of horsemen, and the skirmishers in front of them, still lower down, hastened up to the main body, which speedily formed. Then, for a few moments, General Gourko doubted whether they were not the Turks, from the positions there; and the battery of 9-pounders which had just unlimbered where he stood, seemed to have arrived in the nick of time, when suddenly the soldiers gave a hearty hurrah, and the cheer was faintly re-echoed away across on the mountain; the line descended once more, and turned out to be the Russian column sent to operate in this direction.

At this moment General Gourko turned round, and said earnestly, "Now we can say, in all conscience, that we have crossed the Balkans, in every phase of the undertaking;" and he shook hands warmly with every one, congratulating those who counted this as their second passage.

There was certainly cause for felicitation, for the fight had lasted from Christmas until New Year's Day, first with the forces of nature, which were resisted with wonderful pluck and patient endurance by the Russian soldiers, and then with the enemy, who were driven from their chosen positions.—A few moments later the column from the mountains filed into the valley, and the soldiers distributed the rice, bread, and salt found in the Turkish camp. Near Araba Konak was a fine large tent of the Red Cross Society, and almost the first man the staff met was the chief doctor of the British National Society, Dr. Leslie, who

had come from the village of Strigli to ask for a guard from General Gourko, because he, with six other doctors, were at work on the Turkish wounded in the village, and it was deserted by the Turks, and not yet occupied by the Russians. Besides those seven doctors, the correspondent of the *Illustrated London News* was also there. The guard was promptly furnished, and the last heard of the doctors was, that they were still with the wounded. The Turkish surgeons all left with the troops.

With the capture of the Baba Konak Pass, and the successful passage of the Etropol Balkans, the plains of Roumelia lay open to the invaders. There was scarcely a point left where the Turks could have made a stand before Adrianople, even had they had the men and the means to concentrate them. Still, all the work had not yet been done by the Russians. The Turks, scattered into little columns and detachments at various towns, villages, and passes, thought of one thing only—that was, to resist to the last, and inflict as much loss on the enemy as they could, even though sacrificing their own lives in the attempt.

On the other hand, whatever might be the losses incidental to this spasmodic kind of warfare, the Russians knew that the game was all in their own hands. Like a great net they were closing round the Turks, driving them towards Constantinople and the Ægean. In the extreme west, the Servians had begun, before Christmas, to cross the Turkish frontier, and had captured Ak Palanka, on the road between Nissa and Pirot, on December 24th, Pirot itself falling into their hands on December 28th, where they waited to join hands with General Gourko, and thus effectually cut off all communication between Bosnia and Herzegovina with the rest of the empire, except by way of Klek in the Adriatic, whilst even this part was as good as closed to the Turks by the jealous attitude of Austria. In the east, Generals Radetzki and Skobeloff were preparing to force the Schipka, and clear off the army watching the issue of the pass at Kezanlik, and join hands with the left of General Gourko's command. Thus, from Nissa to Eski Zagra, there was soon to be a line of Servians and Russians joining hands, ready to sweep all before them towards Adrianople and the capital; whilst, north of the Balkans, the Roumanians in the west, and the Czarevitch in the east, were thoroughly clearing Bulgaria, and consolidating their power and administration there.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE INVASION OF ROUMELIA.

WHILST General Gourko was engaged in clearing the Baba Konak Pass and defeating the Turks at Tashkessen, General Weliaminoff was cautiously feeling his way towards Sophia. At Gorni Bugarof he was attacked by the Turks, on January 1st, with such fierceness, that within a couple of hours he lost nearly 300 men; but the Turks were enormously outnumbered; and this fact, coupled with the recklessness with which they attacked, caused them a loss of 500 killed, and upwards of 1,500 severely wounded. The region in the vicinity of the village was thickly strewn with corpses, and for days afterwards the Bulgarians continued their horrible task of stripping the dead. The greater part of the dead lay within 100 feet of the shallow Russian rifle-pits, testifying to the heroism of the Turks, who, after advancing across an open cornfield for half a mile, ran straight up the slope within bayonetting distance of their foe, and held their ground until thinned out by the terrible fire, and at last turned back with the Russians upon their heels, and left half their number on the snow before they formed again on the road. After the fight there was an armistice, during which the wounded on both sides were carried off the field, but only the Russian dead were buried.

The following afternoon, January 2nd, General Gourko was at Gorni Bugarof, having left Tashkessen at noon. He reached the village just in time to hear the first few shots of a sharp little skirmish going on near a covered bridge over the Isker.

The enemy had thrown up a short line of low earthworks on either side the road beyond the bridge, and with a detachment of two or three tabors in the trenches, and three times this number in reserve, they attempted to prevent the passage of the river. The Praobrajensky regiment crossed on the ice, turning the Turks by either flank; and they retired after brief resistance, setting fire to the bridge and the village of Razdimne as they left. The soldiers reached the bridge before the flames had gained great headway, and began to throw water and snow upon the burning timbers with their copper pots, and extinguished the fire before the structure was damaged to any great extent.

General Gourko crossed while the fire was at its height, making his way with his accustomed coolness through the flame and smoke—the first one to pass over the bridge on horseback; and his staff followed in momentary expectation that the flooring would give way. If the bridge had been blown up, the passage of the river would have caused no little difficulty. As it was, the whole detachment passed over in safety, followed by the rest of the column, and passed the night in Gorni Bugarof, about ten miles east of Sophia.

The next day, the enemy still continuing to show a bold front, a strong column was sent round to the north of Sophia, and General Gourko made a personal *reconnaissance* in that direction, approaching within a mile of the city. Great camps were plainly visible near the road; the black lines of a dozen earthworks crowned the summits of the hills near the city on either side, and he could plainly see that the fortifications were manned. The attack was decided upon for the morning of the 5th, when General Gourko expected to lose 3,000 or 4,000 men in the assault; for although he had so disposed his forces as to attack on three sides at once, the storming of the earthworks would have cost many lives. On the 3rd he moved his quarters again, to the establishment of some Turkish Bey near the covered bridge, and prepared to await the arrival of the troops at their designated positions, ready for the attack.

On the evening of January 3rd there were some lights visible in the direction of Sophia, but there was so much haze that it could not be distinguished whether they were camp fires or burning houses. It was an hour after mid-day on January 4th that a Cossack came riding in with a report that Bulgarians had arrived at the outposts with the news that Sophia was evacuated. Everybody had been nerving up for the battle of the next day, and no one could credit the truth of the rumour. In a few moments a second horseman came in, after a hard gallop, bringing official tidings that General Rauch was marching into Sophia to take possession. The plan proposed to, and accepted by the Porte, was thus at last being carried out at an immense sacrifice of life and property; and the retreat upon Constantinople had begun with the evacuation of Sophia. The occupation of this city is fairly described by the correspondent of the *Daily News*, who writes some wholesome truths regarding the meek Bulgarian. When he heard of the evacuation of the town, he says:—

"We were mounted and off at quick trot almost before the courier finished his report, and on the road we overtook a brigade of the guard marching with unfurled banners towards the distant mosques, singing as I have never heard them sing since I saw them cross the bridge at Sistova months ago, every man of them walking as proudly as if he alone had conquered provinces. They answered the salutation of the general cheerily and heartily. He paused only to charge them, with severity of expression in his voice that they knew meant prompt execution of his word, not to raise a hand to plunder on pain of severe and instant punishment, and galloped past to the city, already occupied by Cossacks and the advance guard of the column.

"The excitement of that half-hour's ride was worth the days of exposure in the mountains, the long and tedious season of waiting; still I am not sure that, with all the triumphant feeling, there was not a tinge of disappointment in the thought that we had not met the enemy, for the game of hide and seek among the mountains was getting wearisome. We had missed the opportunity of smashing the Balkan army, and it had slipped away to face us further south. As we neared the town the road was crowded with peasants hurrying in to have their share of Turkish loot, and scores of them were rummaging the deserted tents in the fields close by, and wrangling over the rubbish there.

"A crowd of several hundred citizens, led by priests, with banners, crucifixes, and lanterns, and bearing a salver with bread

and salt, offered these traditional symbols of hospitality to General Gourko, and then the priests and attendants headed the procession that filed slowly into the first narrow street. It was not the pictorial aspect of this triumphant entrance, nor the consciousness that this was an historic moment, nor, indeed, the sense of relief at the successful finish of the first great step of the campaign, that for the time fixed my thoughts, but it was rather the lack of heart in the whole business of the reception, the total absence of anything like frank and spontaneous joy in the crowd of Bulgarians who accompanied us into the town after the formal welcome at the gate. There were exceptions. Old men and women clasped their hands and wept for joy; intelligent citizens, of evident good standing in the city, showed by word and deed that they appreciated the change the arrival of the Russians would make.

"I do not mean to say that the people were not unanimous in their welcome of the Russian army; I only assert that the contrast between the reception by the Bulgarians and a similar welcome by any other people I could name was very great. A race without heart, their enthusiasm has scarcely a spark of the real stuff in it; and as we rode through the streets that day, the crowds gathered and gazed and hustled about, and looked as happy, perhaps, as Bulgarians can look; but not a cheer was heard—not even the murmur of gratification that one hears in the crowd at any *fête;* only a weary kind of listless satisfaction at the final arrival of the long-expected Russians was visible on the faces of those who welcomed us. What a contrast was there between the bronzed, sturdy soldiers of the guard and the pale and feeble-looking men of the town! What a picture it made, General Gourko and his staff following the banners of the church, and sweeping along through the crooked streets; the aides-de-camp in the fantastic uniforms of the winter campaign; General Gourko at their head, trim, straight, and emotionless as ever; the hustling crowd of men and boys in many-coloured costumes; on all sides the fez and the Oriental dress suggesting heat and sunshine; and, through this flood of colour, the cold grey rigid column of men whose type of face, whose dress, whose every motion, showed them to be of the north. On the one side, listlessness and inactivity, mental and physical; on the other, earnestness of purpose, energy, and physical strength. There is little in common between deliverer and delivered, except some similarity of language.

"Few houses on our route were not barred and shuttered, except those whose swinging doors and broken windows showed them to be already plundered. Out of the windows of some large houses were showered sprigs of evergreen from the hands of young women; there was a lively rush for the church, where a short ceremony was performed, and the triumphal entry was ended. The order in the town was perfect. A large patrol of soldiers walked the streets, preventing effectually the destruction of property and pillage. The Turkish quarter had already been completely sacked by the Bulgarians before the troops came in, and most of the loot was hidden away; but whenever any one was found with plundered effects he was promptly arrested, and the goods exposed in the streets under guard to be claimed by their proper owners. I made this a matter of special investigation, and scoured the city in search of plunderers and loot, and found not a single soldier with any article of value except a Kuban Cossack with a small carpet. I naturally supposed that this legitimatised brigand would sell his prize; and when I offered him a round sum for it, he replied, without hesitation, that he had taken it from a Bulgarian peasant, and was carrying it to deposit with unclaimed goods, and I watched him throw it on the pile with the rest. One of his comrades, however, was proved to have stolen watches and money from foreign doctors and citizens; and, by order of General Gourko, he was tied with ropes and led away and shot.

"This is not the first time that I have entered a city with victorious troops; but it is the first occasion in my experience when order was the rule, plunder the exception. To be sure the shops were all rifled before we came in; but the Bulgarians had to be hunted out of the houses on all sides. There was plenty of clothing and other articles the soldiers were greatly in need of, which were collected together by the troops, not distributed among them; and the disorder, if any existed, was only momentary. The only approach to anything like violence that met my notice was the knocking the fez from the heads of the citizens; and in this sport of doubtful taste I saw some officers thoughtlessly take part.

"The church where the religious ceremonies were conducted is next door to the hospital of Lady Strangford; and this was the first place General Gourko visited, simply presenting his compliments to the lady, and assuring her that she would be protected in her work. Beside Lady Strangford, her four female nurses, and Dr. Stephenson, the surgeon of the hospital, there also remained at their posts Doctors Wattie and Busby of the Stafford House detachment, and Ruddock and Macpherson of the Red Crescent, with dressers. From these I learned many interesting details of the evacuation. The town had been in considerable disorder for several days, for the Russians were expected to arrive a week earlier: in fact, the first question put to me by the doctors was, 'Why were you so long on the road?'

"Suleiman Pasha had made a flying visit here about Christmas time; but no one knew he was here until he was gone. From the day the road was cut there was no longer any idea of defending the town, and the troops formed their battalions in the streets on the evening of the 3rd, and left quietly. The signal of the evacuation of the troops was also a signal for the flight of those Turkish families who had not yet departed; and the clumsy arabas, laden with human beings and household goods, piled in promiscuously, creaked over the frosty snow toward the line of retreat, which took the direction of Radomir. There were few enough transports for provisions and ammunition, so the wounded were ordered to quit the town the day of the retreat; and such of the poor wretches who could crawl away, left the hospitals and dragged themselves towards the hills. Terror inspired by the tales that the Russians would massacre all their prisoners, gave them strength to begin their journey. Between 5,000 and 6,000 thus fled, the majority of them probably to die in the snow before the next day.

"There were less than 1,000 wounded left in the town after this wholesale evacuation, so the surgeons in the Turkish service drew lots to decide which ten of their number should remain. This was a large proportion, as there had been but about thirty in charge of the thousands here. Among the ten who remained are one Englishman, one American, and two or three Germans. It is said on all sides that the order had been received from Constantinople to burn the town, and blow up the mosques which were stored with powder. I do not know whether this is true or not; I only am sure that a printed order was issued to each Bulgarian family to leave the town, accompanied with the verbal message that they took upon themselves the responsibility of remaining. There was no systematic attempt made, however, to burn the place; and although the Bashi-Bazouks set it on fire in several places, but few houses were burned. Some of the shops had been deserted long ago by their proprietors, and the rest of them were gutted and the loot distributed during the withdrawal of the troops. Everybody took whatever he could lay his hands on, the magazines were broken open, and the Bulgarians all armed themselves, and did not hesitate to use their new toys.

"The fears of the wounded Turks were not altogether without foundation; for during the night many of them were murdered while the Russians were still miles away; and the same fiends who cut the throats of the helpless victims, welcomed the next day the Russians with an innocent smile, and called them brothers. Household goods and provisions strewed the streets, trampled into the snow by the passers-by, and it was a night of confusion. The Europeans who remained in the town feared alike Circassian and Cossack, and prepared to defend themselves against the irregular soldiery. At daybreak there was scarcely a Turkish soldier in the town; and the Bulgarians, assembled from the neighbouring villages, completed the desolation that had begun in the night. The morning passed slowly, and still no Russians in sight. The English doctors gathered as many of the deserted wounded as they could care for, and carried them into their hospitals. Finally, shortly after ten o'clock, a single Russian officer, accompanied by two Cossacks, rode along the road towards the town. His first inquiry was, 'Have you any sugar?' and, being answered in the affirmative, he rode into the town about as calmly as if he had come solely in search of the much-desired luxury. It was four hours later before General Gourko came in, as I have described above, and order was already restored.

"We had been hearing, all the way down from Plevna, reports of the great numbers of sick and wounded in Sophia. What would have become of them if the foreigners had not stuck by them I dislike to conjecture. The soldiers had been on short rations for days, and bread was a necessity for them.

Immense quantities of flour and meat, both salt and fresh, and other provisions, were found in the stores here; but the public ovens that made bread were too few to supply the demands of the soldiers; and no measures were taken to requisition private ovens; consequently, the bakers who had furnished the hospitals refused to take any orders from them, afraid of compromising themselves with the Russians; and up to the evening of the third day of the occupation the wounded were without bread. The majority were supplied with food enough to sustain life out of the private stores of the doctors: many suffered from hunger; a few died from insufficient nourishment; and the Bulgarian attendants having deserted almost to a man immediately after the occupation, it was only with great difficulty that the wounds were dressed. These wretches of attendants took the opportunity of robbing the wounded of all their money and valuables before they deserted, thus adding one of the most brutal of crimes to their cowardly desertion, and completing the list of dastardly acts which I am obliged, in strict justice, to enumerate.

"On the morning of the fourth day of occupation rations were distributed to the wounded; the Russian doctors had already begun work, and the hospitals were taken in hand. It is possible that the sufferings of the wounded have been exaggerated; but as eighty died in the Konak in a single night, it appears to be proved that they were neglected. The question of what should be done with the foreigners found working for the Turks was not settled in a hurry. No one, in fact, seemed to know what would become of them. Up to date, those who were actually in the Turkish service, serving under contract for the war, are still in ignorance of their fate. Lady Strangford has been treated with every consideration and respect, and would have been provided with means of transport if she had decided to return to the Turkish lines again. She, however, with her entire suite, will continue her work here, and the surgeons of the Stafford House and Red Cross also remained with her."

The day before the evacuation of Sophia, and its occupation by the Russian troops, General Gourko decided to open communication with the Servians at Pirot, and sent Prince Tzeratleff to General Horvatovitch's head-quarters. He found the main body of the detachment, the Timok corps, still at Pirot, but about to move southward upon Vranya. The capture of Pirot had been attended with little or no disorder; the Turkish property had been confiscated, and the army was living on captured provisions, and had plenty for a number of weeks. Pirot was taken after a fight of a whole day, with the loss of 250 men; twelve cannon were captured. Being assured from attack in his rear through the presence of the Servians, General Gourko did not lose any time in Sophia; but after a stay of four days, during which he re-formed his troops and took measures for the security of the forces remaining in Sophia, he left, on January 9th, for Philippopoli—the same day that, further east, General Radetzki and General Skobeloff effected the capture of Schipka in consequence of a turning movement which took the Turkish army in the rear, and forced it to surrender after a sanguinary contest, during which the Russians lost 5,500 killed and wounded, whilst the Turks lost 32,000 prisoners and ninety-two guns.

Skobeloff, the second day after the battle, marched for Hermanli, the junction of the Philippopoli and Yamboli railways, forty-five miles from Adrianople, with two divisions—the 16th (his own division), and its twin, the 39th of the fourth corps, together with two brigades of eight battalions of sharpshooters. Brigades of cavalry of the 3rd division, under the command of General Kartsoff, marched upon Philippopoli by way of Kalofer and Karlovo. Radetzki's corps, to which the 15th division had been added, followed Skobeloff as far as Eski Zagra, and marched upon Tchirpan, east of Philippopoli, evidently with the intention of surrounding that place, in co-operation with the 3rd division, marching by the Karlovo road; and thus to cut off the Turks at Ichtiman, defending that pass against General Gourko.

The Turks, by this movement of Radetzki and Skobeloff, had the whole valley of the Maritza cut off behind them. In this way the retreating army of Sophia, as well as the Philippopoli forces, had no escape but by throwing themselves into the Rhodope mountains, where there were no roads, and where they were, at any rate, certain not to be seriously molested as long as the Russians were engaged in their advance on Adrianople.

Meantime, whilst Skobeloff and Radetzki were capturing the Schipka army,

General Gourko set out from Sophia, his forces following the three roads which lead from Sophia to Philippopoli. General Krüdener was sent along the road skirting the base of the Balkans to Zlatitza, where he found no Turks left, all having fled after the disaster at Schipka. General Weliaminoff was despatched along the road which runs southwards to Samakovo, and thence south-east *viâ* Banya to Tatar-Bazardjik, where it joins the central road from Sophia, which winds through the Ichtiman Pass and Trajan's Gate. Along this latter road General Schouvaloff was sent in advance, Generals Gourko and Rauch following on the next day by the same road. It was in this Ichtiman Pass that the Bulgarians attacked and murdered Baldwin, Earl of Flanders, during the Crusades. This time, however, the Bulgarians had not had the opportunity of exercising their peculiar talents; for when the Russians arrived, pillaged shops, smouldering ruins, and empty houses welcomed them to Ichtiman. Many of the largest buildings had been burned by the Turks; not a shop but was sacked and gutted, and very few of the inhabitants remained. Here the Russians learned, much to their surprise, that the Turks had evacuated their positions in the pass called Trajan's Gate, and were retreating southward, pursued by the dragoons; also, that Weliaminoff's column had been fighting for a whole day north of Samakovo, driving the enemy from one little earthwork to another, until he was stopped by the arrival of a messenger from the Turkish lines with a despatch from Constantinople, announcing an armistice. The Turkish outposts had refused to fire; the men had approached and shaken hands with them, and the Turks had called them brothers, believing that peace was declared.

Such was the report of the armistice, and it was further strengthened by the appearance of a Major Zéki, the chief of staff of Suleiman Pasha, who had come with a sealed despatch addressed to the grand duke, declaring also that an armistice had been agreed upon. General Weliaminoff had replied to the Turkish proposition for cessation of hostilities—"If you don't want to fight, leave Samakovo; for my men can't stay up here in the mountains;" and the Turks quietly went away. But before the messenger whom General Gourko had sent to telegraph for instructions regarding the armistice could have arrived, a courier came in with a message from the grand duke, saying that there were false rumours of an armistice, and that the army was to push on as rapidly as possible. The truth was, that the armistice was agreed to, but had not been actually signed, the Russians not wishing to stay their progress towards the capital; and then succeeded a consequent stage of indecision, which was scarcely war, though quite as bad. Thus Major Zéki was told that there was to be no halt in the movement. It was rather an odd sight to see the two Turkish dragoons who escorted Major Zéki, with their Winchester rifles slung on their backs, fraternising with the Cossacks; and it puzzled the few Bulgarian spectators to see a Turkish bimbashi in full uniform, with his sword on, on easy terms with the Russian officers, who invited Major Zéki to dine in their mess. He had the frankness to say, when he was served with plain boiled rice after the cabbage soup—"I had imagined the officers of the Russian army lived in much greater luxury."

Some one replied—"It is only by your kindness in leaving plenty of stores behind you that we have even these provisions."

This was Zéki's first experience among the Russians; and doubtless, from this little incident, he understood what it was to be with a great army cut loose from its base of supplies, and began to comprehend the happy-go-lucky way the Russians had of doing everything.

A day or two later, Major Zéki, who gained many friends from his sympathetic disposition and pleasant manner, received instructions from the grand duke to present the despatch, the contents of which had already been transmitted by wire, in person at the head-quarters in Kezanlik, whither he went with his two dragoons, escorted by an officer of the staff and two Cossacks, to the complete mystification of the people they met on the road. One thing Major Zéki remarked with a great deal of justice, that the Bulgarians treated the Russians with actual disrespect, and paid no regard whatever to their requests or demands, while to the Turks they were all attention. It was curious to observe how the natives sprang to wait upon the Turkish officer, even while he was in company with the Russians.

Continuing their march after the departure of Major Zéki, the Russians literally scrambled all the way over Trajan's

Gate. The road, which mounts the northern declivity in a succession of steep zigzags, was as smooth as a skating-rink, and was filled with infantry and artillery. Men slipped and slid, horses fell with their riders, the heavy caissons swung from one side of the road to the other, often in imminent danger of dragging the horses over the precipices. From the summit of the pass the view was very wide, embracing the valleys of Ichtiman and Banya no one side, and a large portion of the Rhodope range of mountains to the south, beyond the plain of Philippopoli.

The whole descent was a series of dangerous slides. Occasionally the horses would slide for many yards, only bringing up against the bank on the side of the road, or among the bushes. The limited supply of iron had obliged the farriers to put on the smooth flat plates used by the Turks instead of the European shoes; so that the horses, unaccustomed to their new shoes, skated, awkwardly enough, wherever the ice was smooth.

At last, towards evening on January 12th, the Russian New Year's Day, the tired and worn-out forces reached Vietrena, about fifteen miles from Tatar-Bazardjik, already burning in the distance. At the same time, a black line of troops, retreating before General Weliaminoff, was seen moving rapidly along the Samakovo road from Sophia, towards Tatar-Bazardjik. No infantry had come up, so it was out of the question to attempt immediate pursuit, and the advance guard celebrated in rather a mild manner, for the material means of merry-making were decidedly meagre, the Russian New Year's Eve. A distinguishing feature of the celebration was a mass, conducted in General Gourko's head-quarters by the priest of one of the regiments, the staff officers contributing the vocal music and sonorous responses. It was clear and frosty, and until long after midnight the cannon rattled and jolted heavily down the rough street, and the infantry tramped wearily past to find out but little better halting-places in the plain than those who were obliged to bivouac away up the road in the pass.

About half-way from Vejtrenova to Tatar-Bazardjik, the highway crosses a low hill, the last notable interruption of the level line of the road for many miles eastward, and this hill terminates in a rocky knoll, two or three hundred feet above the plain. A more advantageous position to witness a battle could not be imagined, for the whole plain for miles lay below, like a plan of the surface in black and white; and when at daybreak the Russians saw the Turkish army, drawn up in perfect battle order across the road between them and Tatar-Bazardjik, still burning in a dozen different places, they could scarcely wait for the infantry to get up; indeed it did not get up until after the firing began, for a couple of 9-pounders were sent down the road far in advance of the outposts, with only a handful of Kuban Cossacks as a support, and began to throw shrapnel into the group of Circassians gathered there.

The Kubans scattered out right and left, and trotted away to meet the Circassians, who were ready to welcome them. For a few moments there was a lively little fire, and then they began to stop and look at one another. The whole plain about Tatar-Bazardjik seemed alive with Turkish cavalry; large squads were moving here and there; long lines were filing off to the right and left; and besides these movements, preparatory to receiving the expected attack, the infantry strung out in long double lines of skirmishers.

The Russian infantry soon came over the hill in small detachments, marched right up to within gun-shot of the Circassians, who hesitated and drew back at their approach, and then the riflemen lay down in the ditches. But no serious attack was made, General Gourko preferring to wait for the arrival of General Weliaminoff by the Samakovo road, to goading the Turks into a desperate fight. Thus the day passed away.

The only break in the monotony of the day was the sending of a flag of truce into the Turkish lines with a letter which had been sent by Major Zéki to Suleiman Pasha. Prince Tzereteleff was chosen to carry the letter; and, accompanied by a trumpeter and a Cossack, who carried on his lance two handkerchiefs tied together by a corner, he rode down the road. As Tzereteleff had been fired on last summer near Kezanlik while on a similar mission, and had barely escaped being killed, the Russians watched with great interest the little group draw nearer and nearer to the Turkish outposts, until they were within a few rods, and then at last they saw three horsemen come out to meet them.

It was perfectly evident that the open

preparations for resisting an attack along the road, were only to cover the retreat of the army; and, just as expected, by daybreak on the 14th the town was completely evacuated. The bridge on the road was broken, but not seriously injured; but the one over the Maritza, between the town and the railway station, was entirely burned. Two or three wretched-looking Bulgarians fawned on the Russians as they entered the city; but the streets were otherwise almost entirely deserted, and barricaded with broken cases, shutters, and the confused *débris* of the shops; so that had the Russians not wisely refrained from attacking the night before, they would have incurred very serious losses. Every house was open and gutted. Bedding, groceries, furniture, small wares of all kinds fairly paved the streets leading toward the railway station, marking the flight of the Moslem population. The bright sun, shining through clouds of smoke from a hundred burning houses, lighted the scene of destruction and devastation with a reddish glare; and here and there a dead body, with pools of blood still fresh about it, completed a perfect picture of war in its most tragic aspect.

Before the Russians had been in the town half-an-hour, the ox-carts, with the household goods and families of the Bulgarian citizens, began to pour in from the fields, and on the other side of the river gathered a great crowd of fugitives waiting to be ferried back. The railway station was crowded, and thousands were swarming all about it, half wild with fright. The Turks had forced all the families to leave the town, in view to a possible attack by the Russians, and they were all hustled to the railway station; such as there was time to take were carried off, many were compelled to follow the army, and not a few took their own direction in the confusion, and returned when they heard of the Russian occupation.

Some three-score prisoners were gathered up in the town, many of them wounded by the sabres of the advance guard of cavalry, who followed close on the heels of the retreating enemy. There was one rather amusing capture while the Russians halted in the town. A priest of one of the regiments went into a house, and had a fire lighted to make some tea. As the house was not entirely plundered, he thought he might find some sugar in a cupboard near the fireplace; but instead of sugar he found a Turk with his rifle across his knees, curled up in the small space between the door and the wall. Mutual surprise and mutual fear! But the priest recovered first, and ordered the Turk to give himself up, which he promptly did. While he was drinking his sugarless tea, it occurred to the priest to look in another cupboard, and an exactly similar result followed, and he had the honour of turning over two prisoners to the guard!

That evening the camp fires of the retreating army blazed on the hill-sides beyond the railway, exactly opposite to the Russian lines and the Maritza, and perhaps a couple of miles of rice-fields separated the two armies from one another. The night was bitterly cold, and a piercing wind was blowing; but it was decided that the river must be forded; so Count Schouvaloff crossed with several battalions of infantry, and started immediately in pursuit of the rear-guard of the Turks, which was still moving on, followed by a long line of stragglers. The river was full of ice, and the current was so rapid, that the men, breast-deep in the water, could scarcely keep their feet. In their drenched and freezing garments they formed battalions on the right bank, and pushed on cheerfully after the enemy until late in the night, when they bivouacked in the village of Adakoi.

The columns of Schilder-Schuldner, Krüdener, and Weliaminoff, had all descended into the plain during the day, the latter somewhat behind its assigned position, and the detachment of Count Schouvaloff, which was intended to be the central column, in reality leading. Although the Turkish army was so near, it was playing such an active game, that it was extremely difficult to keep up with it. Of course, General Gourko did not intend to attack it, because, as it was evidently demoralised, its end was certain, and it would have been foolish to sacrifice two or three thousand lives to accomplish a result which time would bring about. When Count Schouvaloff's detachment moved out of the village of Adakoi just before daybreak, prepared to follow the Turks, who were supposed to have fled in the night, it ran plump upon the enemy quietly waiting there in position between Karatair and Kadikoi, admirably protected by a little stream which had cut a narrow but deep channel in the earth, quite impassable for any troops. The Turkish right rested on the road in the village of Ahrianli, so that the hill behind

Kadikoi was really the centre of their position. With this voluntary movement on the part of the Turks, the object of Schouvaloff's movement was accomplished; the enemy had paused in his retreat, and the thing to do next was to keep him busy while a column had time enough to turn him by his right flank, thus blocking his retreat towards Philippopoli.

Count Schouvaloff got his men under such cover as the nature of the ground afforded, and began a lively demonstration, and a hot musketry fire was interchanged. Just about the time this began, General Gourko, who had started away from the village of Doghankoi, where he had passed the night, long before daylight reached the point where the river and the road almost meet, very near the village of Ahrianli. Whilst the staff were watching the smoke rise from Philippopoli, and the troops as they marched along the road, three horsemen rode out of the grove upon the opposite bank of the river; one of them drew his revolver and deliberately fired it three times in their direction, and then turned and quietly trotted away, followed by the second, while the third remained there still looking at the Russians. He was dressed in the Circassian costume, and there was a brief moment of doubt whether he was not, after all, one of the scouts of Schouvaloff's column; but in an instant the Kuban Cossacks, who had an instinct for distinguishing the enemy, were kneeling along the bank and banging away at the Circassian. When the fire began he saluted, wheeled his horse round, and slowly retired, evidently caring no more for the buzzing of bullets than for the singing of so many mosquitoes, and chuckling all the time at the wild firing of the Russians, who certainly did not distinguish themselves on that occasion, although the mark was not half rifle-shot away.

It soon became clear the village opposite was full of Turks, who clustered like bees about the houses there. It was a raw, blustering day, and it seemed a pity to order the men to wade the river, which was rushing along, covered with bits of floating ice; but a ford was found a couple of hundred yards above the Russian position, and a battalion waded across and got in and at work in a few moments. After this operation, General Gourko, at the suggestion of Captain Scalon, of his staff, ordered the dragoons of his escort to take the horses of the officers and carry the rest of the soldiers across the stream on horseback. When they rode down the 200 yards towards the ford for this work, the bullets were already falling fast. The road, which had been crowded a short time before, had been well cleared; a battery was at work a little further on, and the Turkish shells began to plough up the rice-fields, the muzzles of the Martinis pumping out the bullets like hail. The lead knocked up the snow all around, and there was a buzzing in the air that made the men involuntarily quicken their steps. The firing was not very heavy, but it was effective, for ten out of the sixty horses which carried over the last two battalions, were wounded in the space of about an hour.

When these two battalions got into the village, the music of the fight took a higher key, and there was a constant, ceaseless rattle all day long. Late in the day General Schilder-Schuldner came up to consult with General Gourko, who had been for hours anxiously awaiting the arrival of the column entrusted to the former, which had been ordered early to cross the stream below, to make an attempt to turn the enemy's left. Hours were lost in waiting for this detachment; and at last, instead of the infantry, there only came the old general himself! But the delay was shortly ended, and the troops came past at quick step. One or two of the soldiers were wounded in sight of General Gourko, for the bullets were still flying about promiscuously, and the squadron of dragoons that was detailed to carry three battalions across the ford, lost three or four horses and men during the passage. The entire loss of the day was about 300, a large proportion of Schouvaloff's command.

Krüdener's detachment, which had gone towards the town, had met with little resistance; but arriving on the bank of the Maritza, found the bridge completely destroyed. A couple of old brass muzzle-loading cannon, on the rocky hill in the centre of the town, blazed away the whole day at the Russians, and there were a score or two of Turks sitting on the hill and firing lazily, with little effect, and others in the streets. But though the loss in Krüdener's column was only six, not a man of his force got into the town.

The same squadron of dragoons of the guard which had carried three battalions over the river, returned to General Gourko;

and Captain Bourago, who commanded the squadron, reported that the men were wet, hungry, and cold, the horses fatigued and without food, and asked for further orders.

"Go and join your regiment," said General Gourko.

"It is impossible to find the bivouac in the night, your Excellency," was the reply.

"Then, suppose you go in and occupy Philippopoli; you will find good lodgings there," suggested the general, more than half in jest.

"Is that your order?" eagerly asked the captain.

"It is!" came promptly back in reply, and the captain saluted, mounted quickly, and, forgetting fatigue and cold, led his squadron towards the zone of the enemy's bivouac-fires all along the plain between the river and the mountains, and went away at a trot.

The adventures of this little band are worth relating. When they came within half a mile of the fires they halted, and scouts were sent forward to report on the probable number of the enemy; but they returned, in the course of an hour, with the news that the bivouac was empty, and that the fires were left burning to deceive the Russians. Then the squadron trotted away in the darkness towards the black mass of the lesser one of the two granite hills that tower over Philippopoli—landmarks in the unbroken plain for many miles.

Near the town another bivouac barred the path—this time in a field enclosed by a ditch and bank of earth. Leaving the horses to be led in groups of six to a single man, Captain Bourago and the rest of his force reconnoitred on foot up to the bivouac, and peered over the wall to hear the last of the Turks go away in the distance. The fires were only deserted a few moments before the dragoons arrived. Mounting again, the dragoons, with the platoon of singers at their head, marched into the streets of Philippopoli, waking the inhabitants with the unaccustomed music. Everybody was of course surprised and delighted at the arrival of the Russians, and half the population turned out in their night-dresses.

One of the consuls met Captain Bourago, and begged him to enter his house and take a cup of tea. Over the tea he put the natural question—

"How many men are here?"

"Oh, very many—an immense force."

"But I mean here in the city," repeated the consul.

"Why, we have got a whole squadron of dragoons!"

"Then, if you value your lives," said the consul, "you will lose no time in trying to escape, for you are surrounded on all sides."

With only a moment of hesitation, Bourago ordered his men to mount, and marched away towards the station, where the enemy was reported to be strongest.

It was then past midnight; the great piles of stores and several houses were burning at the station, and just beyond could be plainly distinguished, by the light of the fires, a great mass of Turkish soldiers in some disorder. In the same formation as before, the dragoons advanced with great precaution, and reached a ditch within short range, concealed themselves in it, and opened a scattering fire, cheering and shouting with all their might.

Volley after volley answered their fire; but the bullets passed over their heads, and they began to shoot with all possible rapidity, taking careful aim. The terrific fire of the Turks grew weaker and weaker, and finally melted away, and sounded further and further off. Then was the moment to charge, and the squadron mounted and went away at a gallop after 1,500 retreating Turks, sabring those who did not immediately give themselves up, and capturing over fifty prisoners. Surrounding the burning station with a guard, Captain Bourago entered it, and found three consuls there with several of the railway *employés*, and learned that a short quarter of an hour before, three pashas were standing there, waiting for a supper to be prepared. It need hardly be remarked that the officers of the squadron enjoyed that supper very much. Count Rebender, who, with Lieutenant Pijoff, had been very active through the whole affair, was given a platoon to clear out the nest on the hill, which he did in short order, and the squadron slept in the town.

Philippopoli was in a frightful state. For just one week there had been a reign of the greatest confusion. On the 8th of January a telegram had been received from Suleiman Pasha, ordering the city to be evacuated of all its inhabitants, because he intended to burn it on the approach of the Russians. On the following day, news came from the same source that an armistice of two months had been arranged. The

Christian schools began again, and business was to some extent resumed, but only a few shops were opened for fear of the Circassians and Bashi-Bazouks. The Turkish families continued to flee, transporting all their household effects to the station, to be sent to Constantinople. Frequent trains were run, carrying thousands of passengers, loading the roofs, the steps, and even the buffers of the carriages with a living freight. Provisions were thrown away or sold for trifling sums. A yoke of oxen only brought one Turkish pound; a cow eight piastres (1*s.* 4*d.*), and a sheep four (8*d.*)

On the 10th of January the last passenger train went away; but immense piles of goods and household effects still remained at the station. Orders came from the medical director at Constantinople to remove all the sick and wounded (numbering 850) to the station, to await a train which would be sent to carry them away; and this order was executed with as little stir as possible, for fear of augmenting the disorder. The consuls, English, French, Italian, Greek, and Austrian, met and consulted about the best measures to protect the inhabitants, and decided to stay, and to pay no attention to the order to evacuate the town, which had been repeated. The Circassians and Bashi-Bazouks having begun promiscuous plundering as early as the 12th, the authorities in the Greek Church issued 150 muskets to the citizens of that nationality, to protect themselves from the irregular soldiers; but, of course, there was no authority, civil or religious, which could stop plundering, or prevent incendiary fires. On the 14th, before daylight, the bazaar was in flames, and the Russian cavalry being near, the bridge was burned, to prevent them entering the town.

The story of the next day has been already told. When the Russians entered on the 16th, it was a picture of ruin and destruction all along the streets where the shops were, and was smoking in a dozen places. It was rather a ridiculous sight to see a whole army corps wasting precious hours idly watching the smouldering timbers of the bridge, and the rushing, ice-choked stream that separated them from the opposite shore, where thousands of Bulgarians were frantically shouting and gesticulating. The staff rode down to the river bank, and there halted, waiting for a small leaky boat that was coming across, when, whether in derision of the inaction of the soldiers, or whether due to the impulse of a half-cracked brain, a sturdy Bulgarian stripped and plunged into the icy water, and half waded, half swam, across to the Russians, blowing like a porpoise. He had nothing particular to say, so he was wrapped up in a rug, and sent away to warm himself.

Prince Tzereteleff crossed over in the skiff to arrange about the bridge, and in a few moments there was a rope sent across, and a rude ferry established. Mr. Petline, the delegate of the Princess Imperial Red Cross Society, was the only engineer who happened to be present, and he undertook immediately the building of a solid structure out of railway iron and planks. The Bulgarians were in a state of the greatest excitement; most of them were armed, and those who came over in the skiff so far lost their heads as to rush down to the water's edge and take deliberate aim at Prince Tzereteleff, who was walking, in his Circassian costume, among the people on the opposite shore, and they would have fired if they had not been suddenly brought to their senses. This was the first time the Turks had taken the trouble to hinder the Russian advance by burning a bridge, and the Bulgarians began to construct a foot-bridge on the bases of the piers, and a few enterprising boat-builders soon began hammering away in a lively manner on some scows they were making to serve as a ferry. One ford was tried; but several men got a ducking, and one horseman was swept down stream. Before long, however, a shallower place was found, and the crossing was at last effected, with the ice knocking against the horses' shoulders and the saddle-flaps.

When Prince Tzereteleff came into the town, he found only two or three marauding soldiers there, for the dragoons were already off to new fields, and he constituted himself a special police force to stop pillaging until enough soldiers crossed to form a patrol. In the Stafford House hospital there were two of the Stafford House committee-men, neither of them Englishmen, and two young English doctors in the Turkish service. The hospital was nearly full of wounded Turks, and all the available force was employed in bringing them up from the station, where they had been starving for days, huddled together in a temporary wooden building, without attendants, with neither food nor water. Many of them had died of starvation and neglect, and the rest were in a miserable state altogether. The

single word "ekmek" (bread) caused a general cry of joy. A hundred bony hands were stretched out; sunken eyes glittered with delight; those strong enough to move, raised themselves on their elbows, and begged for a morsel. While the biscuit was circulating, one after another of the poor wretches held out a water-jug or a canteen, for there was not a drop of water in the place, and had not been all day.

The sound of wrangling, and blows of axes close by, betrayed to the experienced ears of the *Daily News* correspondent, that the beautiful Bulgarians were at their usual work. There was a whole crowd of them, who had got into the store-room of the hospital, where medicines in bulk and a few provisions, like rice and butter, were kept, and were smashing things right and left, and fighting among themselves for the loot. They scattered when the correspondent came upon them in the twilight, but he halted there as many of them as he could surround, and herded them into the hospital, loaded them with jugs and canteens, and started them for water.

There was considerable firing still going on at no great distance, just in the direction of the spring, and the Bulgarians were not ambitious to distinguish themselves under fire; but having noticed the muzzle of an easy-acting revolver looking for some one in their vicinity, they thought the safest plan was to bring the water, and did so in haste. But one of them had a half revenge later in the evening; for as the correspondent was passing an open space in the street, he heard a splutter and a bang, and then a whiz close to his head, and it was evident that some one had sighted him with an old flint-lock. He did not find the fellow, and thought it prudent not to make too careful a search for him, for there were probably a couple of horse-pistols and a yataghan in the would-be assassin's sash, and he had the advantage of being in ambush.

Meantime, after the Turks had abandoned Philippopoli, they took up a position under Fuad Pasha, a few miles south of the city, to cover their retreat to join the fugitive army of Suleiman Pasha, which had succeeded in effecting its escape along the Stanimaka road into the Rhodope, or Despoto Dagh.

The battle-field was not more than an hour's ride distant from Philippopoli, and from a neighbouring mound the fight could be plainly seen. The Turks were firing from the vineyard terraces at the foot of the hills, and waves of musketry swept from one end of the line to the other. But the rifle-fire was not the hottest where the sharpest work was going on, for the Turks charged impetuously down the slopes, and bayonets and sabres were crossed in hand-to-hand fight. In point of fact, the Turks were fairly at bay; for after slipping away between the columns of Schilder-Schuldner and Weliaminoff, they had halted, completely exhausted, on the hill-sides south of the city. Dondeville had hurried up across the Maritza and flanked them on the right, Schouvaloff and Schilder-Schuldner were pushing them in front, and Weliaminoff was crowding them on the left. Behind them were the bleak mountains; on three sides of them an enterprising, fearless, tireless enemy; and they resisted in their last ditch with desperation, fighting like lions in their lairs.

The whole of January 16th the fight continued without intermission, the Russians gradually gaining ground as fresh forces came up, and succeeded in capturing eighteen cannon, through a flank movement carried out by General Dondeville, on the following morning, January 17th. The Turks charged down the slope with the bayonet in a mad endeavour to recapture the eighteen cannon left in Dondeville's hands the day before. One of the commanders rushed into the thick of the fight with Dondeville's troops, was surrounded, and is reported to have killed and wounded seventeen Russians with his own sword before he was finally cut down. But this headlong assault was stoutly resisted. General Krasnoff especially distinguished himself at the head of the brigade of the 3rd division; and that day twelve additional cannon were abandoned by the Turks as they retreated sullenly from one terrace to another; and when, after a most heroic and hopeless resistance, the disorganised, exhausted, famished, half-frozen remnant of an army could hold a bold front no longer, it broke up into small bands, and under cover of darkness dispersed back in the mountains, leaving the remaining twenty cannon on the field.

This was the last stand made by the Turks against General Gourko's victorious forces. Further east, General Radetzki and Skobeloff, hearing of the proximity of General Gourko to Philippopoli, had turned their backs upon that city and proceeded

to Adrianople, which was occupied by their forces on January 20th.

The news of the collapse of the Ottoman army soon spread over the country; and abandoned to the mercy of Russian and Bulgarian—Christians—the Moslem population, knowing that they would seek for justice, pity, or generosity in these quarters in vain, thought but of escaping from their invaded homes. All the way from Philippopoli to Hermanli, a distance of seventy miles on the road to Adrianople, the road was strewn with the household goods of many thousand families and many thousand bodies. It was one ghastly, sickening panorama of death in every form, and of such colossal proportions and horrible character, that it was quite impossible for any one who had not witnessed part of it, to conceive, in the most moderate degree, the nature of the diabolical drama.

It was along this road that the great mass of the Turkish families fled from the villages at the approach of the Russians. Fugitives from the entire territory, from Plevna to Philippopoli, were for weeks, and even months, endeavouring to make their way to Constantinople, the haven safe from the pursuit of the Muscovite. How many thousand families had gained the vicinity of Stamboul before the rapid advance of the Russians it is impossible to estimate. It is certain that the long trains of fugitives blocked all the roads of the Turkish retreat, and seriously hindered and even stopped the march of the troops. After the investment of Plevna, and even before, there was a general exodus to the southward from all the towns threatened by the Russians, and hundreds of trains concentrated by converging routes in the valley of the Maritza, the tide being naturally directed towards Constantinople. As the Russians advanced, they never found any Turkish families in any of the villages; and it had been a long-unanswered question what had become of the population; but a journey along the road from Philippopoli to Hermanli, depicted, in part, the sufferings of these people, and furnished some adequate idea of the multitude of the Mussulman inhabitants who fled panic-stricken before the Russians and Bulgarians.

As the Russians left the rocky hills and picturesque city of Philippopoli on the morning of the 23rd, and rode eastward along the road, the first thing that met their eyes was a number of bodies of Turkish soldiers lying in the road, crushed by the wheels of passing artillery, and trampled into the mud by the feet of many horses. Before they had gone half-a-dozen kilomètres, the corpses of peasants, both Turkish and Bulgarian, were to be seen lying on the snow, and some of them had already been exposed to the weather for two or three weeks. Some had blood-stains still fresh on their garments. Dead horses and cattle blocked the path at every few steps, averaging two to the distance between the telegraph posts; and as one went further and further away from the city the number rapidly increased, and hundreds of abandoned arabas stood in the road, and choked the ditches alongside.

The road, too narrow for the immense trains that had passed over it in hasty flight, was supplemented by beaten tracks through the rice-fields on each side; and there were traces of bivouacs in the snow, which became more and more frequent, until these side-paths were almost literally carpeted with the *débris* of camps, and lay between rows of dead animals, broken arabas, piles of rags and cast-off clothing, and human bodies, for thirty-five miles of the whole of the first day's ride from Philippopoli.

There were bodies of Bulgarian peasants with terrible wounds in the head and neck, sometimes mutilated and disfigured; women and infants, children and old men, both Turkish and Bulgarian, fallen in the fields by the road-side, half buried in the snow, or lying in pools of water. It seemed to have been one long battle between the peasants of both races, in which the dead were counted equally for each; but while many of the bodies bore marks of violence and showed ghastly wounds, the great proportion of the women and children were evidently frozen to death, for they lay on the snow as if asleep, with the flush of life still on their faces, and the pink skin of their feet and hands still unblanched. Side by side with these, many corpses of old men, full of dignity even in death, lay stark by the road-side, their white beards clotted with blood, and their helpless hands fallen upon their breasts. From the muddy water of the ditches tiny hands and feet stretched out, and baby faces half covered with snow looked out innocently and peacefully, with scarcely a sign of suffering on their features. Frozen at their mothers' breasts, they were thrown down into the snow to lighten the burden of the poor creatures who were struggling along in mortal terror, but soon afterwards to be frozen to death in the severe weather, for they had been travelling in miserable arabas without food or shelter, and with half-starved oxen. Miles of these araba trains were passed on the road, human beings and household effects jumbled in promiscuously. Upon the jolting carts bedding and utensils were piled. Women and children upon donkeys and cattle followed alongside; and behind, for miles, was a long trail of wretched, weary, half-dead stragglers; old men and women bent double, crawling along with the aid of crutches or sticks; mothers with infants at their breasts, scarcely moving one foot before the other—all this after long months of flight, constant exposure, continuous dread of marauders, and the hated Muscovites. There was one mother leading along a sick child of perhaps ten years, a mile or more behind one of these trains. The poor girl could with difficulty balance herself on her naked, half-frozen feet. Night was coming on, and the cold wind that chilled even men in their warm clothing, blew about the rags from the suffering creature, disclosing emaciated limbs and skeleton body. The mother was in quite as pitiable a condition. Her face and head alone were well wrapped up. The araba train was moving slowly out of sight on the distant hills. A night on the road meant death to both these unfortunates, and their straggling friends could give them no assistance, because they were for the most part in a similar state of misery. The mother dragged her little one along, fast losing patience as the darkness came on, and finally pushed the sick child into the snow by the road-side, and hurried on without looking behind her. This was one of a series of similar scenes that were enacted before the very eyes of the Russians.

At Kuru Tchesme, half-way to Hermanli, there was nothing but a collection of empty buildings and barn-yards. Like the rest of the towns and villages on the road, it had suffered first from the exodus of the fugitives, who had pillaged on all sides; next from the Bashi-Bazouks and Circassians, who had plundered and murdered; and last from the Russian cavalry, who had pretty well eaten the place bare. Few inhabitants remained in the village. All was despoiled. Even the priest, who always had something if there was anything in the town, lived between bare walls, had no carpets, rugs, bedding, or provisions. But priests and Bulgarians were on the look out; and when the head of a long train of returning Turkish refugee families appeared in the main street of the village, there followed a scene which is painful in the last degree to describe. The Bulgarians gathered on the side of the street in knots of three or four, waited calmly until the miserable train had got well into the village, when, from every direction, they pounced upon the exhausted, defenceless Turks, and began to carry off their household effects, and even the cattle from the carts.

One poor woman, leading an ass piled up with bedding, and a child on the top, found her property distributed among half-a-dozen stalwart ruffians in a twinkling, and the little infant on the ground in the mud. The old men and women clung to their only treasures, while the Bulgarians dragged them away. Children yelled with fright, and panic reigned, which started the slowly-moving caravan into a quick march. All this went on before General Gourko was out of sight of the town. So much for Russian protection!

From Kuru Tchesme to Haskoi the corpses were more numerous, if anything, than on the route of the day before. The village was full of dead Turkish peasants; and on asking the Bulgarians who killed them, they replied, with a great deal of effusion and fiendish pride—"We did it. We and our friends did it."

In Haskoi there were bodies of Turkish soldiers in the streets nearly buried under heaps of stones and bricks, suggesting that, after being wounded and unable to move away, they had been stoned to death by the peasants; and here also were hundreds of Turkish families who, without arabas or beasts of burden, had taken shelter in the deserted houses.

Inquiring of one of these families where they had come from, they said that they had left Plevna five months ago, and since that time they had been on the road, and for the past few weeks in a great camp, further on towards Hermanli. For many days they had been entirely without bread or even Indian corn, and had existed solely on the flesh of the cattle that fell on the road. When some bread was given to them, they ate it like starved creatures, crying for joy. The grandmother, father, and mother with an infant at the breast, and a small boy of ten years, had not a single shoe between them, and their only baggage consisted of a

few old torn bed-quilts, and a kettle to boil meat in. They were in great distress of mind, because the house they occupied did not belong to them; and not having any means of transport, they were unable to proceed further until fine weather should begin.

At every step beyond Haskoi, General Gourko met new and more horrifying scenes on his triumphal march; man and wife lying, side by side, on the same blanket, with two children curled up on the snow near, all frozen dead; old men with their heads half cut off; and on each side of the road, broad continuous bivouacs deserted in haste, strewn with household effects. For many miles, carpets, bedding, and clothing had been trampled into the mud. The highway was literally paved with bundles, cushions, blankets, and every imaginable article of household use. Broken arabas, too, began to multiply; and near the little village of Tirali, on either side of the road, there was a perfect forest of wheels, reaching to the river on the right, and spreading away up the hill-sides on the left. Several dead Turkish soldiers, and one or two Russians, showed that there had been a little skirmish there; and the general and his staff rode into the midst of the great deserted bivouac, the horses walking on rich carpets and soft draperies, all crushed and trampled in the mud.

The scene was at once unique in its general aspect, terribly impressive, eloquent of suffering and disaster to innocent people. Hundreds of acres were covered with household goods. The bivouac reached all along the river bank, following the windings of the road, over the hill, and across the fields where the road made a sharp turn, for a distance of at least three miles, and of varying width. Over this great tract the arabas stood as closely as they could, with their oxen placed together.

The frames of the carts were, in most cases, broken to pieces. Sick cattle wandered listlessly about among the wheels. Corpses of men, women, and children lay about near every araba, and the whole ground was carpeted with clothing, kitchen utensils, books, and bedding.

It was a pitiable sight to see an old, grey-bearded Turk lying with his open Koran beside him, splashed with blood from ghastly gashes in his bared throat. Bundles of rags and clothes nearly all held dead babies. Crowds of Bulgarians swarmed in this great avenue of death and desolation, choosing the best of the carts, and carrying away great loads of copper vessels, which lay about in profusion, and mud-soiled bedding, with no more respect for the dead than for the rags they lay on. These scavengers would drive their carts across the heads of dead women and old men without even a glance of curiosity at the bodies!

At least 500 dead lay in the bivouac; no less than 15,000 carts had halted there, large as the number may seem; and at least 75,000 people had deserted the whole of their possessions, and had run away with only what they could carry in their hands. Even General Gourko and his staff were sickened by the continuation of the ghastly panorama for so many hours, and rode on to Hermanli, not leaving the last of the horribly mutilated corpses until they reached the very edge of the village.

At Hermanli they learned, for the first time, the story of the bivouac. It seems that the advance of the cavalry had been checked, at different villages on the roads, by the very determined resistance of the armed population, who fought with fury. There were seven repetitions of the little scene which occurred near Philippopoli, where the inhabitants fled with the Turkish soldiers, and men and women fired volleys upon the Russians. The correspondent of the *Daily News* describes this little scene as follows:—"At Derbent, a short distance on the road between Philippopoli and Hermanli, when the Russian cavalry entered after a sharp little skirmish, they were fired upon, and several killed and wounded, from a little stone house. All efforts to parley with the Turks concealed there resulted in loss of life; and at last, after several peasants had been shot in the attempt to persuade the inmates to surrender, cannon were brought to bear upon the house, and shells exploded inside, which set it on fire. The defenders were driven out, and advanced upon the mass of soldiers, firing as they came. Of course, they were shot immediately."—From this description one would think that at least some considerable number of the inhabitants had thus been keeping the Russians at bay. But the correspondent goes on, in the most innocent way, to say—"There were only three peasants in all who made this desperate resistance in their fortress. This incident shows the spirit that animated the Turks to resist the advance of the Russians; and the history of

the great bivouac proves the extent and force of the panic which seized those who ran away." He then continues to describe the attack made on the bivouac:—"When the Russian cavalry came in sight of the bivouac there were one or two battalions of Turkish infantry stationed there as rear-guard, *but they dispersed and retired with little attempt at resistance*, and a squadron was sent into the great assembly of waggons to find out what it was. They rode on without receiving a single shot until they were right alongside, and within a very few paces of the train of arabas occupying the road, when, from behind these waggons, out from under the rude coverings, and from all sides, came a rattling volley, which emptied some saddles. Then it became evident that a ferocious resistance was to be made, so this squadron retired, and preparations were made to attack the collection of waggons, for it *sheltered not only the rear-guard*, but also no one knew how many armed peasants; but before the attack began in earnest the panic caught in the bivouac and spread like wildfire. The immense band of refugees ran away with the soldiers to the mountains, leaving cattle, carts, and all their movables which they could not seize upon at the moment." It need only be pointed out that, in one breath, it is stated that the rear-guard had retired from, and in the next that it had taken shelter in, the bivouac! He then continues:—"The cause of the panic was the appearance of Skobeloff's cavalry in the valley of the Maritza, in front of the bivouac. The result of it was doubtless the death of thousands upon thousands of Turkish peasants, who are now in the mountains without clothing or food. Still, another result of the flight is the enrichment of all the Bulgarians in the neighbourhood, for the smoke of the first firing had not cleared away when these ever-watchful individuals pounced down upon all the cattle the soldiers did not drive off, and carried away hundreds of carts laden with plunder."

This description is a model of disingenuousness and unscrupulous partisanship. There were over 500 dead lying in the deserted bivouac when the correspondent of the *Daily News* was there; yet he states that only a "few saddles of the Russian squadron were emptied, and that before the attack began in earnest, the panic caught like wildfire, and the refugees ran away into the mountains with the soldiers." How, then, does he account for the 500 dead bodies? Comment is rendered superfluous by the report of the official commission in August, 1878, which entirely bears out the view we have taken of the affair. In short, of the 75,000 people, only a few thousands with their arabas were turned back towards their homes by the Russians. The rest escaped from the horrors of the road between Philippopoli and Hermanli, which should bear for all time the name of the Road of the Dead.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE ADVANCE ON ERZEROUM.

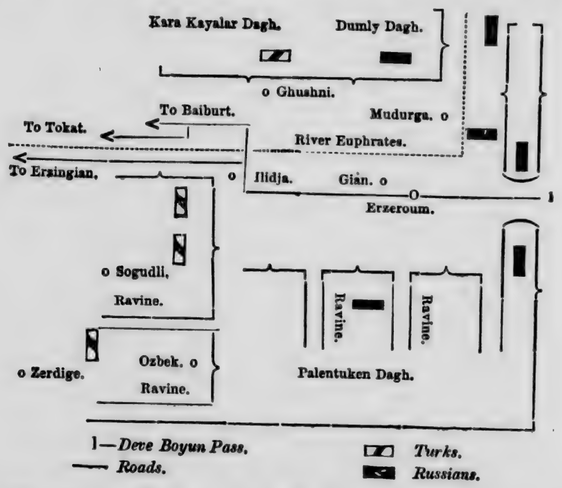
AFTER the battle of Aladja Dagh, as already recounted, Mukhtar Pasha ordered Ismail Pasha to fall back from his positions at Igdir and Bayazet, and join him at Hassan Kaleh, in order to assist in the defence of the Deve Boyun Pass, leading to Erzeroum.

Ismail at once complied with this order, and set off with his Kurds, followed step by step by General Tergukassoff, whilst Mukhtar Pasha himself, with the remnant of his troops, was pursued by General Heimann, who effected his junction with Tergukassoff at Köprikoi, five-and-twenty miles east of Erzeroum.

The Russians lost no time in following up the track of the Turks, and found them intrenched in very strong positions on the Deve Boyun heights, guarding the pass to Erzeroum from the east. But, strong as were the positions, the Turks were not in a state to defend them. Mukhtar Pasha's and Ismail Pasha's men were thoroughly demoralised by their precipitate flight and the disaster at Aladja Dagh, whilst the

fresh troops from Erzeroum were more or less panic-stricken by the exaggerated accounts of the hopeless condition of things. And scarcely had they heard of the full extent of the catastrophe when they found the Russians already upon them at their very gates. All this, apart from the fact that men never fight so well in the open when they know they have stone walls and their houses behind them, contributed to make the defence of the Deve Boyun a forlorn hope. Not that the men did not fight well and hold their ground bravely enough when face to face with the enemy; but as soon as they saw that they were being outgeneraled, as usual, and their flanks turned, as usual, they lost heart; and after an obstinate combat, as long as it lasted, closed by the heights of the Deve Boyun, which curve round in the south into the Palentuken Dagh, a range of mountains much cut up into ravines and defiles, running south and west. North of the valley are the Kara Kayalar Dagh and the Dumly Dagh; and in the west are the heights of Sögüdli, separated from the crest of the Palentuken Dagh by two deep ravines south of Sögüdli and Ozbek respectively; whilst on the north-east lies, in a commanding position, the village of Ilidja, on the high-road from Erzeroum to Trebizonde, Tokat, and Erzingian, and opposite to it, on the slopes of the Kara Kayalar, the village of Ghushni, in a similar position.

Now the Russians were in this difficulty:—They had not sufficient men to surround



Mukhtar Pasha was obliged to give up the pass and fly to the town behind him, leaving nothing on the east between him and the victorious Russians but the crumbling walls of Erzeroum and the forts on the Top Dagh, between the town and the Deve Boyun Pass.

This took place on November 4th, and Erzeroum literally lay at the feet of the Russians. But between that and entering it was a long step, and this step was not so easy to take, for many reasons.

The above sketch gives a graphic picture of the town and its surroundings. Erzeroum, it will there be seen, lies somewhat south of the river Euphrates, in a swampy valley, through which only a few good roads run. In the east this valley is Erzeroum, nor even to attack it simultaneously north, east, and south. They might, indeed, have succeeded in carrying it by assault from one point, but it would have been at a great loss, and the instructions both commanders had were not to risk any great loss if avoidable. But, apart from this, and supposing they had succeeded in capturing the town, they had not sufficient men to hold it and carry on active operations in the field at the same time against the army, which would have left the town by the western gates as soon as they entered it by the eastern gates, and, in truth, have beset them themselves in Erzeroum—thus besieging the victorious enemy, in turn, in the very scene of his success. Kars, it must be remembered, had not yet fallen, so there

was no knowing when the reinforcements could arrive which were held in check by this Asiatic Plevna in miniature.

If, however, it had been possible to carry the town by a *coup de main* with a small force, and oblige Mukhtar Pasha to abandon it with his army, the Russians would have been able to move the whole of their forces westwards, and camp at the key of the western approach to Erzeroum, at Ilidja, or even follow up Mukhtar to Erzingian or Baiburt, or to whatever other point he might fall back upon. In short, the only feasible project, under the circumstances, was for the Russians to frighten the Turks out of the town by a surprise, and follow them up whilst the panic lasted. This was, in fact, the plan they adopted, in spite of the reports and rumours industriously set afloat, both in Europe and in Asia, to the effect that Mukhtar Pasha intended to convert Erzeroum into a second Plevna.

But to have done this, other than disorganised troops were requisite; and the simple matter of fact is, that the defeat of the Turks in the action on the Deve Boyun on the 4th November, resulting in the loss of thirty-six cannon, was scarcely less disastrous than the defeat before Kars. A complete panic, with the consequent losses, took place, and was not allayed till the fortifications round Erzeroum inspired the fugitives with a certain sense of safety. Everything was in the most fearful confusion. The only person who kept his senses at all about him was Sir Arnold Kemball. Regarding Sir Arnold Kemball, by the way, a story obtained currency, which, true or not true, was believed in by the Russians at the time. It is said that Sir Arnold, seeing the disastrous result of the engagement, rode off in all haste to Baiburt, to inform the commander of the troops hurrying up from Trebizonde of what had occurred, and to prevent him from coming up to Erzeroum, thus enabling him to secure Mukhtar Pasha's line of retreat should it be necessary for him to abandon Erzeroum.

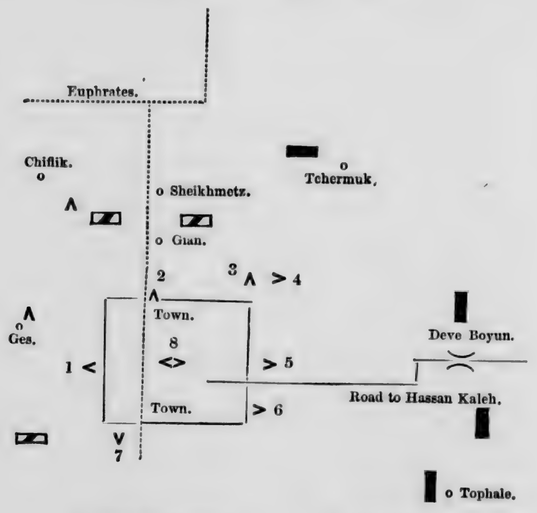
Thus, after the action on the Deve Boyun, Erzeroum was held by one portion of Mukhtar Pasha's and Ismail Hakki's forces; the rest were at Ilidja and Ghushni; whilst the reinforcements, such as they were, from Trebizonde, had been placed in positions which would enable them, in conjunction with Mukhtar Pasha's army, to bar the enemy's advance further west, and prevent him from descending into the plains west and north of Erzeroum—that is to say, until he had seized the heights of the Palentuken Dagh and the adjoining hill up to Ilidja, and had also occupied the slopes of Dumly Dagh and Kara Kayalar Dagh as far as Ghushni. The possession of these two points, completely commanding the road from Erzeroum, was absolutely necessary before the Russians could have ventured upon any advance.

Defence and attack were thus clearly prescribed by the natural features of the field. In no case, perhaps, could they have been more stringently laid down. A wide, straggling town, commanded east and south by high hills, protected in the west and north by a belt of swampy ground, stretching for about eight miles in either direction, Erzeroum would have required for its investment a far larger body of troops than the Russians disposed of. A line of investment, to be effectual, would have to stretch over more than forty miles. Hence, as an attack from the west, where the town was quite open, with the exception of one redoubt, would have been impossible as long as there were sufficient troops in the rear at Ilidja or Baiburt, it could only be taken from the east, south, or north; and it was just in these directions that the defences—redoubts and bastions—had been erected, as will be seen from the following sketch. In the north, barring the roads from Gian, Sheikhmetz, and Suk-Tchermuk, there were three works—Kavak Tabia, Nishan Tabia, and Medjidieh Tabia. In the east, on either side of the road which comes winding down from the Deve Boyun, and commanding it for a considerable distance, were the Azizieh and Ahali Tabias. These were flanked in the south by some other works—all open—which are not shown in the sketch—situated on the terraces of the Palentuken Dagh. In the south-west, where the stream which traverses Erzeroum enters the town, there was the Keremen Tabia; and in the west, commanding the road from Trebizonde and Erzingian, the Djahabane Tabia. Nearly in the centre of the town stood the citadel, the whole surrounded by an old wall, dating from the Genoese occupation, where it had not been patched up by the Turks.

The course of the combat on the 9th to the 10th of November can be clearly followed when bearing this situation in mind. An attack from the north was not advisable, as General Komaroff, demonstrating through the Tortoum valley, had other objects to attend to, and would thus

have necessitated a change of front on the part of Generals Heimann and Tergukassoff, which could not be thought of. The attack, therefore, had to be conducted on the east and south against the Azizieh and Ahali redoubts. A detachment was sent by General Heimann to advance against the Azizieh redoubt, and another by General Tergukassoff against the Ahali position. But owing either to one of the columns losing its way, as the Russians say, or to the determined defence of the Turks, the attack was unsuccessful. The course of the action was really very simple. The eastern column failure of the southern column to carry out its share of the operations. Possibly it lost its way; but it is much more likely that, flushed with their success on the Deve Boyun, the Russians imagined that the Turks were so demoralised that a handful of troops would suffice to carry the town, force Mukhtar Pasha to retreat, and enable them to drive him before them and clear the whole plain of his forces. But they were mistaken. Mukhtar Pasha knew perfectly well that the Russians had not the men to invest the town completely, or cut off his retreat to Ilidja, and that for some

Plan of Erzeroum and Forts.



successfully attacked the Azizieh redoubt, occupied it, and made a number of prisoners; but the southern column—which, if any column lost its way, must have been that one—failed to carry the Ahali position which, flanking the Azizieh, rendered it untenable for the Russians, who, therefore, withdrew at dawn in the presence of the reinforcements which had been hurried up, and which followed the retreating Russians till they were thrown back on their main forces on the Deve Boyun. In so far, therefore, the Turks could justly claim a victory. The repulse was, no doubt, due to the time to come his line of march westward would be secure. He therefore naturally determined to throw as many impediments in the way of the Russians as he could without compromising himself. At any time, supposing the Russians attacked in force from the east, south, or immediately north of Erzeroum, he could fall back on the positions he had prepared in the west. By this means he gained time for "something to turn up."

Meantime the alarm in Erzeroum itself was great. Cavalry soldiers, going wildly about, informed the public that the Russians

had taken the Azizieh Fort. At two o'clock in the morning the enemy had stormed the advanced work on the southern extremity of the Top Dagh. It seems they surprised the garrison, and even entered into the great stone barracks amid the work; for, afterwards, the Turks saw the broad scaling-ladder they had left in the fosse. They had surprised the sleeping sentinels and got into the place before any one was rightly aware of what was going on; and it was even said that the assailing force, some two companies of grenadiers, wore fezes in order to deceive the defenders. Anyhow, the Azizieh Fort was taken; and it was only towards daybreak that Mehemed Pasha, the same officer who carried the Kizil Tepe, succeeded in retaking it. Had it been known what was really going on at the time, a most disastrous panic would probably have ensued.

As it was, the troops, armed citizens included, remained steady at their posts. Shortly after daybreak, the din of combat got further and further off, for the Turks had already assumed the aggressive, and were fighting down at the western end of the Deve Boyun Pass. A long line of cavalry, supported by heavy reserves, was halted across the valley mouth, whilst a heavy infantry engagement went on away up the pass, where the Turkish troops were pursuing the Russians, who had failed to hold their own in the Azizieh Fort, until a body of Russian troops pushed along the mountain slopes which gird the plain south of Erzeroum, to sweep the Turkish line of retreat. Then the Ottomans began to retire precipitately, fearing lest this demonstration might develop into a real attack, and, in case of success, cut off their retreat. Before this sudden retreat there was considerable disorder. The armed townspeople, who had made a sally, had allowed themselves to be drawn too far, and when the enemy reassumed the offensive, withdrew with a certain amount of haste; but, for the moment, the danger was over. The conflict had, however, been very severe, and Russian and Turkish dead covered the ground within and without the ramparts of Azizieh; the former, as usual under such circumstances, entirely stripped of their clothing. Some of the townspeople, in a spirit of uncompromising hatred, were maltreating their dead enemies—one man jumping with both heels on the still fresh body of a Russian, a gurgling cry escaping from his mouth with each concussion. The bodies were buried as quickly as possible, by order of Mukhtar Pasha. The Turkish loss was nearly 700 *hors de combat*, and that of the Russians about 900. On November 12th, at dusk, the Russians made another attempt on the Medjidieh and Azizieh forts, but, for the second time, without success, and without inflicting much damage or loss of life on the defenders and population of the town. In spite of the din and roar outside the places and along the ramparts, the streets were quiet enough. The Armenian population, like so many rabbits in a burrow, sought the furthermost shelter of their rickety houses; whilst the Moslems, the privileged warriors, were all at the ramparts. Nasty troops of wolf-like dogs, who belong to nobody, cowered on the rubbish-heaps at the corners, and showed their glimmering teeth at the few passers-by, called outside by the circumstances, or at the half-drowned soldiers, heavily laden with clot-like bread packed in their sodden blankets. Poor fellows! they took it all calmly enough. There was Allah, and the Padishah, and Mukhtar Pasha, who bade them go; and used as they were to obey every nod of a nameless pasha, far off in a province it would take a gazetteer to find out, how could they dream that victory was not chained to their standards? And yet the battle of Aladja and the capture of Deve Boyun were not so remote. One of the best characteristics of British troops is that they don't know when they are beaten. Turkish soldiers possess this quality to a rare extreme, and thus they were ready to defend Erzeroum in spite of all.

Towards midnight the attack was repulsed along the whole line, and all was silent till the dawn should bring in its usual accompaniment of shells and rockets. These latter projectiles made more noise than they could do harm in an earth-roofed, stone-built town like Erzeroum. There was a great deal of whizzing, followed by a blazing glare of red light, and a thundering detonation. At first these missiles frightened the Turkish soldiery immensely; but they were not long getting used to them, and considered them no worse than shells. It was curious to go out into the streets after the attack. Every one was still at his post. The liquid mud which, on the occasion of a rainfall, takes the place of water in Erzeroum, duly fumbled its heavy way down the ill-paved precipitous streets; the uneasy dogs still felt inclined to snap at the untur-

baned stranger; and from away out in the plain came the pattering fire of the obstinate Muscovites, unwilling to abandon their attack even though repulsed.

Thus far, the fighting of the population of Erzeroum was immensely superior to that of Kars. Old Moslems, with long white beards, and brass-ringed octagonal-stocked muskets of another age, stood, hour after hour, in the advanced forts, awaiting the attack with a bravery that might have been an example to younger men. A little way further on, one saw men bearing something muffled in a dusky blanket. It was a wounded man. Then came many more such. Smothered fires gleamed along the rear of the ramparts. They were lit to enable men perishing in the bitter cold night to stand the biting temperature. Ever and anon a bugle was sounded, followed by many another The *sonnerie* was "Long life to the Padishah!" and wild cries, far from cheerful, replied to the call.

But all the devotion and endurance of the Turkish troops in Erzeroum could not check the course of events outside, and on November 20th Mukhtar Pasha was informed of the fall of Kars, and summoned, for the second time, to surrender. He refused; and by November 23rd, already a large body of troops was added to General Heimann's forces, and henceforth the hopes of the defenders of Erzeroum were centred, not without some reason, on "General Winter;" and, it may be added, on a still more powerful ally who speedily put in an appearance—"General Disease." These two grim officers exacted more victims in Asia than in Europe, and caused Russia the loss of some of her best officers.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE END OF THE CAMPAIGN IN ARMENIA.

In the beginning of December, a caravan of camels from Persia was passed through the Russian lines round Erzeroum. When it came to the Russian camp, the head man was asked what his goods consisted of, and he replied, carpets, and that they were consigned to an agent in Erzeroum, to be forwarded to England. The Russians took three or four carpets, and gave the man a note to the agent, saying they hoped he would not charge too much, and that they would pay him in a few days when they came to Erzeroum. Those few days, however, were spun out to eighty, for it was not until February 22nd that the Russians entered Erzeroum; and then only in consequence of the signature of the armistice.

It is true that the tenacity of the Turks in holding their positions in Asia Minor, had only an indirect influence on the course of events, and that when the European armies collapsed, the fate of Erzeroum was interesting chiefly to the inhabitants only. Indeed, the wisdom of the Turkish commanders in attempting to defend Asia Minor with a field army at all, may be doubted, and the question be asked, whether it would not have been better for the Porte to have concentrated all its forces in European Turkey. There would also have been political wisdom in this step; for the Porte might have felt assured, that however indifferent to the fate of Danubian Turkey, the British government could by no means afford to ignore the fate of Asia Minor; and that, come what might, England would, in all circumstances, take care that the Russians should not acquire a preponderating influence south of the Black Sea.

However, all these considerations do not alter the fact that, until December 27th, when he went to Constantinople, Mukhtar Pasha held his ground against the Russians in Erzeroum, whilst stout old Dervish Pasha did the same in Batoum.

Though within cannon-shot of the town since the battle of Deve Boyun, the Russians, with the exception of the two attempts to storm Erzeroum, remained almost entirely inactive, at least as far as hostilities were concerned. Still they had been steadily pushing their way down the Olti valley, and behind the Palentuken mountain south-east of the town, both columns gradually converging to a point of union in the neighbourhood of Ilidja. Both forces were thus

in alarming proximity to the Trebizonde road, and it was only a matter of a few days at the furthest for the town of Erzeroum to be completely blockaded. For some days past the Turks had been accustomed to see, from the ramparts of the town, the Cossacks leisurely marching from one village to another, requisitioning corn and forage, only three-quarters of an hour's march from the Olti gate of Erzeroum. The guns on the Kop Dagh opened fire, and succeeded in forcing the Cossacks to retire after they had asked about forage, and whether any Turkish troops were concealed in the village.

The Russians, however, were rapidly closing round Erzeroum; and on January 1st, when Edhem Pasha, who occupied Ilidja to watch the fords and bridges of the Euphrates, started on a patrolling expedition towards Pernacaban, the Cossacks who occupied the village of Usni, an hour and a-half's march distant, took advantage of the circumstance to try and surprise Ilidja. At half-past four o'clock they were already, to the number of some eight or nine hundred, so close to it, that the advanced guard could be counted without the aid of a glass. At this juncture the Turkish cavalry, warned of the danger, hurriedly returned to Ilidja, but only just in time to prevent its capture. The Russians advanced up to the banks of the river; but, finding they could not arrive at the village before the Turks, they drew off to their camp at Usni. The situation had become critical in the extreme, for to maintain their communications with Trebizonde open, the Turks required a much larger force at Ilidja than they possessed. The Kara Su, half-way between Ilidja and Erzeroum, expands into an elongated sheet of water, known as the Ilidja Su. It is here crossed by two bridges, its depth rendering it unfordable. While these bridges were held, a formidable obstacle intervened, during the summer and autumn, between the Russians and the Trebizonde road, which runs more or less parallel to the stream; and some flying columns of cavalry amply sufficed to prevent parties of the enemy from molesting the traffic. In winter, however, matters became greatly changed. The intense cold froze the river to a depth of eighteen inches; and cavalry and ox-waggons could pass across it. It practically ceased to be an obstacle; and the Russians did not neglect to take advantage of the circumstance to possess themselves of the road on its southern bank leading to Trebizonde, and on January 4th, at about ten o'clock in the forenoon, six battalions of Russian infantry, preceded by two regiments of cavalry, boldly crossed the Kara Su, and took possession of Ilidja. Their first act was to cut the telegraph wires, and to throw out vedettes in the direction of Baiburt; whilst Edhem Pasha, supposing that he saw only the advanced guard of a whole army corps, immediately fell back hurriedly upon Aschkalé.

A correspondent of the *Daily News* was quietly reclining on the floor of his *oda* at Aschkalé, the best in the miserable village, that of the local magnate or Bey, when Edhem Pasha, looking like King Christmas white from head to foot with hoar frost, rushed in, and divesting himself of his numerous fur coats, and head and face wrappers, threw himself on a mattress at the fire opposite that occupied by the correspondent. He seemed greatly perturbed in spirit. He gave several orders in rapid succession about outposts and vedettes, and then his servant produced a large wicker-covered gallon bottle of rhaki.

He turned abruptly to the correspondent, and asked what his countrymen were about. England seemed going to sleep, he said. "There is Erzeroum completely blocked; its last avenue of communication with the outer world cut off; all the same as lost." And he continued pouring out his dissatisfaction in the same strain for about an hour.

The "Special" felt glad that he had taken the rather emphatic hint of the Cossacks on the previous evening, and left Ilidja there and then. Edhem Pasha seemed divided in opinion as to whether he should retreat on Erzingian, or merely push forward to Pernacaban. "You'll have the Russian cavalry here to-morrow," he said, "and there is no knowing how we may be cut off."

He asked if General Kemball was still at Pernacaban, and on being answered in the affirmative, proposed going to him the next day.

The evening wore on with such talk, and orderlies and officers coming and going continually on one business or another, when, at about half-past nine in the evening, an orderly arrived with a despatch, to the effect that, the same afternoon, Mehemed Pasha had made a sortie from Erzeroum in connection with a flank movement led by

Ismail Pasha, and that the Russians, after a brief cannonade, had evacuated the village, and retired across the river again. The pasha thereupon somewhat regained his composure, and immediately issued orders for the entire force to be ready to march back to Ilidja within an hour.

Then followed a scene of confusion such as has been rarely witnessed. Bugles sounded and re-sounded in vain. There was no response save on the part of the local guard and a couple of dozen Karakalpaks, or irregular horsemen. The pasha stormed and raved, despatched his second in command and his aides-de-camp hither and thither, but all in vain.

"Where are the officers? where are the men?"

"In the different villages," was the reply.

In fact, the thing was only reasonable, inasmuch as no orders had been given on the subject. Aschkalé was a miserable tumble-down hamlet of a few dozen cabins crowded by an excessive population. It was impossible to find quarters for 1,600 men and horses there; and the subordinate officers had given *carte blanche* to their men to find lodgings where and when they could.

The night was bitterly cold, and a kind of smothering smoke like frozen mist filled the air, rendering a man invisible at fifty yards. Just the sort of weather for a surprise, had the Russians been in a position to effect one. The soldiers accordingly went off in scattered parties to different villages, some two, three, and four, and even ten miles distant. This may seem incredible; but it is positively true. Some came as far as Pernacaban, three hours' ride from Aschkalé. Orderlies were at once sent off to the surrounding villages to order the men in; but notwithstanding every effort, not more than five or six hundred could be got together by midnight. There were fragmentary squadrons without officers, and officers without men. Possibly this scattering of the troops was the only available means of finding the cover so imperatively necessary, for it was almost certain death to attempt bivouacking on such a night; but with the enemy in such supposed dangerous proximity, it was courting certain destruction.

The pasha, having seen this fraction of his command on their way back to Ilidja, went to bed; but started himself long before daylight in the same direction. He did not, however, remain long in Ilidja. On January 8th, he suddenly put in an appearance at Pernacaban, on the road to Baiburt, announcing that the Russians had occupied Aschkalé with a considerable force, he himself narrowly escaping being made prisoner.

He owed his escape to the timely warning of his host, who informed him that the Russian cavalry was advancing its flanks to surround the village. The bulk of the Zaptieh cavalry and Karakalpaks were stationed at Karabuyouk Khan, two hours and a-half distant along the Erzeroum road. The Cossacks, moving stealthily along the opposite bank of the frozen Kara Su, under cover of the dense snow-fog, and crossing on the ice, succeeded in surprising the Turks, some 600 strong. There was no fighting. The Ottomans fled in disorder. Those who were well mounted fled across the plain, scattering in every direction; and those whose horses failed them were either cut down or made prisoners. The Russians then immediately advanced, occupying Aschkalé, and pushing a force towards Pernacaban, three hours' march further on.

With this evacuation of Ilidja by the Turks, the investment all round Erzeroum, by the Russians, could no longer be prevented; and henceforth, neither army nor garrison did anything but keep in its positions until the town was entered, in accordance with the terms of the armistice, which was signed on January 31st. Batoum, however, still held out, and resisted, successfully, a determined attack by the Russians on January 30th, the day before the armistice was signed.



CHAPTER XXXII.

THE ARMISTICE.

WITH Adrianople in the hands of the Russians, and their armies converging in every direction upon Constantinople, it became clear to the Turks that the supreme moment had at last arrived; and that whatever diversity of opinion might prevail as to the course of action to be ultimately adopted, it was absolutely necessary to stay the advance of the Russians. As this could not be done by force, there was nothing left but to submit to the Russian conditions for an armistice, which armistice, however, was to depend upon the agreement as to the bases of a definite peace. True, at one moment it seemed as though there was another way out of the difficulty. That was when the British fleet, under Admiral Hornby, suddenly arrived from Besika Bay at the mouth of the Dardanelles on January 25th.

Crowds lined the shores on both sides of the Hellespont. The enthusiasm amongst the Turks was at its height. "At last," they said, "the English are convinced the Russians are not fighting for the Bulgarian Christians, and are coming to help us." But when the flag-ship of Vice-Admiral Hornby, the *Sultan*, was abreast the Castles of the Dardanelles, a boat put off from the shore. Presently the fleet came to a standstill in mid-channel, the ships blowing off steam. H.M.S. *Sultan* saluted the Turkish flag, and the salute was immediately returned by Fort Sultanieh; then, right-about-face, the whole of the vessels steamed outside the Straits again, whence they had so recently come. This was in consequence of a telegram from Mr. Layard, to the effect that the Porte refused, in virtue of the treaties, to allow the fleet to pass the Straits. It had been presumed that, as the Porte had given the requisite permission to pass the Dardanelles on a previous occasion, this would remain valid, or that no difficulty would be found in obtaining fresh permission, and Mr. Layard was requested by Lord Derby to obtain the necessary document. The Porte refused, alleging that the circumstances had changed. The preliminary conditions of peace and the armistice had been agreed to, though not yet signed; and the advance of the fleet would be construed as hostile to Russia. The allegation as to the protection of the lives and property of British subjects was admitted on all hands to be insufficient, the condition of the capital having improved, and the danger of disturbances having become immensely less since the armistice and the presence of the Russian army in virtual possession of the lines of Constantinople. The Turks, moreover, pointed out, that if the fleet entered with permission, the Russians would probably occupy the city; and it was even asserted that the Grand Duke Nicholas had telegraphed to this effect on hearing of the proposal. Whether true, or not, that the grand duke uttered this threat—probably not, as otherwise Lord Derby would certainly have made mention of it in one of his tattling moments—it is certain that the Russians took credit to themselves for this sudden flight of the British fleet; and, on the following day, a placard was posted up on the gates of the British embassy, and at other places, on which were printed the words, in large type—"Lost, between Besika Bay and Constantinople, an ironclad fleet. Any one giving information will be handsomely rewarded."

But, though the fleet failed to accomplish its ostensible object, the real object of its despatch to the Dardanelles had been attained. This was, to hurry on the negotiations, and relieve the minds of ministers and the public as to their nature.

On January 27th the Grand Duke Nicholas arrived at Adrianople, accompanied by the Turkish ambassadors, who had been sent to arrange the terms of the armistice and the bases of the future peace. Little progress was made at first, however, for two reasons, both of the same kind. The Russians wanted to gain time for their armies to reach the points they had determined to reach in order to consolidate their position; whilst the Turks also desired ardently to gain time in hopes of "something turning up" in their favour. To attain this object they both adopted the simple plan of referring to head-quarters—that is to say, to St.

Petersburg and Constantinople. Hence endless delays, real confusion amongst the Turks, and a well-calculated confusion amongst the Russians in the matter of orders sent, or not sent—as best suited the purpose—to the commanders of the different army corps and detachments.

At the same time, both the grand duke and M. Nelidoff professed to have no power to discuss conditions. They simply offered their terms, and gave the Turks the alternative of acceptance or refusal. After two days' negotiations the Turks decided to refuse, although the grand duke and M. Nelidoff used every argument to persuade them to accept, informing them that the march of the armies would be stopped the moment they consented, and that their refusal was the destruction of the Turkish empire, which Russia had no wish to bring about.

They were informed that Adrianople and Philippopoli were taken, the army of Suleiman completely destroyed, and that the Russians would continue to march upon Constantinople unless they accepted.

Namyk Pasha exclaimed, "Well, then, if the Ottoman empire must perish, let it perish by force. We will never sign our own death-warrant."

He was, however, induced to reconsider this decision, and he and Server Pasha asked two hours for reflection. At the end of this time they answered that they could not accept.

Both the Russians and the Turks declined to tell any one the conditions, but Sir A. Layard was able to obtain them indirectly, and to communicate their general drift to his government at home. The Turks objected, more or less, to all the conditions; but the one which prevented the agreement was the Bulgarian autonomy. They were ready to yield every other point but this, which they considered equivalent to the destruction of the Turkish power in Europe. They were willing to grant autonomy, as provided for in the programme of the conference. The Russians replied to this, that the programme of the conference was the minimum reduced to the most slender proportions in order to avoid war. As this object was not obtained, they must now demand a far more efficient kind of autonomy, something like that of Servia and Roumania, with Bulgaria extending very near Constantinople on one side, and to Salonica on the other. This was, of course, equivalent to the extinction of Turkish power everywhere in Europe, except merely Constantinople. This they would not accept. They were willing to cede Kars and Erzeroum, willing to grant the complete independence of Roumania and Servia, the free passage of the Straits to the Russian fleet, and a war indemnity, but not the autonomy of Bulgaria.

It was just on this point, however, that the Russians were the most rigid. They left all the other questions for ulterior discussion, apparently recognising the fact that all those questions concerned Europe, and not Russia and Turkey alone. On the one question of Bulgarian autonomy only were they inflexible. There was no question of the cession of the Turkish fleet; though, of course, that might arise in ulterior discussions on the question of a war indemnity. The whole course of the negotiations showed that Russia wished to conclude a direct and separate peace with Turkey, however much the conditions of that peace might be afterwards discussed and modified by Europe. These conditions were, a cession of territory in Asia, the question of the Straits, and a war indemnity. Although she meant to force the Turks to consent to these things in principle, she expected Europe to sanction their confirmation and application. In this way Russian diplomacy offered no hold to the English government to seize as a pretext for war; for England could not declare war to prevent Bulgarian autonomy, the only question on which the Russians professed to be inflexible.

At last, however, the Turks yielded, and on January 31st the armistice was signed at Adrianople, and Count Keller was sent by General Skobeloff from Tchataldja to Mukhtar Pasha at Kadikoi, to arrange the lines of demarcation and the neutral ground between the two armies during the armistice. General Skobeloff's head-quarters were to remain at Tchataldja until the signature of peace. His cavalry arrived there on February 6th, and he himself, with the head of his infantry column, on the following day. General Gourko's advance guard arrived in Silivri, on the coast of the Sea of Marmora, on February 7th also.

There was some difficulty in getting the Turks to evacuate the ground stipulated in the protocol, though it was agreed that they should evacuate all their positions by February 6th. It was to see if they meant to do so or not, as well as to arrange the lines of demarcation, that Count Keller went to

Kadikoi; in fact, Mukhtar Pasha had not, until a late hour at night, received any information about the terms of the armistice from Constantinople, and thought the two armies were simply to remain where they were at the moment the armistice was signed, and he was surprised to find the Russian troops continually advancing.

Thus when General Strukoff, of Skobeloff's cavalry, arrived on February 5th at Silivri, he found the Turks still there; and they at first refused to leave the place, as they had had no orders to that effect. It was not till he brought up a battery, and threatened to fire on them, that they finally consented to leave. It was stipulated in the protocol that the Russian lines should be from Buyuk Tchekmedje, on the Sea of Marmora, along the right bank of the Kara Su river to the Lake of Derkos, on the Black Sea; and the Turkish line from Kujuk Tchekmedje, on the Sea of Marmora, to the village of Ak Bunar, on the Black Sea, leaving a space of about seven miles between the lines as neutral ground. The village of Derkos was on neutral ground, as was also the whole Turkish line of defence, and the fortifications of Buyuk Tchekmedje. The Turks really abandoned their last line of defence, and left Constantinople at the mercy of the Russians, with the line of Kujuk Tchekmedje, not fortified, nor were they allowed to work on them by the terms of the armistice.

In consenting to this arrangement, Server and Namyk Pashas must either have been completely panic-stricken, thinking that the only way to keep the Russians from Constantinople was thus to throw themselves on the generosity of the grand duke, or else, having abandoned all hope, they wished to give the Russians a proof of their sincerity in thus needlessly abandoning their last line of defence. The fact is, the Russians could not have attacked these lines for fully two weeks, as they would not have had up enough infantry to do so, for the positions were amongst the most formidable in the world.

The valley of Kara Su, far above Tchataldja, is nothing but a marsh, crossed by one or two causeways, over which no troops could have passed for fully two months; and it was further shortened by the Lake of Derkos. The possible line of attack was not over seven or eight miles long, not more than a third of the length of Osman's lines at Plevna, and Mukhtar had 30,000 or 40,000 men, good, bad, and indifferent, with whom he might have held this line at any hazard, and the Russians could not have insisted on its evacuation, for the reason that they could not be ready to attack for two weeks. In their possession this line would have put the Turks on a much better footing for the peace negotiations. However, they abandoned all idea of holding it, and Mukhtar received orders to give it up. He only asked for a delay of three days to remove his heavy artillery and stores, and promised to evacuate the line by February 10th. General Skobeloff informally granted that delay, while reserving to himself the right to watch the proceedings step by step, and see that they were really carried out. He informed Mukhtar that unless he saw that the evacuation was taking place, he should consider himself authorised, by this continued violation of the armistice, to occupy the neutral ground, and seize whatever war material, cannon, &c., he might find there. As Skobeloff had not yet enough troops up to attack these formidable positions, this threat was what the Americans call a game of bluff. The grand duke, however, considered it of the greatest importance to have these positions evacuated at once, and Skobeloff tried to get it done by means of threats and bluster in lieu of force, which he had not yet got at his disposal.

The reason for this anxiety to obtain possession of the coveted lines was evident. Peace was not certain until it was signed. Meantime the Russians had the possibility of English interference continually before their eyes—an event which a discussion of the conditions of peace might still bring about. But, with the lines of Buyuk Tchekmedje in their possession, as they virtually would be when the Turks evacuated them, Constantinople was practically as much in their hands as if there were sentinels at the doors of St. Sophia.

Meantime, however, both Turks and Russians tried hard to deceive each other. The Turks assured the Russians that they had 85,000 men behind their lines. The Russians assured the Turks that they had 100,000 ready to attack upon a moment's notice, and were only restrained from doing so by consideration for them.

On February 10th, however, true to his promise, Mukhtar Pasha completed the evacuation of the neutral territory. All his army retired behind the lines of Buyuk Tchekmedje; but the heavy artillery still

remained in position, and a good deal of war material was still on neutral ground, because the Turks could not remove it. Skobeloff told Mukhtar to at least remove the guns from their platforms. Constantinople was thus virtually in the hands of the Russians, just as much as if they were already in the place. They had the sense not to enter, that was all. Skobeloff, while going over the lines of delimitation, was near enough to see the place. He and the whole of his staff, with the escort, sat on their horses and gazed on the capital for some minutes. There was some disappointment expressed that they should not have been allowed to march in; but all were in general very glad the war was over.

There was still, however, considerable alarm lest a conflict should arise between England and Russia; for, with the occupation of the Tchataldja lines, Russia had played the first of her trump cards. Constantinople was threatened. With this threat the necessity for action to protect British interests had arisen; and, in spite of dissensions at home, and in spite of the protests of the Porte, the British fleet was ordered to pass the Dardanelles, and take up any position, within easy distance of Constantinople, that might appear suitable to the admiral. If necessary, Admiral Hornby was to force an entrance. The Porte, however, contented itself with a protest, and Admiral Hornby arrived with his fleet in the Sea of Marmora on February 14th, and anchored off Princes' Islands.

The movement was dictated, not so much by the presence of the Russians so close to Constantinople, as by the knowledge, which had been allowed to leak out, of the conditions of peace which the Russians laid down. These were such that, if insisted on, war between England and Russia was inevitable. It was therefore absolutely necessary that a force should be on the spot ready to keep the Straits open in case of necessity.

Meantime, pending the signature of peace, both Russians and Turks lost no opportunity of strengthening their positions, in view of a possible resumption of hostilities. Rustzuk was given up to General Todleben on February 21st; the Turks were retreating to Schumla and Varna, in compliance with the terms of the armistice; whilst, on the other hand, the lines of Bulair stretching across the isthmus of Gallipoli, and Gallipoli itself, were strongly garrisoned by the Turks, and Mukhtar Pasha and Mehemed Ali were indefatigable in strengthening the lines before Constantinople, from the Black Sea down to the extreme limit of the neutral zone by San Stefano. The Russians, on their side, held the whole country west of Constantinople, along a line drawn from Derkos on the Black Sea to Buyuk Tchekmedje on the Sea of Marmora, as well as the northern coast of the Sea of Marmora, whence a neutral zone, two miles either side of Examile, was drawn to the Gulf of Enos, north of the isthmus of Gallipoli, and separated the Russian lines from the lines of Bulair, which stretched across the isthmus from sea to sea.

Already, by the middle of February, the Turks, if it had been necessary, could have made a stronger resistance on the Gallipoli fortifications than was generally supposed, Though Constantinople was virtually in the hands of the Russians, Gallipoli was far from being similarly situated without a severe struggle. Twenty-two thousand Turkish troops were in the lines of the fortifications, with fifty Krupp cannons of large calibre on the modern system, and thirty-six on the old system. Ammunition trains were constantly leaving for the lines, notwithstanding the probability of the preliminaries of peace being speedily signed; whilst three ironclads of the British fleet, with Vice-Admiral Commerell on board, were watching the Straits. The *Flamingo* was at Rodosto, and three other vessels of the fleet in the Gulf of Ismid, with Admiral Hornby; whilst three more were cruising between Enos and the north-western coast of the Gallipoli Peninsula, in the Gulf of Saros, watching the movements of the Russians.

Under these circumstances the negotiations for the definite signature of peace were carried on. All three countries, England, Turkey, and Russia, were quietly but actively preparing for the worst, and intrigue, diplomacy, and war were mixed up in a conflict for the supremacy, to a degree which made this period one of intense excitement and anxiety. All three countries were trying to find a way out of the wood; but the worst of it was, that even supposing a way was found, it by no means followed that it would suit all three; so that, in fact, three roads had to be cut out of the densest undergrowth of political brushwood that ever perplexed a craftsman.

Thus no one was surprised to hear that the Russians took the opportunity, when the British fleet arrived, to reply by a counter move. On February 21st, General Gourko suddenly left Adrianople, his staff receiving only two hours' notice of his departure; and next day it was known that the whole of the head-quarters' staff, General Ignatieff, and the Diplomatic Chancery, were to start on the following morning for San Stefano, close to the south-western gate of Constantinople, and there was a forward movement of the Russian troops.

This sudden change of plans was coincident with the news of the fall of Server Pasha; and it was this which seemed to have decided the movement, although it had evidently been in contemplation before, as an answer to the coming of the British fleet. The coming of the fleet was the second trump played out to follow the Russian first, and the coming of the Russians to San Stefano was their reply.

However, General Ignatieff was very glad of a good pretext for getting nearer Constantinople. The negotiations had been going on slowly, although Safvet Pasha was supposed to have full powers to treat. But, in fact, he continually refused to accept point after point without orders from Constantinople, and telegraphic communication was constantly mysteriously interrupted. He was three or four days getting an answer. It was the same with the telegrams to General Ignatieff. They were four or five days *en route*.

Then Safvet Pasha was taken ill, and it was with the greatest difficulty General Ignatieff could get him to go on with the work. He wanted, from the first, to await the arrival of Saadoullah Bey from Berlin. He had completely forgotten the whole programme of the conference, and had to be continually referred to it. Again, he did not know the lines of delimitation agreed upon in the armistice, and had no map. He had to accept whatever the Russians told him on this head. One day he complained to General Ignatieff of the depredations of the Circassians in some village south of Sophia, and asked if the Russians could not stop it. General Ignatieff showed him that this village was on the Turkish side of the neutral ground, and therefore it was the business of the Turks to keep order, but offered to send Russian troops there if he wished to punish the Circassians. Under such circumstances it was most difficult to push the negotiations rapidly. General Ignatieff said the end of it would be, that he would have to deliver an *ultimatum* in order to get peace signed.

It is impossible to say whether these delays were caused by the natural and ordinary unreadiness of the Turks, or by a wish to gain time. General Ignatieff thought, or professed to think, that the knowledge of the views of the powers during the conference had much to do with it, and that the Turks imagined that no peace signed under such circumstances could be final and conclusive—a view borne out by subsequent events. Then came news of the fall of Server Pasha, and Safvet said that the negotiations must be suspended until further orders.

This was the last straw on the camel's back. It was immediately decided to go to San Stefano, the consent of the Turks to that step having been previously obtained. The Turks also agreed to abandon the last line of defence, Kujuk Tchekmedje. All these delays gave General Ignatieff the very pretext he wanted to get nearer to Constantinople—a step which he insisted upon most strongly.

The grand duke, hereupon, left Adrianople on February 22nd, with the head-quarters' staff. It was a beautiful day. Everybody was in the best spirits, delighted at the exchange of the muddy streets of Adrianople for the pretty village of San Stefano, on the shores of the Sea of Marmora.

They arrived at Tchataldja about six in the evening. Here General Skobeloff's corps, and part of the guards, were drawn up to receive the grand duke. He reviewed them, and found the troops, having had a rest, in excellent condition; but when on the point of continuing the journey, he was accosted by Tahir Bey, the Turkish officer appointed for regulating the lines of delimitation, who, for some days, had been at Skobeleff's head-quarters. Tahir said that Mukhtar Pasha had had no orders to withdraw his troops from Kujuk Tchekmedje. He could not, therefore, allow the Russian troops to occupy these positions, nor to go to San Stefano.

This was news indeed, and of the most serious nature. The Turks were refusing to do what they had agreed upon, and were stopping the grand duke after allowing him to come as far as Tchataldja. Had the Turks held out, there could have been only

one result—the assault of the Turkish positions next morning at daybreak.

The moment was an exciting one, and for a couple of hours the two enemies seemed again on the brink of war. The telegraph was set going, but nothing seemed to come of it; and, finally, the grand duke grew very angry and indignant. He thought he was being trifled with. The spirit of his father rose within him; and as he walked up, his resemblance to the Emperor Nicholas was striking, and it was still more evident when he called Tahir Bey, and said to him, with an energy that made the latter tremble—"Go and tell Mukhtar Pasha, that when I give an order he must obey it, and at once, or it will be the worse for him. Go."

There was a dead silence for a moment. Everybody felt the gravity of the situation. Tahir withdrew precipitately, sprang upon a locomotive, and in a moment was flying through the darkness down over the line to Kujuk Tchekmedje, as fast as steam could carry him. It was then known by all the officers present, that unless the Turks abandoned the positions instantly, they would be attacked at daylight. The situation was considered very critical. Peace was trembling in the balance, and yet there was not the slightest desire expressed at headquarters for the continuance of the war under any circumstances whatever.

Mr. Gladstone seemed to fear the danger of the army escaping from the control of cooler heads at St. Petersburg. There was not the slightest danger of this. There had not been a move without orders. The British fleet had done its work most effectually, and the Russians knew, best of all, how critical their position was in spite of their apparent advantages, and that they had no chance in a war with England. The aversion of the grand duke for the continuation of the war was shown in a somewhat amusing way. While waiting for the result of Tahir's mission, the question of what was going to happen was criticised in an animated manner. The grand duke, who was excited and indignant at the situation, asked Skobeloff, it is said, what he thought of it. The latter, with the reckless indifference which characterised him, replied—

"For my part, Monseigneur, I think we shall have to fight England."

"Oh, but you are a madman," exclaimed the grand duke in a half-angry manner, turning from him, and spitting as every Russian peasant spits when anything displeases him.

Finally, after two hours, news came that the positions were being evacuated by Mukhtar, and that the Russians were marching in. At midnight the train was again in motion, and at two o'clock on Sunday morning the grand duke was in San Stefano. The line Kujuk Tchekmedje was abandoned completely by Mukhtar, who withdrew his forces behind the little creek that empties itself into the Marmora, half-way between San Stefano and Yedi Kuleh.

The Russians were delighted with the pretty little place. San Stefano, though not a Dutch model of cleanliness at any time, appeared quite clean and bright, after Bulgaria. The weather was delicious, and the quay and sea-shore presented a very animated appearance, lined with officers in brilliant uniforms, ladies, and the population walking up and down, listening to the music played all day long. It was very pleasant to watch the glimmer of the sunshine over the Sea of Marmora, with Mount Olympus in the misty distance. Numerous boats and caïques gave animation to the scene close at hand, and picturesque groups of Cossacks bathing their horses were continually seen. General Ignatieff inhabited a pretty villa, whose walls were washed by the waves, and from the windows of which the minarets of St. Sophia were plainly visible. It was here that peace was to be signed.

As regards the progress of the negotiations, no point had been touched upon but questions relating to Bulgaria, and little advance had been made even in the arrangement of the frontiers. True, the outlines had been generally arranged, but the details in no case had been settled; and it was just on the details the Turks made their chief stand.

When General Ignatieff, to induce Safvet Pasha to hurry the negotiations, told him that the Russian military expenses were 2,000,000 roubles daily, and that for every day's delay this sum would have to be added to the war indemnity, he exclaimed—"But this sum is enormous! Why do you spend so much on your army? We do not spend a tenth of this sum on ours. You pay your officers too much. Your army is too expensive; and it is not right we should pay for it."

Then Safvet objected to Rasgrad being included in Bulgaria, because it was a Mus-

sulman town, although in the middle of a Christian country. General Ignatieff could only reply—"If you will pick up Rasgrad, and carry it bodily out of the country, we shall be glad to get rid of it; but we cannot allow it to remain under Turkish rule as long as it is where it is."

Then the Turks continually harked back to the condition of things before the war, and denied that there were ever any massacres in Bulgaria to the extent asserted by the Russians, and maintained that Edib Effendi's report, which Mr. Schuyler and Mr. Baring called a tissue of falsehoods, was quite correct and truthful. This shows how incorrigible the Turkish officials were. Even after all the disasters brought upon themselves, they still clung to the old story, and refused to see that there was any cause for complaint, or any necessity for reform.

If General Ignatieff had been contented to go back over the old ground, and discuss questions which had been settled long ago, the peace negotiations might have lasted a year. He was continually obliged to recall them to the subject in hand, and pin them down to it. At last, however, what with threats, cajoling, promises, and appeals, the terms of the proposed peace were agreed to on March 3rd.

In General Ignatieff's quarters, in a little house by the sea-side at San Stefano, shaken by the increasing gale that tore across the Sea of Marmora, were busy, all night long, the secretaries of both diplomatic bodies, copying and arranging for the signatures the treaty of peace, the result of the concluded negotiations. All night long Prince Tzereteleff dictated the treaty to his colleague, Chebachoff, who wrote and wrote through the long hours until the document was finished. Although wearied by continuous labour, these two secretaries, appreciating the value of their work, kept at their task, only stopping for refreshment and to listen to the scratch of the reeds of the Turkish secretaries in an adjoining room, busy with their own copy, until the dull dawn found them still at the table, Countess Ignatieff herself looking in every now and then to see that they were not neglecting their work. Then, the last word being on paper, they slept amid the confusion of documents, maps, and volumes.

Scarcely was it daylight when, notwithstanding the storm, there was an unusual movement in the village. There was a general idea that peace was to be signed that day. The steamers from Constantinople came rolling along through the rough sea, overladen with excursionists attracted by the review which had been announced to take place in celebration of the anniversary of the Czar's accession to the throne. Greeks, Bulgarians, Turks, and Russians crowded the little village, besieging the restaurants, swarming about the doors of houses whence were supposed to issue some of the great personages who were to become famous in history, all impatiently awaiting the hour of 2 P.M., the appointed time of the review. The horses of the grand duke and his staff were gathered about the entrance to his quarters, and keen-eyed spectators, ready to interpret the slightest movement of the commander-in-chief, formed unbroken ranks around the group of horses in the street.

One o'clock passed. Two o'clock passed, and still no movement. People began to grow serious, began to feel that something was in the air—were sure that this was the decisive moment—that peace and war were trembling in the scale; and one said to the other, "This is an event in history;" and each believed himself an actor in the scene—such was the impressiveness of the hour. At length word was given out that the review was postponed until three o'clock; but that hour came and went, and brought only another postponement for an hour. Later, rain fell, but the people remained at their posts.

At last their patience was rewarded. About four o'clock the grand duke mounted, and rode to the Diplomatic Chancery, where he asked at the door, "Is it ready?" and then galloped towards the hill where the army was drawn up. Here he halted again for a few moments. Finally, a carriage came whirling out of the village. General Ignatieff was in it; and when he approached, he rose and said—"I have the honour to congratulate your imperial highness on the signature of peace."

There was a long loud shout. Then the grand duke, followed by about 100 officers, dashed forward to where the troops were formed on rising ground close by the sea-coast, just behind San Stefano lighthouse, and began riding along the lines. As he passed, the soldiers did not know that peace had been signed, as it was still unannounced; but soon the news spread, and the cheering grew louder and more enthusiastic. There were Schouvaloff's and Rauch's divisions,

with the sharpshooters of the guard, and cavalry and artillery in line, and the grand duke passed between the ranks in review. Very different, indeed, was the appearance of these soldiers then, and that of the same men months before. During their interval of rest they had patched and cleaned their clothes, repaired and polished their boots, washed and brushed up generally, so that they looked as trim and neat as could be.

After riding between the lines, the grand duke halted on a little eminence, whence all the troops could be seen, and formally made the announcement of the peace:—

"I have the honour to inform the army that, with the help of God, we have concluded a treaty of peace."

Then another shout burst forth from 20,000 throats, rising, swelling, and dying away. There was a general feeling of relief and satisfaction. Still, the news of peace was not greeted with anything like the wild excitement and enthusiasm caused by the emperor's proclamation of war at Kischeneff. There stood the famous regiment of Peter the Great, the Praobrajensky, often the first to attack in many of the late battles of the war. There were the troops who had faced the enemy on the bleak summits of the Balkans at Baba Konak for a long, cold, and terrible month. There were the men who had toilod over the slippery mountain paths, scantily fed, thinly dressed, dragging the heavy guns across into the valley, finding, after their struggles with cold, hunger, and fatigue, a desperate enemy to resist them on every hill-top. These were the same brave fellows who had made the long march from Sophia to Philippopoli, who had run that race for enormous stakes with Suleiman's army, and finally thrown their great force against the wall of the Rhodope mountains, and smashed it to pieces. These were the men whose courage, devotion, and unparalleled endurance will go down to history.

And there, gathered scarcely more than a rifle-shot away, was the enemy they had found worthy of their steel. For on the crest of the neighbouring hill stood the Turks in groups, interested spectators of the scene—those very fellows who had kept the snowy ridge of Shandarnik, defending gallantly the great gate of Roumelia; and who at last, after a memorable retreat, had fought like heroes on the hills of Stanimaka. These two armies stood looking at each other at this moment of final peace: like true soldiers they had learned to respect and esteem each other, and welcomed peace as an honourable finish to the fight which they cared not to prolong. It was the beginning of a new friendship formed on the basis of actual experience of qualities that had hitherto been unrecognised.

After the review, gathering his officers about him where the priest stood ready for the *Te Deum*, the grand duke spoke briefly and emphatically, saying—

"To an army which has accomplished what you have, my friends, nothing is impossible."

Then all dismounted, uncovered, and a solemn service was conducted, the soldiers all kneeling. A few ladies were present at this ceremony; among them Madame Ignatieff, kneeling on a fur rug beside her carriage.

All the generals except Skobeloff were in attendance. He was back in Tchataldja. Baron Loenhausen and Captain Bolla, the Austrian military *attachés*, the former wearing the Cross of St. Vladimir, received for coolness under fire; the latter with the St. George, for acting as Skobeloff's aide-de-camp on the day he took the redoubts on the Lovatz road; Colonel Gaillard, the French *attaché*, who had been with the grand duke ever since the army was mobilised, eighteen months back, decorated with the St. Vladimir around his neck; Major Liegnitz, the Prussian *attaché*, with the St. George, for services at the Grivitza redoubt; Lieutenant Green, the American *attaché*, wearing the St. Vladimir for the last Balkan campaign; and, finally, two Swiss *attachés*, who had arrived just in time for the *Te Deum*.

The religious ceremony over, the grand duke took his stand, and the army began to file past with a swinging rapid stride, in forcible contrast with the weary pace with which they used to drag themselves slowly along at the end of their long and exhausting marches, scarcely, at times, able to put one foot before the other. The night was falling, and darkness settled quickly over the scene; but the grand duke sat immovable on his horse whilst the troops were still passing, and listened to their joyful shouts ringing in the air, and the measured tramp, tramp going off in the darkness.

And it was fit that the ceremony should end in darkness; for the instrument just signed was the signal for a period of darkness and general anxiety that has not been

equalled since the great wars of Napoleon I. After the usual preambles, this document, known as the treaty of San Stefano, ran as follows:—

ART. 1.—In order to put an end to the perpetual conflicts between Turkey and Montenegro, the frontier which separates the two countries will be rectified conformably to the map hereto annexed, subject to the reserve hereinafter mentioned, in the following manner:—From the mountain of Dobrostitza the frontier will follow the line indicated by the Conference of Constantinople as far as Korito by Bilek. Thence the new frontier will run to Gatzko (Metochia-Gatzko will belong to Montenegro), and towards the confluence of the Piva and the Tara, ascending towards the north by the Drina as far as its confluence with the Lim. The eastern frontier of the principality will follow this last river as far as Prijepolje, and will proceed by Roshaj to Sukha-Planina (leaving Bihor and Roshaj to Montenegro). Taking in Bugovo, Plava, and Gusinje, the frontier line will follow the chain of mountains by Shlieb, Paklen, and along the northern frontier of Albania by the crests of the mountains Koprivnik, Babavik, Borvik, to the highest peak of Prokleti. From that point the frontier will proceed by the summit of Biskaschik, and will run in a straight line to the lake of Tjiceni-Hoti. Dividing Tjiceni-Hoti and Tjiceni-Klastrati, it will cross the lake of Scutari to the Boyana, the thalweg of which it will follow as far as the sea. Niksich, Spuss, Gatzko, Podgoritza, Jabliak, and Antivari will remain to Montenegro. A European commission, on which the Sublime Porte and the government of Montenegro shall be represented, will be charged with fixing the definite limits of the principality, making on the spot such modifications in the general tracing as it may think necessary and equitable, from the point of view of the respective interests and tranquillity of the two countries, to which it will accord in this respect the equivalents deemed necessary. The navigation of the Boyana having always given rise to disputes between the Sublime Porte and Montenegro, will be the subject of a special regulation, which will be prepared by the same European commission.

ART. 2.—The Sublime Porte recognises definitively the independence of the principality of Montenegro. An understanding between the imperial government of Russia, the Ottoman government, and the principality of Montenegro will determine subsequently the character and form of the relations between the Sublime Porte and the principality as regards particularly the establishment of Montenegrin agents at Constantinople, and in certain localities of the Ottoman empire, where the necessity for such agents shall be recognised, the extradition of fugitive criminals on the one territory or the other, and the subjection of Montenegrins travelling or sojourning in the Ottoman empire to the Ottoman laws and authorities, according to the principles of international law and the established usages concerning the Montenegrins. A convention will be concluded between the Sublime Porte and Montenegro to regulate the questions connected with the relations between the inhabitants of the confines of the two countries and with the military works on the same confines. The points upon which an understanding cannot be established will be settled by the arbitration of Russia and Austria-Hungary. Henceforward, if there is any discussion or conflict, except as regards new territorial demands, Turkey and Montenegro will leave the settlement of their differences to Russia and Austria-Hungary, who will arbitrate in common. The troops of Montenegro will be bound to evacuate the territory not comprised within the limits indicated above within ten days from the signature of the preliminaries of peace.

ART. 3.—Servia is recognised as independent. Its frontier, marked on the annexed map, will follow the thalweg of the Drina, leaving Little Zwornik and Zakar to the principality, and following the old limit as far as the sources of the stream Dezevo, near Stoilac. Thence the new line will follow the course of that stream as far as the river Raska, and then the course of the latter as far as Novi-Bazar. From Novi-Bazar, ascending the stream which passes near the villages of Mekinje and Irgoviste as far as its source, the frontier line will run by Bosur Planina, in the valley of the Ibar, and will then descend the stream which falls into this river near the village of Ribanic. The line will then follow the course of the rivers Ibar, Sitnitza, and Lab, and of the brook Batintze to its source (upon the Grapachnitza Planina). Thence the frontier will follow the heights which separate the waters of the Kriva and the Veternitza, and will meet the latter river by the

shortest route at the mouth of the stream Miovatzka, which it will ascend, crossing the Miovatzka Planina and redescending towards the Morava, near the village of Kalimanci. From this point the frontier will descend the Morava as far as the river Vlossina, near the village of Staikovtzi. Reascending the latter river, as well as the Linberazda, and the brook Koukavitze, the line will pass by the Sukha Planina, will run along the stream Vrylo as far as the Nisawa, and will descend the said river as far as the village of Kronpatz, whence the line will rejoin by the shortest route the old Servian frontier to the south-east of Karaoul Baré, and will not leave it until it reaches the Danube. Ada-Kale will be evacuated and razed. A Turco-Servian commission, assisted by a Russian commissioner, will, within three months, arrange upon the spot the definite frontier line, and will definitively settle the questions relating to the islands of the Drina. A Bulgarian delegate will be admitted to participate in the work of the commission when it shall be engaged on the frontier between Servia and Bulgaria.

ART. 4.—The Mussulmans holding lands in the territories annexed to Servia, and who wish to reside out of the principality, can preserve their real property by having them farmed out or administered by others. A Turco-Servian commission, assisted by a Russian commissioner, will be charged to decide absolutely, in the course of two years, all questions relating to the verification of real estate in which Mussulman interests are concerned. This commission will also be called upon to settle within three years the method of alienation of State property and of religious endowments (Vacouf), as well as the questions relative to the interests of private persons which may be involved. Until a direct treaty is concluded between Turkey and Servia determining the character of the relations between the Sublime Porte and the principality, Servian subjects travelling or sojourning in the Ottoman empire shall be treated according to the general principles of international law. The Servian troops shall be bound to evacuate the territory not comprised within the above-mentioned limits within fifteen days from the signature of the preliminaries of peace.

ART. 5.—The Sublime Porte recognises the independence of Roumania, which will establish its right to an indemnity, to be discussed between the two countries. Until the conclusion of a direct treaty between Turkey and Roumania, Roumanian subjects will enjoy in Turkey all the rights guaranteed to the subjects of other European Powers.

ART. 6.—Bulgaria is constituted an autonomous tributary principality, with a Christian government and a national militia. The definitive frontiers of the Bulgarian principality will be traced by a special Russo-Turkish commission before the evacuation of Roumelia by the imperial Russian army. This commission will, in working out the modifications to be made on the spot in the general tracing, take into account the principle of the nationality of the majority of the inhabitants of the border districts, conformably to the bases of peace, and also the topographical necessities and practical interests of the intercommunication of the local population. The extent of the Bulgarian principality is laid down in general terms on the accompanying map, which will serve as a basis for the definitive fixing of the limits. Leaving the new frontier of the Servian principality, the line will follow the western limit of the Caza of Wrania as far as the chain of the Kara Dagh. Turning towards the west, the line will follow the western limits of the Cazas of Koumanovo, Kotchani, Kalkandelen, to Mount Korab; thence by the river Welestchitza as far as its junction with the Black Drina. Turning towards the south by the Drina, and afterwards by the western limit of the Caza of Ochride towards Mount Linas, the frontier will follow the western limits of the Cazas of Gortcha and Starovo as far as Mount Grammos. Then by the lake of Kastoria, the frontier line will rejoin the river Moglenitza, and after having followed its course, and passed to the south of Yanitza (Wardar Yenidje), will go by the mouth of the Wardar, and by the Galliko, towards the villages of Parga and of Saraï-keui; thence through the middle of Lake Bechik-Guel to the mouth of the rivers Strouma and Karassou, and by the sea-coast as far as Buru-Guel; thence striking north-west towards Mount Tchaltepe, by the chain of Rhodope as far as Mount Krouschowo, by the Black Balkans (Kara-Balkan), by the mountains Eschekkoulatchi, Tchepelion, Karakolas, and Tschiklar, as far as the river Arda. Thence the line will be traced in the direction of the town of Tchirmen, and leaving the town of Adrianople to the south, by the villages of Sugutlion, Kara-Hamza, Arnaout-keui,

Akardji, and Enidje, as far as the river Tekederessi. Following the rivers Tekederessi and Tchorlouderessi as far as Loule-Bourgaz, and thence, by the river Soudjakdere as far as the village of Serguen, the frontier line will go by the heights straight towards Hakim-tabiassi, where it will strike the Black Sea. It will leave the sea-coast near Mangalia, following the southern boundaries of the Sandjak of Toultcha, and will come out on the Danube above Rassova.

ART. 7.—The Prince of Bulgaria shall be freely elected by the population, and confirmed by the Sublime Porte, with the assent of the Powers. No member of the reigning dynasties of the great European Powers shall be capable of being elected Prince of Bulgaria. In the event of the dignity of Prince of Bulgaria being vacant, the election of the new prince shall be made subject to the same conditions and forms. Before the election of the prince, an assembly of Bulgarian notables, to be convoked at Philippopoli (Plowdiw) or Tyrnowo, shall draw up, under the superintendence of an imperial Russian commissioner, and in the presence of an Ottoman commissioner, the organisation of the future administration, in conformity with the precedents established in 1830 after the peace of Adrianople, in the Danubian principalities. In the localities where Bulgarians are mixed with Turks, Greeks, Wallachians (Koutzo-Vlachs), or others, proper account is to be taken of the rights and interests of these populations in the elections, and in the preparation of the organic laws. The introduction of the new system into Bulgaria, and the superintendence of its working, will be entrusted for two years to an imperial Russian commissioner. At the expiration of the first year after the introduction of the new system, and if an understanding on this subject has been established between Russia, the Sublime Porte, and the cabinets of Europe, they can, if it is deemed necessary, associate special delegates with the imperial Russian commissioner.

ART. 8.—The Ottoman army will no longer remain in Bulgaria, and all the ancient fortresses will be razed at the expense of the local government. The Sublime Porte will have the right to dispose, as it sees fit, of the war material, and of the other property belonging to the Ottoman government, which may have been left in the Danubian fortresses already evacuated, in accordance with the terms of the armistice of the $\frac{19th}{31st}$ January, as well as of that in the strongholds of Schoumla and Varna. Until the complete formation of a native militia sufficient to preserve order, security, and tranquillity, and the strength of which will be fixed later on by an understanding between the Ottoman government and the imperial Russian cabinet, Russian troops will occupy the country, and will give armed assistance to the commissioner in case of need. This occupation will also be limited to a term approximating to two years. The strength of the Russian army of occupation, to be composed of six divisions of infantry and two of cavalry, which will remain in Bulgaria after the evacuation of Turkey by the imperial army, shall not exceed 50,000 men. It will be maintained at the expense of the country occupied. The Russian troops of occupation in Bulgaria will maintain their communications with Russia, not only through Roumania, but also by the ports of the Black Sea, Varna, and Bourgas, where they may organise, for the term of the occupation, the necessary depôts.

ART. 9.—The amount of the annual tribute which Bulgaria is to pay the Suzerain Court, by transmitting it to a bank to be hereafter named by the Sublime Porte, will be determined by an agreement between Russia, the Ottoman government, and the other cabinets, at the end of the first year during which the new organisation shall be in operation. This tribute will be calculated on the average revenue of all the territory which is to form part of the principality. Bulgaria will take upon itself the obligations of the imperial Ottoman government towards the Rustzuk and Varna Railway Company, after an agreement has been come to between the Sublime Porte, the government of the principality, and the directors of this company. The regulations as to the other railways (*voies ferrées*) which cross the principality, are also reserved for an agreement between the Sublime Porte, the government established in Bulgaria, and the directors of the companies concerned.

ART. 10.—The Sublime Porte shall have the right to make use of Bulgaria for the transport, by fixed routes, of its troops, munitions, and provisions to the provinces beyond the principality, and *vice versâ*. In order to avoid difficulties and misunderstandings in the application of this right, while guaranteeing the military necessities of the Sublime Porte, a special regulation will lay down the conditions of it within

three months after the ratification of the present Act by an understanding between the Sublime Porte and the Bulgarian government. It is fully understood that this right is limited to the regular Ottoman troops, and that the irregulars, the Bashi-Bazouks, and the Circassians will be absolutely excluded from it. The Sublime Porte also reserves to itself the right of sending its postal service through the principality, and of maintaining telegraphic communication. These two points shall also be determined in the manner, and within the period of time, indicated above.

ART. 11.—The Mussulman proprietors, or others, who fix their personal residence outside the principality, may retain their estates by having them farmed or administered by others. Turko-Bulgarian commissions shall sit in the principal centres of population, under the superintendence of Russian commissioners, to decide absolutely, in the course of two years, all questions relative to the verification of real property in which either Mussulmans or others may be interested. Similar commissions will be charged with the duty of regulating, within two years, all questions relative to the mode of alienation, working, or use, for the benefit of the Sublime Porte, of the property of the State, and of the religious endowments (*Vacouf*). At the expiration of the two years mentioned above, all properties which shall not have been claimed shall be sold by public auction, and the proceeds thereof shall be devoted to the support of the widows and orphans, Mussulman as well as Christian, victims of the recent events.

ART. 12.—All the Danubian fortresses shall be razed. There shall be no strongholds in the future on the banks of this river, nor any men-of-war in the waters of the principalities of Roumania, Servia, and Bulgaria, except the usual *stationnaires* and the small vessels intended for river-police and custom-house purposes. The rights, obligations, and prerogatives of the international commission of the Lower Danube are maintained intact.

ART. 13.—The Sublime Porte undertakes to render the passage of Soulina again navigable, and to indemnify the private individuals who have suffered loss by the war and the interruption of the navigation of the Danube, applying for this double charge a sum of 500,000 francs from the amount due to the Sublime Porte from the Danubian commission.

ART. 14.—The European proposals communicated to the Ottoman plenipotentiaries at the first sitting of the Constantinople Conference shall immediately be introduced into Bosnia and Herzegovina, with any modifications which may be agreed upon in common between the Sublime Porte, the government of Russia, and that of Austria-Hungary. The payment of arrears of taxes shall not be required, and the current revenues of these provinces, until the 1st of March, 1880, shall be exclusively applied to indemnify the families of refugees and inhabitants, victims of recent events, without distinction of race or creed, as well as to the local needs of the country. The sum to be received annually after this period by the central government, shall be subsequently fixed by a special understanding between Turkey, Rnssia, and Austria-Hungary.

ART. 15.—The Sublime Porte engages to apply scrupulously in the island of Crete, the Organic Law of 1868, taking into account the previously expressed wishes of the native population. An analogous law adapted to local requirements shall likewise be introduced into Epirus, Thessaly, and the other parts of Turkey in Europe for which a special constitution is not provided by the present Act. Special commissions, in which the native population will be largely represented, shall in each province be entrusted with the task of elaborating the details of the new organisation, and the result of their labours shall be submitted to the Sublime Porte, who will consult the imperial government of Russia before carrying it into effect.

ART. 16.—As the evacuation by the Russian troops of the territory which they occupy in Armenia, and which is to be restored to Turkey, might give rise to conflicts and complications detrimental to the maintenance of good relations between the two countries, the Sublime Porte engages to carry into effect, without further delay, the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by Armenians, and to guarantee their security from Kurds and Circassians.

ART. 17.—A full and complete amnesty is granted by the Sublime Porte to all Ottoman subjects compromised by recent events, and all persons imprisoned on this account, or sent into exile, shall be immediately set at liberty.

ART. 18.—The Sublime Porte will take into serious consideration the opinion expressed by the commissioners of the mediating Powers as regards the possession of the town of Khotour, and engages to have the works of the definitive delimitation of the Turco-Persian boundary carried into effect.

ART. 19.—The war indemnities and the losses imposed on Russia, which his majesty the Emperor of Russia claims, and which the Sublime Porte has bound itself to reimburse to him, consist of—

(*a.*) 900,000,000 roubles for war expenses (maintenance of the army, replacing of war material, and war contracts).

(*b.*) 400,000,000 roubles on account of damage done to the south coast of Russia, to her export commerce, to her industries, and to her railways.

(*c.*) 100,000,000 roubles for injuries inflicted on the Caucasus by the invasion; and,

(*d.*) 10,000,000 roubles for costs and damages of Russian subjects and establishments in Turkey. Total, 1,410,000,000 roubles. Taking into consideration the financial embarrassments of Turkey, and in accordance with the wishes of his majesty the Sultan, the Emperor of Russia consents to substitute for the payment of the greater part of the moneys enumerated in the above paragraph, the following territorial cessions:—

(*a.*) The Sandjak of Toultcha, that is to say, the districts (Cazas) of Kilia, Soulina, Mahmoudié, Isaktcha, Toultcha, Matchine, Babadagh, Hirsowo, Kustendje, and Medjidie, as well as the Delta Islands and the Isle of Serpents. Not wishing, however, to annex this territory and the Delta Islands, Russia reserves the right of exchanging them for the part of Bessarabia detached from her by the Treaty of 1856, and which is bounded on the south by the thalweg of the Kilia branch and the mouth of the Stary-Stamboul. The question of the apportionment of waters and fisheries shall be determined by a Russo-Roumanian commission within a year after the ratification of the Treaty of Peace.

(*b.*) Ardahan, Kars, Batoum, Bayazet, and the territory as far as the Saganlough. In its general outline, the frontier line, leaving the Black Sea coast, will follow the crest of the mountains which separate the affluents of the river Hopa from those of the river Tcharokh, and the chain of the mountains to the south of the town of Artwin, up the river Tcharokh, near the villages of Alat and Bechaget; then the frontier will pass by the peaks of Mounts Dervenikghek, Hortchezor, and Bedjiguin-Dagh, by the crest which separates the affluents of the rivers Tortoum-tchaï and the Tcharokh, by the heights near Zaily-Vihine, coming down at the village Vihine-Kilissa to the river Tortoum-tchaï; thence it will follow the Sivridagh chain to the pass (*col*) of the same name, passing south of the village of Noriman; then it will turn to the south-east and go to Zivine, whence the frontier, passing west of the road which leads from Zivine to the villages of Ardost and Horassan, will turn south by the Saganlough chain to the village of Gilitchman; then by the crest of the Charion-Dagh it will arrive, ten versts south of Hamour, at the Mouradtchaï defile; then the line will follow the crest of the Alla-Dagh, and the summits of the Hori and Tandourek, and passing south of the Bayazet valley, will proceed to rejoin the old Turco-Persian frontier to the south of the lake of Kazli-gueul. The definitive limits of the territory annexed to Russia, and indicated on the map hereto appended, will be fixed by a commission composed of Russian and Ottoman delegates. This commission, in its labours, will take into account the topography of localities, as well as considerations of good administration, and other conditions calculated to insure the tranquillity of the country.

(*c.*) The territories mentioned in paragraphs (*a*) and (*b*) are ceded to Russia as an equivalent for the sum of one milliard and one hundred million roubles. As for the rest of the indemnity, apart from the 10,000,000 of roubles intended to indemnify Russian interests and establishments in Turkey—namely, 300,000,000 of roubles—the mode of payment and guarantee of that sum shall be settled by an understanding between the imperial government of Russia and that of his majesty the Sultan.

(*d.*) The 10,000,000 roubles claimed as indemnity for the Russian subjects and establishments in Turkey, shall be paid as soon as the claims of those interested are examined by the Russian embassy at Constantinople and handed to the Sublime Porte.

ART. 20.—The Sublime Porte will take effective steps to put an amicable end to the law-suits of Russian subjects pending for several years, to indemnify the latter if

need be, and to carry into effect, without delay, all judgments passed.

ART. 21.—The inhabitants of the districts ceded to Russia who wish to take up their residence out of these territories, will be free to retire on selling all their real property. For this purpose an interval of three years is granted them, counting from the date of ratification of the present Act. On the expiration of that time, those of the inhabitants who shall not have sold their real property and left the country shall remain Russian subjects. Real property belonging to the State, or to religious establishments situated out of the localities aforesaid, shall be sold within the same interval of three years as shall be arranged by a special Russo-Turkish commission. The same commission shall be entrusted with determining how the Ottoman government is to remove its war material, munitions, supplies, and other State property actually in the forts, towns, and localities ceded to Russia, and not at present occupied by Russian troops.

ART. 22.—Russian ecclesiastics, pilgrims, and monks travelling or sojourning in Turkey in Europe or in Asia, shall enjoy the same rights, advantages, and privileges as the foreign ecclesiastics of any other nationality. The right of official protection by the imperial embassy and Russian consulates in Turkey is recognised, both as regards the persons above-mentioned, and their possessions, religious houses, charitable institutions, &c., in the the Holy Places and elsewhere. The monks of Mount Athos, of Russian origin, shall be maintained in all their possessions and former privileges, and shall continue to enjoy, in the three convents belonging to them, and in the adjoining buildings, the same rights and privileges as are assured to the other religious establishments and convents of Mount Athos.

ART. 23.—All the treaties, conventions, and agreements previously concluded between the two high contracting parties relative to commerce, jurisdiction, and the position of Russian subjects in Turkey, and which had been abrogated by the state of war, shall come into force again, with the exception of the clauses affected by the present Act. The two governments will be placed again in the same relation to one another, with respect to all their engagements and commercial and other relations, as they were in before the declaration of war.

ART. 24.—The Bosphorus and the Dardanelles shall remain open in time of war as in time of peace to the merchant-vessels of neutral States arriving from or bound to Russian ports. The Sublime Porte consequently engages never henceforth to establish at the ports of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, a fictitious blockade (*blocus fictif*), at variance with the spirit of the declaration signed at Paris on the $\frac{4}{16}$th of April, 1856.

ART. 25.—The complete evacuation of Turkey in Europe, with the exception of Bulgaria, by the Russian army will take place within three months after the conclusion of the definitive peace between his majesty the Emperor of Russia and his majesty the Sultan. In order to save time, and to avoid the cost of the prolonged maintenance of the Russian troops in Turkey and Roumania, part of the imperial army may proceed to the ports of the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmora, to be there shipped in vessels belonging to the Russian government or chartered for the occasion. The evacuation of Turkey in Asia will be effected within the space of six months, dating from the conclusion of the definitive peace, and the Russian troops will be entitled to take ship at Trebizond, in order to return by the Caucasus or the Crimea. The operations of the evacuation will begin immediately after the exchange of ratifications.

ART. 26.—As long as the imperial Russian troops remain in the localities which, in conformity with the present Act, will be restored to the Sublime Porte, the administration and order of affairs will continue in the same state as has existed since the occupation. The Sublime Porte will not participate therein during all that time, nor until the entire departure of all the troops. The Ottoman forces shall not enter the places to be restored to the Sublime Porte, and the Sublime Porte cannot begin to exercise its authority there, until notice of each fortress and province having been evacuated by the Russian troops shall have been given by the commander of these troops to the officer appointed for this purpose by the Sublime Porte.

ART. 27.—The Sublime Porte undertakes not to punish in any manner, or allow to be punished, those Ottoman subjects who may have been compromised by their relations with the Russian army during the war. In the event of any persons wishing to withdraw with their families when the Russian

troops leave, the Ottoman authorities shall not oppose their departure.

ART. 28.—Immediately upon the ratification of the preliminaries of peace, the prisoners of war shall be reciprocally restored under the care of special commissioners appointed on both sides, who, for this purpose, shall go to Odessa and Sebastopol. The Ottoman government will pay all the expenses of the maintenance of the prisoners that are returned to them, in eighteen equal instalments in the space of six years, in accordance with the accounts that will be drawn up by the abovementioned commissioners. The exchange of prisoners between the Ottoman government and the governments of Roumania, Servia, and Montenegro, will be made on the same bases, deducting, however, in the account, the number of prisoners restored by the Ottoman government, from the number of prisoners that will have to be restored to that government.

ART. 29.—The present Act shall be ratified by their imperial majesties the Emperor of Russia and the Emperor of the Ottomans, and the ratifications shall be exchanged in fifteen days, or sooner if possible, at St. Petersburg, where, likewise, an agreement shall be come to as to the place and the time at which the stipulations of the present Act shall be invested with all the solemn forms usually observed in treaties of peace. It is, however, well understood, that the high contracting parties consider themselves as formally bound by the present Act from the moment of its ratification.

In witness whereof the respective plenipotentiaries have appended their signatures and seals to the present Act.

Done at San Stefano, the nineteenth February, third March, one thousand eight hundred and seventy-eight.

(Signed) Cte. N. IGNATIEW.
NELIDOW.
SAFVET.
SODOULLAH.

Final paragraph of Article 11 of the Act of the Preliminaries of Peace, signed this day, February 19, March 3, 1878, which was omitted, and which should form an integral part of the said Article:—

The inhabitants of the principality of Bulgaria, when travelling or sojourning in the other parts of the Ottoman empire, shall be subject to the Ottoman laws and authorities.

(Signed) Cte. N. IGNATIEW.
NELIDOW.
SAFVET.
SODOULLAH.

San Stefano, February 19, March 3, 1878.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE NAVAL OPERATIONS AND DESCENT ON THE CAUCASIAN COAST.

THOUGH the naval operations of the Turks and Russians during the war, as well as the descent on the Caucasian coast, were so utterly insignificant in their extent and results as to make it unadvisable to break the thread of the narrative, some mention may now be made of them in order to complete the picture of the war.

Still, insignificant as were the results of the operations of the Turkish and Russian navies, the very fact is of considerable interest, as showing what small results are to be expected from so expensive and dangerous an institution—dangerous to friends more than to foes—as an ironclad fleet.

Without entering into any learned technical discussion as to the relative merits of ironclads, wooden vessels, torpedoes, &c., and the claims of those interested in their manufacture, it is almost impossible for a layman not to endorse the assertion of Prince Bismarck—made, it is true, in reference to another matter—that whales cannot make war upon elephants.

The duties of a navy, and what is expected from a fleet, differ very much now-a-days from what they were, and what was expected from men-of-war in the days when the naval supremacy of England was at its height. Then ships made war upon ships—fleet was pitted against fleet—cruisers scoured the seas, chasing the enemies' trans-

ports, convoys, and merchantmen; and it was only on rare occasions, comparatively speaking, that a fleet was pitted against land defences.

Now, however, the idea seems to be, that if the enemy possesses a mighty fortress by the sea, a still mightier floating fortress, in the shape of an ironclad, is to be steered up to it and be pitted against it; whilst, to protect his land fortress, the enemy follows suit, and constructs his ironclads likewise. They mostly go to the bottom, however, or are blown up, or otherwise suddenly disappear—especially in times of peace—like the *Captain*, the *Vanguard*, and the *Grosser Kurfürst*. At most they have hitherto been saved by carefully remaining at home, like the celebrated Popoffkas; and when they are expected to begin to do their work, they unaccountably blow up like the *Lutfi Djelil* In fact, so far, the moral to be deduced from the fable of the earthenware pot and the iron kettle, does not at all apply to the case of ironclad *versus* wooden ship.

These doubts and fears were very generally diffused, not only amongst the public, but also amongst naval men and scientific constructors; and when the war between Turkey and Russia commenced, the world expected a fine and interesting display of skill, and a highly instructive course of naval warfare.

As usual, the world was disappointed, and all the results were of so negative a character, that the way has been paved to the question, which is sure to arise on the first failure of the fleet to accomplish its mission—whereunto is an ironclad fleet good? And the reply to that question will raise the consequent one—namely, whether it will not be better to revert to the old system, and keep ships to fight against ships, and not against stone walls on dry land? It is said—indeed, it is a fact—that during the Abyssinian war, the ironclad squadron was ordered to proceed to Gondar, or as near to it as possible. But, as that interesting place was some 300 miles inland, on the top of a high mountain in the heart of Africa, the squadron punctually obeyed orders by steaming to Massowah—the nearest point possible—which, however, happened to be 300 miles away from Gondar. Ridiculous as this incident was, it is not more ridiculous than to expect a fleet to successfully compete with land fortifications, on which cannon of any calibre necessary to pierce an ironclad can be mounted, and destroy it before it even comes within range, to say nothing of the torpedoes which can safely be launched against it.

It is true that the Turks might have made much more use of their fleet than they did, had it not been for two circumstances. But as these circumstances were unavoidable, and are sure to recur in any war, the results of any future operations by ironclads will probably have also to be described with a "might have been." These circumstances are: firstly, the terror of torpedoes, which more or less paralyse the men; and, secondly, the aversion to risk the loss of such costly articles of naval luxury. In fact, like many other articles of luxury, the ironclad seems to be more calculated for show than for use. In this respect, in daring of men and commanders, and general handiness, the Russians showed to much better advantage than the Turks.

When the war broke out, the Turks had a flotilla on the Danube consisting of the following vessels:—*Fethi Islam* (Moslem Victory), *Burywidelan* (Heart-piercer), *Semendria*, *Scodra*, and *Podgoritza*. These five vessels were small craft about 115 feet long, fitted with 80-horse power engines, and carried, each of them, two 80-pounder Armstrong guns in a battery protected by 2-inch armour. In addition to these armoured gun-boats, there were two of recent construction, and much more formidable in every respect, the *Isher* (Lion) and *Saiffee* (Sword). They each carried two 80-pounder Krupp guns in revolving turrets on the upper deck, protected by 3-inch armour, and a belt of the same thickness was placed round the water-line. Their length was 120 feet, and the horse-power of the engines 100. These seven vessels, however, did not form the whole of the naval force, as there were several wooden steamers armed as gun-boats; and soon after the war, the two large sea-going monitors, *Lutfi-Djelil* and *Hiftzi Rahman*, were sent up the Sulina branch into the main river. These last-named ships were a most valuable addition to the defence, and gave great trouble at first to the Russian batteries, until one of them came to an end, as we have already related, in a somewhat inexplicable manner—by accident, the Turks say; by the effect of their artillery fire, the Russians: and thus the affair remains in dispute. The evidence inclines in favour of the Turkish view, for the *Lutfi-Djelil* had

been out of action for nearly an hour when the catastrophe, by which so many human beings were killed, took place. At all events, the fruits of victory were to the Russians, even though they had been in nowise instrumental in her destruction. Up to this time nothing had been seen of the Russian torpedoes, though a good deal was said about the Danube having been mined; and Hobart Pasha was supposed to have run the gauntlet of all sorts of dangers in the *Rethymo:* but the manner in which the Turkish ships moved about, is sufficient evidence that nothing in that way had been done at that time to the main river.

When war was declared the Russians had nothing afloat on the Danube, though they had a steam-launch or so at Ismail or Vilcova, on the Kilia branch, and had some eight or ten, all ready for launching, at Galatz, to be used as torpedo boats. Their first care was necessarily the bridge over the Sereth; and to protect this against the Turkish gun-boats, a number of torpedoes were unquestionably placed across the channel where its waters flow into the Danube. In a short time, however, the Russians were prepared to take the offensive with their torpedo launches, and the first fruits was the destruction of the gun-boat *Saiffee*. The batteries erected along the Roumanian shore soon put a stop to the circulation of the Turkish gun-boats, and the flotilla was shortly afterwards blocked up in various places by lines of torpedoes laid across the stream. The Turks themselves assisted to this end by keeping the greater number of the vessels moored under the fortifications of Widdin, Silistria, Nicopoli, and Rustzuk, instead of making them move up and down to gall the Russian workmen with their fire, and thus impede the erection of the hostile batteries. The conduct, at this period, of those charged with the defence of the Ottoman empire is really inexplicable. They acted as if it had never been their intention to defend the Danube at all; not the slightest opposition was offered to the progress of the enemy's works on the opposite side of the river, and no provision at all was made for the movements of the gun-boats.

There was no depôt of coals at any of the above-named fortresses; and it was only by an arrangement with the Varna Railway Company that a small quantity of fuel was obtained at Rustzuk. The supineness of the Turkish naval authorities in this respect is extraordinary; for, properly made use of, this flotilla would have delayed the Russian passage for weeks. There was an admiral sent to command the gun-boats at least a fortnight before the war, and the state of the coal depôts must have been known weeks before the hostilities actually commenced. Hobart Pasha is in nowise responsible for what occurred, for Abdul Kerim deliberately refused to allow him in any way to interfere with the arrangements that had been made for the disposal of the squadron. When the Russians crossed at Sistova there was a gun-boat looking on quietly, and as if regarding the passage of a friendly army, instead of hostile foes bent upon the destruction of Turkish power; and after a time she steamed away to report the news at head-quarters. The meaning of all this, as well as the general neglect of the Danube line of defence in the first instance, we shall never know, for the Turks are very lenient to military and political offenders; and such are the ramifications of their intrigues, that once an examination were opened, no one could say where it could be decently closed without allowing, perhaps, the most culpable offenders to escape. Of the armoured gun-boats forming part of the flotilla, three in addition to the turret-vessel *Lutfi-Djelil* were lost by the Turks—namely, the *Saiffee*, destroyed by a torpedo, and the *Podgoritza* and *Scodra*, which fell into Russian hands at the taking of Nicopoli. These two small craft were put into working order to be made use of for attacking the others. Besides the vessels above named, the Turks lost four wooden vessels—the *Sulina*, a regular 60 horse power gun-boat of the old type, designed for the Baltic during the American war, and three river steamers of no particular value as fighting-ships—the first-mentioned by a contact torpedo, and the others by the fire of the Russian batteries.

To return to the Russian offensive operations. Their next move was of a far bolder nature—no less than an attack upon the ironclad squadron lying off Sulina, under the command of Hassan Pasha—the blockading fleet, in fact, designed to keep the Russian steamers shut up in Odessa and Sebastopol. A number of steam-launches, fitted with pole torpedoes, to be exploded by electricity, came down at night from Kilia. Hobart Pasha, who at that time held no special appointment, and was therefore without authority, had pointed out to the admiral in command the exposed position of

the Turkish ships, suggesting, as a defence against torpedo attacks, a cordon of boats with ropes or small chains between; but, as usual, the advice was not followed, the Turks contenting themselves with keeping a good look-out on board of each ship, and having a guard-boat or so rowing round. Besides this, a certain amount of signalling with flashing lights, which preceded the attack, aroused the attention of the Turks, so that they were found on the alert. All the men were at their quarters, the guns loaded and run out, and the ships were engaged in slipping their cables when the enemy's boats came up. The *Idjlalieh*, an ironclad corvette, was the ship singled out by Lieutenant Poutshakine, who led the attack; and had he been ably seconded by the other boats, in all probability that ship would have been destroyed. He successfully brought his little craft under the bows; but his torpedo "got foul" either of the spur or the cable, and so exploded without effecting any injury to the enemy's vessel. The water thrown up probably swamped his boat, though she was supposed to have been sunk by the Turkish fire. She had, however, advanced too close to the *Idjlalieh* for that vessel's guns to have produced any such effect, for the gunports of a man-of-war allow of but very little depression, and the Turkish man-of-war undoubtedly escaped more by accident than by good management or a carefully planned defence. The Russian attack should have been more concentrated; it failed, and the Turks have, therefore, every right to claim the victory. In the meantime the Russians had been fitting up several swift merchant steamers and the fast-steaming yachts of the emperor; and shortly after this the Turks were much disgusted at hearing of the destruction of several of their collier-brigs; but it did not occur to them, apparently, that it might be worth while trying to prevent it.

This was a game the Russians could well play, having such secure places for retreat as Sebastopol, Odessa, Balaklava, and Kertch. The run from any one of those ports to the Turkish coast is very short, so that it is not surprising that they managed to avoid capture. No real blockade of the Russian ports was ever instituted, so that there was nothing to prevent their free egress or ingress; and the only wonder is that the raids were not more frequent. So slightly were the regulations with regard to blockade maintained, that Greek ships arrived at Constantinople with corn from the Russian ports. The Russian cruisers were specially well fitted out for their work. Painted an "invisible" grey, lying low in the water, with nothing but pole-masts visible above the deck, and burning smokeless coal, the lumbering Turkish ironclads had not the smallest chance against them in the game of "hare and hounds." The latter could be seen miles off, their approach betrayed by the dense cloud of black smoke given out by the Heraclea coals; and thus the light-heeled enemy, by a change of course, always managed to avoid a rencontre. Throughout the war the Russians made no use of their Popoffkas. They were kept well within the harbour of Odessa; for as fighting-ships they have proved a complete failure. The Russian navy had not made the progress that was expected, and had really no very efficient sea-going men-of-war. The officers and seamen of the Black Sea fleet, however, did great service in the way of torpedoes and individual exploits of considerable daring. Thus the encounter between the *Vesta* and the *Fethi Bulend*, which occurred on the 22nd of July, 1877, was a very spirited contest between an unarmoured vessel and an ironclad, and the Russians deserve great credit for having thought of escaping in any other manner than by steaming away at the highest rate of speed, the *Vesta* having kept up a running fight before a stern chase for several hours. The Russian torpedo attack at Soukhum-Kalé was aimed at the *Arsari Shefket*, an ironclad corvette which was lying on guard at that place, towards the end of the evacuation. The Russian steamer *Constantine*, which was specially fitted up for torpedo work, brought down some four torpedo launches, and sent them in on the night of the 24th of August, 1877, when the eclipse of the moon seemed to offer special advantages in the obscurity which naturally ensued. The attempt to destroy the corvette was foiled in a great measure by the guard-boats, as any one of the launches got close to her, and the torpedo being fired at a distance from the ship's side, produced no other effect than throwing a quantity of water upon her decks. The Russians, however, managed to make good their retreat, and retired under the impression that the *Arsari Shefket* was done for, the torpedo having, as they imagined, blown such a hole in her bottom as would send her speedily below.

A very skilfully-planned attack against

the Sulina squadron only resulted in the destruction of a small wooden gun-boat. The attack was of a twofold nature—the enemy were to be lured over ground previously prepared with contact mines; or, failing this, the ironclads were to be sunk or driven out of the harbour by mortar-firing, or guns pointed with extreme elevation. The Russian flotilla safely passed Sulina, and entering the St. George's branch (which, with their usual want of foresight, the Turks had neglected to close), proceeded leisurely to Tuldsha, and from thence descended the Sulina river, seeking for torpedoes as they came. Stopping at the sixth mile, securely hidden from view by a bend of the river and the tall reeds of the neighbouring swamps, the torpedo lighters were sent ahead during the night to lay the mines, which was most successfully done, though the Turks poured in a hot fire. The guns of the latter, however, did not range more than 3,500 yards, so that their ammunition was only thrown away to no purpose.

The next morning the *Sulina* was sent out by the Turks beyond the protecting chains to assist the little *Cartal* tug-boat, which had previously gone up to reconnoitre. From the latter having safely passed the suspected ground, the Turks seem to have thought that the *Sulina* might do the same with impunity, not taking into consideration the difference in their draught of water. The consequence was that the *Sulina* struck upon a torpedo, and was instantly destroyed. The Russian contact torpedoes, used on this occasion, show to what perfection the art of submarine mining is now being brought. They combined in their construction both the elements of safety in placing them, and the certainty of explosion when struck by a passing body. Small bichromate of potass batteries are placed all round the case, screwed into small cylinders, and each of these are placed in circuit with its regulators, with a fuze inserted amongst the gun-cotton. The whole chain of these electric circuits are not completed until the mine is placed, and every one has retreated to a safe distance, when, the main wires being joined, the affair is ready for action, the batteries not working until the plates are acted upon by the bichromate of potass. The solution of bichromate of potass is placed in a glass tube hermetically sealed, and protected from accidental fracture by a thick lead covering. When a ship or other passing object strikes this arrangement, which projects outside the torpedo case, the glass tube is broken, and the solution coming in contact with the zinc and carbon plates, a current of electricity is immediately generated, and the torpedo explodes. After the destruction of the *Sulina* there was not the slightest chance of getting another vessel to mount the stream, and so the Russians had to fall back upon the other part of their plan, and commence the bombardment. This they did from a safe distance, far beyond the range of the Turkish guns, and from first to last poured in some 200 shells. No great damage was inflicted on the town, and none at all on the shipping. The latter escaped as by a miracle; the shot and shell fell all around, but the two corvettes at the booms were never struck once; though had only one of the shots, fired with so high a trajectory, but fallen upon the deck of an ironclad, it would probably have placed her *hors de combat*, by sending her to the bottom of the river.

The descent on the Abchasian coast, and the attempted raising of the mountain tribes against the Russians, was even less productive of results than the abortive expedition of Omar Pasha during the Crimean war. Beyond somewhat delaying the march of the Russian troops southwards, and causing much misery amongst the inhabitants who rose, the Porte gained nothing at all by the expedition.

Hussein Pasha, the Turkish admiral, did nothing with his ironclads but threaten the coast, cannonading the stations, and landing predatory bodies of Circassians, who burned the villages and devastated the country lying along the shore on an extended scale. Sukhum Kaleh was bombarded and burned to the ground, and several attempts were made to bombard Poti, but without any success. Altogether, the movement was a complete failure; and the only benefit which the Turks derived from their navy was, that it prevented the Russians from despatching stores and reinforcements by sea from Odessa to the Danube. And even this was but a very poor result, and did not hamper the Russians in any way, as they commanded the lines of railway from Russia to the Danube. The only inconvenience they suffered was a slight increase of expenditure.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE GREEK QUESTION.

BEFORE entering upon the troubled period ushered in by the San Stefano treaty, some account of the attitude of Greece during the war is necessary for the complete comprehension of the vexed questions to which the Russo-Turkish conflict gave birth.

There was a time, and not so very long ago, when the Hellenic factor in the Eastern Question was the chief factor in that very complicated problem. The Greeks were then synonymous with the Eastern Christians, and from them proceeded all the movements towards emancipation from the Turkish yoke. But in recent years all this has changed. The Slavs emerged from their long obscurity, and thus the Eastern Question was rendered much more complicated than it was before. The Bulgarians and other members of the Slavonic race had discovered that they had a nationality of their own, and began to show political aspirations inconsistent alike with Turkish and with Greek supremacy. Even if they had stood alone their numbers would have made them a very important factor in the problem; but they did not stand alone. They found a powerful ally in Russia, who advocated their cause in order to extend Russian influence, and, if possible, to plant the Russian eagle on the banks of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. The Slavonic Question was thereby identified with the question of Russian extension.

The Greeks had not, however, forgotten their own political existence, such as it is. If they had been silent during the commencement of the war, it was not because they had given up their aspirations, and were indifferent to what was taking place in Turkey. Never, perhaps, had they watched with more intense interest the current of daily events. They believed that at last the sick man, who had for centuries been such a burden to them, was really approaching his latter end, and they thought more than ever about his inheritance. But with profound disgust they observed that their claim as heirs was no longer so strong, and so likely to be regarded as it once was. They found that there were no longer Philhellenes in Western Europe, and that this class of enthusiasts had become as extinct as the mammoth and the megatherium, and that if any happened to come forward, they would be powerless anachronisms. The discussions about the possibility of Greek regeneration had given place to the cry—"L'avenir est aux Slaves!" All this was very saddening to the Hellenic heart. "Why," asked the Greeks, "have we been thus abandoned by Western Europe? Have we not proved ourselves able to govern ourselves, and shown ourselves a respectable member of the European family of nations? Our government, we are quite ready to admit, is not all that could be desired. We are cursed by a class of youths and full-grown men who call themselves politicians, and aspire to become Prime Ministers; and as we have not places and money enough to satisfy the aspiration of all these place-hunters, many ministries are overthrown, and the regular administration greatly hampered by personal rivalries and intrigues. Besides this, too, we do not pay our debts. If, therefore, you compare our government and our country with the more advanced nations of Western Europe, you will certainly form a low opinion of us. But such a comparison is grossly unfair. To judge us justly, you should compare us with what we were before our emancipation; and if you do that, you cannot fail to be struck by the enormous progress we have made in half a century. If your memory does not go back so far as that, and if you doubt the written testimony on the subject, you can still make the comparison for yourself by visiting the northern provinces of the kingdom, and then passing into the purely Greek portions of Thessaly and Epirus. What the Greek villages and towns in these two provinces now are, the villages and towns of the kingdom were before the emancipation. Compare, for example, the Piræus with Salonica. The natural position of the two towns is equally good; but what a difference in the history of the two towns during the last fifty years! Fifty years ago the Piræus was a miserable

village; now it is a flourishing town with about twenty manufactories of various kinds, and is every year increasing in prosperity. And what has been the history of Salonica during that period? On a small scale, the history of the Turkish empire in general—that is, gradual, inevitable decay. If it has made some little progress, it has to thank the Greek inhabitants, who, in spite of Turkish misrule and oppression, have to a certain extent improved their condition. If only some serious, conscientious Englishman would go and live for some time in the kingdom of Greece and the Greek provinces of Turkey, and then give the results of his investigations to the world, the British public would have truer notions as to what the Greeks are, and as to what the emancipated Greeks have done. We should then have true Philhellenes—not generous sentimentalists, who loved and admired us because of the heroic deeds and artistic genius of our forefathers, but cool-headed practical men who can appreciate and admire the material, intellectual, and moral progress of a young, struggling nation. We do not ask you to remember Pericles, or Phidias, or Demosthenes, or even the heroic men who, within living memory, fought and died for their country. Forget if you will all our glorious past, and look on us as we are. If you observe closely and accurately what is before you, and compare it with what was fifty years ago, we have no reason to fear your decision."

On these and similar grounds the Greeks asserted that they were being most unjustly neglected. At a moment when the Eastern Question was about to be, at least, temporarily solved, they were hardly spoken of. They did not, however, intend to sit quietly still and be left out in the cold. If there was to be any distribution of the sick man's goods, they were determined to have, if possible, a share. These ideas, industriously propagated by the politicians, naturally caused a good deal of excitement in Greece, and considerable military preparations were made in view of possible contingencies. The Greek argument was, that having taken up arms, Russia would not lay them down till she had humiliated the Turks; and that when she had done that, there would be a congress, or something of the kind, to decide upon the arrangements for the future. In these arrangements the interests of Russia and the Slavs would be first considered. If Greece had taken part in the struggle, her claims would also receive attention; but if she remained quiet, no one would think of giving her anything. Plainly, then, her best policy, it was argued, was to strike a blow at the sick man whilst the life was still in him. But, on the other hand, the striking of this blow, in view of distant prospective advantages, might lead to direct consequences of a very disagreeable kind. The Turkish fleet was still at large, and Hobart Pasha might think it his duty to bombard at once the Piræus, Syra, Patras, and all the other important towns on the sea-coast. Enormous loss could thereby be inflicted on Greece without withdrawing a single regiment from the Danube or Asia Minor.

Thus Greece was animated by two diametrically opposed motives. She would very much have liked to fight, but she perceived clearly the dangers she would expose herself to by entering on the struggle. As might naturally be supposed, the irresponsible part of the Greek public were, for the most part, advocates of decided action. "This is," they said, "a question of life and death, and we must be content to run a certain risk. The risk, however, is not so great as it appears. Surely England would never allow Hobart Pasha to bombard peaceful unfortified towns containing a very large amount of English property. If England will not interfere, we will find means of defending ourselves as our forefathers did in the War of Independence; and if we should be unsuccessful, Europe will certainly not allow Turkey to eat us up altogether." Such were the sentiments of a very large section of the Greek public. On the other hand, the ministry were more peacefully inclined, and strove—or at least professed to strive—to calm the public, who clamoured for an invasion of Thessaly and Epirus, where the Greek population were waiting for the signal to rise and inaugurate a spectacle similar to that in Servia, when Russia helped the insurgents without declaring war against the Porte. The most difficult position of all was that of the king. He wished to preserve peace; but he also knew that if he tried to stem the flood of popular feeling too long, his fate would be that of Otho.

As it was, it was loudly insisted on in Athens and Syra, that if King George desired to retain his crown, he must do something. So far, he had done nothing to

justify the expectations the Greeks had formed from his connexions in London and St. Petersburg. His journey to England raised these hopes for a time, and it was thought that he would come back with some valuable consideration in return for the "loyalty" the Greeks had evinced in their relations with the Porte, and their self-denial in not complicating matters by an intervention in the Turco-Servian conflict. But when he returned empty-handed—when, above all, it was found that the conference had only busied itself with the Slav question, and that this question had even been transferred to the Mediterranean side of the Balkans, then the Greeks began to lose their patience, and discovered that the great friends of the Vikings' son, and the Vikings' son himself, were animated by other interests than those of Greece. They complained that their king was a Dane, their queen a Russian; and that the children of the royal pair were in a fair way of becoming Germans, their education being entrusted to a Prussian—Dr. Lüders. They felt themselves also highly aggrieved that the former secretary of the queen—M. Domboffski—had been replaced by M. Tatiseff, in consequence of an imperial Russian ukase; and obstinately refusing to see that this ukase had reference only to M. Tatiseff's position as a Russian subject and within the Russian empire, they insisted that it was an impertinent interference, and an attempt to extend Russian administration into the Greek kingdom. Thus there gradually arose a party which had its chief seat in that especially revolutionary centre, Syra, which became louder and louder in its demands that King George should really prove himself an Hellene, and not a marionette pulled by Russian or British strings; whilst throughout Greece generally there was a very strong feeling that something must be done.

This state of things was made use of by the two rival ministers, Koumoundouros and Deligeorgis, each in his own fashion. Koumoundouros wished to obtain what Greece claimed by an alliance with Russia and in concert with the Russians. Deligeorgis, on the contrary, wished to attain the same object by arrangement with the Porte. Between these two stood Charilaos Trikoupis, who insisted on a united and frankly-declared national policy, and was strongly opposed to unofficial war, either in a military or a political sense. This programme had the advantage of satisfying the Greeks of all parties, with the exception of the tufthunters and intriguers—a rather numerous race in Greece—who found his Spartan patriotism impregnable against their little plans of personal advancement. Among these three men King George had to choose; and in view of the strong feeling against the Slavs, it was foreseen that his choice would be limited to Deligeorgis or Trikoupis. Deligeorgis was a popular man, and idolised by the educated youth, on account of his wonderful power of oratory. Thus, in popular esteem, both Deligeorgis and Trikoupis held about equal places; but Deligeorgis was a man of more varied resources; and his policy of coming to an arrangement with the Porte regarding Thessaly and Epirus must be read between the lines. For Deligeorgis, the Porte was in this case the Phanar and not the Divan; and it was just possible that the interests of the Greeks of the empire might become, through his exertions, identical with those of the Greeks of the kingdom. The independence of Cis-Balkan Bulgaria would greatly promote such an understanding; but the extension of an independent Bulgaria beyond the Balkans would render it a certainty. The knowledge of this fact was an additional reason for the Russians confining their chief efforts for future territorial acquisitions in Asia Minor. They knew perfectly well, that unless they could manipulate Greece through the agency of Koumoundouros, Germany and England would support Greece; whilst there could be no two opinions in Europe as to whether the Slav or the Greek race is better adapted for the promotion of civilisation and the development of commerce and agriculture at Constantinople and south of the Balkans. On the whole, therefore, it seemed at one time as if Trikoupis's independent national policy had the best chance of success.

But the great impediment to an independent national policy lay in the constitution of Greek society, in the feebleness of the nation, and its exposure to an attack by sea.

When we find that the *employés* and their families form no less than one-twelfth of the population of Greece, we can easily understand that the financial and economic condition of the country must be highly unsatisfactory. Still more serious does the matter appear when we remember that the country was burdened, at the outset of its career, by a debt it could not pay—by a

legacy of passions that formerly found a vent against the Turks, but since then have caused the formation of numberless factions; and, finally, by being saddled with a king of foreign extraction, whose only chance of founding a dynasty depended upon the force of arms, or the consolidation of a constitutional monarchy. Besides all this, there exists the fact, which it is useless to ignore, that the people are over-educated for their means, or possess too much mobility of intellect to be able to devote themselves to manual labour. The mode of life, the climate, permit them to disregard those conditions of existence which the inhabitants of less favoured countries cannot afford to disregard. The consequence is, that though the population of Greece has increased from 710,000 in 1832, to 1,600,000 in 1876, the resources of the country have not been developed in proportion to the powers of this increase. Thus there arose the same cry in Greece that was heard in Dalmatia—more territory and a greater working population.

These sentiments pervade all classes of Greek society. Even the Greek peasant is more ambitious and enterprising than the rest of his kind in other parts of the world. Agriculture is not all the world for him, as it is for the Bulgarian; and, unlike the latter, his whole family is not chained to the soil as the one business of life. The sons and daughters go out to seek their fortunes, and generally succeed in making them. The Greek peasant is, moreover, a clever fellow, and not ill-educated. He takes a keen interest in politics, reads the village newspaper with avidity, and listens with enthusiasm to the history of his country, and the deeds of his ancestors told in stirring song. He is eloquent, too, and can debate excellently over the coffee or raki, or state his case with perfect *sangfroid* to the consul or other authority, when the Bulgarian would hardly be able to utter an intelligible word. The Turkish Greek is, moreover, intensely patriotic; he is proud of free Hellas, and is confident that some day he, too, will be free. He is more luxurious than the Bulgarian, his dress less coarse, his food better served, his house better built, his school better organised, his wife and daughters more refined and better dressed.

In conceding all this, it must also be confessed that the material progress of Greece, since its independence, has been very great; and nowhere is this progress more evident than in the capital, though, as we have seen, it is also noticeable amongst the rural population.

There is enough that is enjoyable in Athens, and far more than the traveller will find in Constantinople. Go out for a walk on a fine evening to the Place de la Concorde, where the band of the king's guard plays in the afternoon; join the crowd of promenaders on foot, on horseback, and in carriages on the fashionable northern avenue to Patissia, past the *cafés*, where hundreds of motley idlers lounge in chairs at round tables cumbering the spacious side-walks; look back to the south, where the stupendous rock of the Acropolis, with its shattered temples and crumbling mediæval walls, sits like a diadem on the brow of this fair Hellenic queen; turn to the west, where the rays of the setting sun dart from the crests of the Ægaleos and the Parnes, gilding on the opposite side the dark masses of the Hymettos and Pentelikon, revealing and relieving their rugged ravines and their bold outlines, which stand out distinctly as if carved in the deepening blue of the sky; walk about, or sit and muse, or listen to the easy chat of those idle groups, and one cannot but half wonder at, half envy that happy vacuity of earnest thought and incapacity of sustained action which make up so large a part of this blessed Eastern existence, yet not the whole of it. For, after looking at Athens, with its 50,000 good-looking, intelligent, sensitive, aspiring people, their schools, museums, and libraries, all improvised, yet all thriving and promising, it is almost impossible to conjure up the cluster of wretched hovels which bore the name of Athens under Ottoman rule fifty or sixty years since. Comparing this little oasis of European civilisation with Volo, or Larissa, or Janina, or any of the hotbeds of Turkish sloth, especially with that horrid Pera-Galata, that sea of deep, fœtid mud, out of which emerge, like islands, the sumptuous palaces of their diplomatic Excellencies, produces the most emphatic evidence of the utter impotence of these same Excellencies to work out any material good, even at their very doors.

But that there are drawbacks to all these good things at Athens, that there is something rotten in this new state of Greece, no one will deny. There are some incurable and

some not easily mended faults in the soil and climate; for the mild and sweet early days of May are soon over, and before the end of the month the torrid heat sets in, and the glare of the sun in the injudiciously broad thoroughfares, with the reflection of the smooth flag-stones and white walls, is dazzling and blinding; and the dust rises in huge dense clouds at every breath of wind, and chokes you at every step if you venture out of doors, and creeps through the windows that you dare not open, and covers the table you are writing at and the very bed you sleep on. There is no such scourge in the world as Athenian chalk-dust; for all the new streets are macadamized, and for one house that is rising from the ground the foundations of a score of others are laid; and in spite of political anxiety and financial distress, the chipping of the stonemason's chisel is heard at all hours in every quarter, whilst the wind sweeps through the rubbish-heaps in the open spaces, and Athens has scarcely one drop of water to slake the thirst of her burning streets and squares.

This is all owing to the centuries of human unthrift and stolidity which has made of Attica a torrid desert for six or seven months in the year. There was a time, as Sophocles tells us, and as the guide-books translate, when "beautiful fields bloomed, when nightingales sighed and lamented among the groves of Colonus, along its green hedges and walls mantled with dark ivy." Days are mentioned when the Cephisus and Ilissus were streams of water and not beds of arid stones as they are now; when people could talk of "sacred foliage teeming with fruits in shady coolness, nourished by gentle breezes, untouched by storms." The ravages of man have done away with all that. Men still living in Athens remember the fires with which the last strips of forest in the glens of Hymettus and Pentelicus gleamed round Athens night after night, as they do now incessantly in the gorges of the mountains of Albania, visible from Corfu. The savage cultivators of the soil in these regions burn their woods to fertilise the fields with their ashes. By the destruction of trees of many ages' growth they insure a paltry crop for one season. But the experiment cannot be twice made; the havoc is now complete; the mischief can no further go. With every trace of vegetation, every vestige of moisture vanishes early in the spring from the Attic land, and before the end of May all is parched, burnt, pulverised, bare, scorched, and desolate. No one plants trees; no trees planted would have any chance of living; and where nature, by the inexhaustible strength of her recuperative energies, puts forth here a bud, there a bulb, where a chance seed dropped from a bird, or wafted by the wind, might be the means of again covering the land with trees and blessing it with new verdure and moisture, the goat comes browsing, crops up, tears up, the very rock to which the roots cling with unavailing vital instinct. Nowhere in the world, perhaps, is the proportion of goats to all other cattle so great as it is in Athens and the surrounding territory. The niggardly boor of Attica cherishes a quadruped that gives milk and eats nothing—eats, that is to say, what costs its owner nothing, but what is in reality "the heart of the land." This improvidence, let it be repeated, is not peculiar to Athens or to other parts of Southern Greece. But no country has sinned on this score more grievously than Attica, no town more bitterly rues the consequences than Athens, and no country or town, to all appearance, is less alive to the enormity of the evil, or less earnestly inclined or determined to devise a remedy. That woods could be planted everywhere around Athens, that the mountains, if protected from the goats, would again teem with vegetation up to the highest rocks, and that verdure and moisture would again be as plentiful as they were in the days of the great tragedian, no one will doubt who sees in how few years the king's garden and other plantations have sprung up to the greatest luxuriance. And barren as is the country, by the fault of the governing classes more than by the fault of the people, just as barren are its politics—no doubt, in a great measure, owing to the relations of Greece with and towards the Greek provinces of Turkey. Besides the associations, or clubs, to which we have alluded on an earlier page (p. 11) there was a crowd of newspapers expounding the views of these clubs and the various parties.

But, in spite of all the intrigues of the societies, the exertions of the politicians—in spite of the popular clamour, and notwithstanding the noisy patriotism of Leonidas

Bulgaris—or perhaps in consequence of all this, on the principle that too many cooks spoil the broth, the long-expected "action" did not go beyond the ostentatious concentration of Greek troops on the frontier; whilst Leonidas Bulgaris, styling himself president of the insurrectional *comité*, issued a proclamation, calling upon the people of Thessaly, Macedonia, and Epirus, to take up arms. Photiades Bey made energetic representations to the Greek ministers on the subject, and called upon them to arrest Bulgaris, but without success, the ministers alleging that they could not take such a measure without endangering their existence as a Cabinet.

Meantime the ministers exhibited much activity in their diplomatic negotiations with England, Turkey, and Roumania; and towards the end of July, 1877, Trikoupis had a long conversation with the English ambassador, Mr. Stuart, who assured him that the interests of the Greeks would not be lost sight of by England. This has been interpreted as though Mr. Stuart was alluding to the interests of the Greek government in Athens. Such was not the case. The conversation referred only to the interests of the Greek subjects of the Porte, in view of any extension of the privileges of the Slav subjects which might be prejudicial to them. In the same sense must the notes be considered which the Greek Cabinet addressed to its agents at foreign Courts. This attitude was rather at variance with the expectations entertained by the Greeks from the Cabinet of Compromise, at the head of which was Canaris, and, whose *raison d'être* lay in its being supposed to represent the universal national wish; and it was also at variance with the military preparations that were rapidly approaching completion. At the same time, the excitement throughout Greece became so great, that it was feared that if the Cabinet did not abandon its temporising policy, it would be forced to resign, and make way for a more resolute one. The national enthusiasm exhibited itself in considerable contributions of men, arms, and money; and the men of the first extraordinary reserve were welcomed everywhere by processions of the inhabitants, and bands of music, and the customary festal virgins. They were all at their posts even before the appointed time, so that the increase of the army to 27,000 men was now an established fact by the beginning of August, 1877.

And yet matters still remained in the same undecided state. The fact was, that the Greek government were suffering from a plethora of advice. It was an open secret that they had been formally assured by the German government of its fullest sympathy; but this assurance was somewhat diminished by the proviso, that such sympathy could not practically extend beyond the limits imposed by Great Britain. But as to what these limits were, the Greek government had not been able to ascertain. In no case had the promises of the British ministers gone beyond the general assurance that the interests of Greece should not suffer in favour of any other nationality subject to the Porte; but at the same time it was pointed out, that any premature action would forfeit the good wishes of the government of Great Britain, and prevent any interference with such maritime dispositions as the Turkish government might see fit to adopt. This language made a decided impression upon some members of the Athens Cabinet, who found themselves opposed by the more independent members, whose idea was in favour of co-operation with Russia—or, to use the more exact phrase—of parallel action with Russia, independent of Russian control, but still *en rapport* with St. Petersburg. Canaris, however, was opposed to this, as indeed to any war at all, until the success of the Russian arms appeared assured beyond all doubt. So, too, was the Phanar opposed to any action; and when certain occurrences in the Russian monastery of Pantaleimon, on Mount Athos, in connexion with intrigues in the Bulgarian monasteries there, seemed to point to an attempt to Slavonicise the peninsula, the *Phare du Bosphore* called upon the Porte to vindicate its rights, and banish the Russian and Bulgarian monks. The Porte would have consented, but Prince Reuss protested against the measure, and it was not carried out. Again, the Phanar rendered important services to Turkey during the war. Thus, the banking firm Sarifi advanced £300,000 to the Porte, in addition to former sums advanced by the same firm, and by Messrs. Negroponte and Stefanovitch. The Phanar also had the chief contracts for the supplies of the Turkish army. There was thus a great division of interest between the Greeks of the kingdom and those of Constantinople, and part of the Greeks of London and Vienna. But the people of Greece felt very strongly that the

jackal's part was not a worthy one to play, especially not for such a nation as the Greek, and had besides a shrewd idea that it was a dangerous game to play. It is true, the Greek Cabinet was prepared to enter into an alliance with Russia on certain conditions. These conditions were, that Russia should formally engage to renounce for herself and the Slavs any claim to the country south of the Balkans; that the occupation of towns largely inhabited by Greeks, such as Adrianople, should be temporary only; and thirdly, that Russia should sell her ironclad fleet to Greece in order to secure the services of the 30,000 sailors Greece was prepared to furnish! The little kingdom had thus no small idea of its importance. But, extravagant as these demands may appear, it might have been wise on the part of the Russians to have acceded to them. Greece must not be measured by the Morea and the Peloponnesus. There is a larger Greece—the Greece that has kept the Porte on its legs for many centuries, and which was capable of keeping it on its legs still for many a year to come.

However, the result of all the commotion was, that the government took no action itself, and regarded the exertions of Bulgaris and the clubs to raise an insurrection in Thessaly with a lenient eye, the ministers assuring the Turks and the foreign governments that the movement was not dangerous, and was of great use as a safety-valve, and eminently calculated to save troubles and complications between the government of Greece and its hard-beset neighbour.

This was the state of affairs immediately preceding the treaty of San Stefano. The Greek government was waiting to pick up whatever crumbs might be dropped by the great powers, and the Greek people were occupied in watching the course of the insurrection, and finding a vent for their superabundant excitement in denunciation of the Turks, England, Russia, France, Germany, and the rest of the world in general—not even forgetting Italy, whose example of acquiring provinces without fighting for them, or even by a series of defeats, they were all so eager and ready to follow.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE TREATY OF SAN STEFANO BEFORE EUROPE.

ALTHOUGH the treaty of San Stefano was signed on March 3rd, it was not officially communicated to the British government until March 20th. Probably this was due, in some measure, to the Russian government desiring to allow some of the excitement it caused to subside before its official presentation, but chiefly in order to gain time and allow the military authorities to take the strategic steps also permitted by the treaty before any foreign government could interpose on the basis officially provided by the treaty itself.

The wisest thing about the whole treaty was its qualification, "preliminary." This qualification was wise for two reasons. First of all, because it opened the way for a peaceable abrogation of the articles, which England for one—and probably the whole of Europe—would declare inadmissible and contrary to previous treaty obligations. Secondly, it was wise from a Russian point of view, because it also opened the way to a period of anxiety, indecision, and tension which could not but act more or less unfavourably to trade and commerce generally, and England's commerce especially. By this means it was hoped that dissatisfaction with the Beaconsfield ministry would be engendered in England, and pave the way to the accession of a Liberal Cabinet, with which the Russian government imagined it could more easily deal.

In fact, the San Stefano treaty inaugurated a policy which was consistently carried on all through the year 1878. The *mot d'ordre* of this policy was harassment, and it extended from the Adriatic to the Afghanistan frontier of India.

But, in spite of the damage done to business—in spite of the indubitable desire of the British people for peace—even at a

moderate sacrifice—it was acknowledged on all sides that the treaty of San Stefano could not be allowed to stand. This opinion Europe unanimously expressed as soon as the text of the treaty had been published.

But even some time before its publication, the ministers and ambassadors of the different powers were made aware of the general character of the document; and, in reply to their objections, the Russian diplomatists replied that really it did not much matter what was signed between Russia and Turkey, as the treaty would be laid before the powers, and have to receive their sanction before it became a definite agreement with full international force.

As soon, therefore, as the preliminary arrangements for an armistice—to be followed at once by negotiations for peace—had been signed, Count Andrassy, the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs, addressed a despatch, on February 5th, to all the great powers, in which he stated that Austria had always reserved her right to exercise her share of influence over the definitive regulation of the conditions of the future peace. The imperial government of Russia, to which he had communicated this point of view, had fully appreciated it; and, as preliminaries of peace had just been signed between Russia and Turkey, the moment appeared to have come to establish the agreement of Europe on the modifications which it may become necessary to introduce into the treaties of 1856 and 1871. The most suitable means to bring about this agreement appeared to the Austrian government to be the assembly of a conference of the powers signatory of the treaty of Paris of 1856, and of the protocol of London of 1871. Count Andrassy therefore begged to invite the Cabinet of St. James's to be good enough to join in a conference of the powers signatory of the above-mentioned international acts, and hoped there would not be any objection to the assembling of the conference at Vienna. As soon as the acceptance in principle of this invitation by the Cabinets invited should be signified, he would hasten to propose to them the manner and the date of meeting.

To this despatch Lord Derby replied on February 7th, accepting the Austrian invitation, which was also accepted by the other powers.

Meantime, however, between the signature of the armistice and the signature of the San Stefano treaty, a better knowledge of the probable character of that instrument had been acquired, and the chief result of this better knowledge, as far as England was concerned, was the demand by the Beaconsfield ministry for a credit of £6,000,000, in order, should the conference proposed meet at Vienna, to be prepared for extreme measures if no agreement were arrived at. This credit parliament voted by a large majority, especially as the public were in an intense state of excitement at the critical state of affairs. For, notwithstanding the ratification of peace at St. Petersburg and the re-establishment of the Russian embassy and consulate at Constantinople, the relations between England and Russia, and the mystery which overhung the precise conditions of peace, made the situation most serious. The evacuation by the Turkish troops of various points between Buyukdere and Kilios on the Black Sea, and the uncertainty whether the points thus evacuated were or were not to be occupied by Russian troops, of course added to the gravity of the phase of the "Eastern Question" through which the world was passing. Naturally, at such a moment, the most wild and extravagant rumours were circulated, not only in Pera and Stamboul, but also in London and Paris, as to a further advance of the Russians towards Constantinople. There was considerable reason for such apprehensions; for, day by day, the Russians gradually drew nearer to the capital and the shores of the Bosphorus. Between Daoud Pasha and Belgrad, the line occupied by the Russians ran from San Stefano through the villages of Nymphis, Aipas, Kalfa, Ayo Ghiorghi (St. George), and thence on the north-west of the forest of Domonaderé, through Istenia to Boghazkeui, and to the Black Sea coast.

Belgrad itself not only was evacuated, but Kilios also. Kilios is a fortress with forty-four guns, in charge of which but a small number of troops was left. In fact, Demirjikoi, Ferikoi, Sekeriyehkoi, and all the villages where Turkish troops were stationed, were being evacuated as rapidly as possible, and the troops pouring into Stamboul and elsewhere. This evacuation left open to the Russians all the fortresses between Belgrad and Roumelia Pharanaki (Lighthouse), the extreme point on the European side of the entrance to the Bosphorus from the Black Sea. The forts between that point and Buyukdere were — Papas Point, with

eleven guns; Fort Karibjeh, with seventeen guns; Buyuk Liman, where there were a powder magazine and twenty-two guns; Kavak, with batteries containing twenty guns; and Sariyeri, about two miles from Buyukdere, which contained a battery of eight 24-pounders.

Thus, at that moment, before the Turks had had time to recover from the blows they had received, or to secure whatever positions remained to them before the capital, the Russians could easily have seized Constantinople, and have obtained the control—for a time at least—of the Bosphorus.

Against such a step the British fleet was practically powerless to interfere for a time. Admiral Hornby would have had quite enough to do to hold the Dardanelles and assist the Turks to hold the lines of Bulair and Gallipoli. At the same time, however, there was never any fear amongst the military authorities in London that the Russians would take such a step. They knew perfectly well that Russia was playing a game of brag; and there is little doubt, too, that, as far as immediate contingencies were concerned, the British government was playing the same game.

Still, even a game of brag costs money. It cost the Russians a large sum of money daily on account of their army; and it cost England pretty nearly the whole of the £6,000,000 before the game was played out. It may not be very dignified to acknowledge this; but facts are facts, and, as there was considerable danger of Russia obtaining what she wanted from the Turks by bullying them, and bragging, it was wiser for the British ministry to talk still bigger, and play a still bigger game of harmless, though expensive brag, than to plunge into the miseries of war. At the same time the game was a safe one to play; for should brag have been insufficient, there were the means at hand to render it grim earnest indeed. Still, we repeat it, we have the very best authority for saying, that at no period after the capture of Adrianople, and the entry of the British fleet into the Dardanelles and the Sea of Marmora, was there the slightest apprehension at the War Office that the Russians would occupy Constantinople. All the excitement and tension following the signature of the treaty of San Stefano, up to its modification by the Berlin congress, might have been spared had there but been a rational system for conducting foreign affairs by open discussion and parliamentary means, instead of in a hole-and-corner fashion round a dozen green tables.

But, in addition to these matters of fact which precluded the occupation of Constantinople, there were good military reasons at that moment—*i.e.*, as long as the British fleet was in the Sea of Marmora, and had its communications open through the Dardanelles, as well as the central of the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus.

A reference to the sketch of Constantinople will show that, as long as the sea and Scutari were held by the Turks and English, the retention of Constantinople by the Russians, even if they succeeded in occupying the whole of the European coast of the Dardanelles, would have been rendered impossible except at an immense expenditure of blood and treasure, as the city was open to bombardment throughout its length from south to north, and east to west, by the fleet and by batteries on the Asiatic coast, and at Scutari. For this reason the Russians never dreamt of occupying Constantinople itself. What they contemplated was the encircling of the city with a series of strong earthworks along the Tchataldja lines, and thus prevent any communication with the interior. This plan would have entailed much more trouble and loss of life on the Turks and English, in case of a war, than any other, as it would have obliged them to fight their way by land, and disembark troops more or less in the face of the enemy. In two words, Constantinople was never in any danger of falling into the hands of the Russians. But that this was the case, was due only to the foresight and determination of Lord Beaconsfield, who insisted upon sending the fleet before the very walls of the city, and thus created the situation which prevented the Russians from capturing the city. Had he not sent the fleet, there is very little doubt but that not only Constantinople would have been seized, but Scutari and the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus as well. And then England and Europe might have protested as long as they chose, or have commenced hostile operations against the Russians under the most unfavourable circumstances.

But though Constantinople itself may not have been in any immediate danger, there was, nevertheless, considerable danger of war breaking out for many reasons—

reasons it is not necessary to enter into here, but of which one—the deciding one in fact—was the attitude taken up by Russia in Central Asia against India and British rule and influence on the north-western frontiers of the Punjaub and Scinde and Cashmere.

Already, during the summer of 1876, secret Russian agents had been sent to Cabul to secure the favour of the Emir Shere Ali, the ruler of Afghanistan; and this, coupled with other indications of a similar character, pointed clearly to an intention, on the part of Russia, to prepare a course of agitation in India and the outlying principalities, similar to that in Servia which preceded the Russo-Turkish war.

Against this state of affairs it was necessary to take precautions; and as there is no military organisation in England like those of the other continental powers, which permits the mobilisation of a large army at a few days' notice, it was necessary to take steps long before any immediate cause for action arose.

Thus, for divers reasons of a military and strategic, as well as a political character, it was determined not only to call out the reserves, but also to despatch a body of Indian troops to the Mediterranean. On this determination being arrived at by the rest of the cabinet, Lord Derby resigned his post as Foreign Secretary, and was succeeded by the Marquis of Salisbury.

This defection of Lord Derby's was quite in accordance with what we have already said of his character long before he so fully justified that opinion by his subsequent conduct. At the same time it caused no slight embarrassment to the ministers, for it had been intended to land the Indian troops at Alexandretta; and there is good reason to believe that Lord Derby threatened to divulge this plan if persisted in. In consequence thereof, it was decided—weakly decided in our opinion—to land them at Malta instead. The necessary orders to prepare for this step were sent to India. These orders were followed up by the order calling out the reserves; this order Lord Derby stating to have been one, though not the chief of his reasons, for resigning.

Now all these steps placed England on the verge of the boundary which separates peace from war; and it was necessary, not only to state clearly what would be the cause of such war, but also to justify the steps taken. With the first object, Lord Salisbury addressed a despatch to all the English embassies abroad; and with the second, Lord Beaconsfield moved an humble address to the Queen, thanking her for the message of April 1st, calling out the reserves in order to afford government an opportunity to justify its action and take the opinion of parliament on the subject.

The following is the despatch which Lord Salisbury addressed to Lord Loftus and the other ambassadors:—

"Foreign Office, April 1, 1878.

"My Lord,—Sir,—I have received the Queen's commands to request your Excellency to explain to the government to which you are accredited the course which her majesty's government have thought it their duty to pursue in reference to the preliminaries of peace concluded between the Ottoman and Russian governments, and to the European congress which it has been proposed to hold for the examination of that treaty. On the 14th January, in view of the reports which had reached her majesty's government as to the negotiations for peace which were about to be opened between the Russian government and the Porte, and in order to avoid any possible misconception, her majesty's government instructed Lord A. Loftus to state to Prince Gortschakoff that, in the opinion of her majesty's government, any treaty concluded between the government of Russia and the Porte affecting the treaties of 1856 and 1871 must be an European treaty, and would not be valid without the assent of the powers who were parties to those treaties. On the 25th January the Russian government replied by the assurance that they did not intend to settle by themselves ('isolément') European questions having reference to the peace which is to be made ('se rattachant à la paix').

"Her majesty's government, having learnt that the bases of peace had been arranged between the Turkish and Russian delegates at Kesanlik, instructed Lord A. Loftus, on the 29th January, to state to the Russian government that her majesty's government, while recognising any arrangements made by the Russian and Turkish delegates at Kezanlik for the conclusion of an armistice, and for the settlement of bases of peace as binding between the two belligerents, declared that in so far as those arrangements were calculated to modify European treaties and to affect general and British

interests, her majesty's government were unable to recognise in them any validity unless they were made the subject of a formal agreement among the parties to the treaty of Paris. On the 30th of January Lord A. Loftus communicated this declaration to Prince Gortschakoff, and his highness replied that to effect an armistice certain bases of peace were necessary, but they were only to be considered as preliminaries and not definitive as regarded Europe; and stated categorically that questions bearing on European interests would be concerted with European powers, and that he had given her majesty's government clear and positive assurances to this effect. On the 4th of February the Austrian ambassador communicated a telegram inviting her majesty's government to a conference at Vienna, and her majesty's government at once accepted the proposal. On the 5th of February his Excellency addressed a formal invitation to Lord Derby, stating that—'L'Autriche-Hongrie, en sa qualité de puissance signataire des actes internationaux qui ont eu pour objet de régler le système politique en Orient, a toujours réservé, en présence de la guerre actuelle, sa part d'influence sur le reglement définitif des conditions de la paix future. Le gouvernement impérial de la Russie, auquel nous avons fait part de ce point de vue, l'a pleinement appréciée. Aujourd'hui que les préliminaires de paix viennent d'être signés entre la Russie et la Turquie le moment nous semble venu d'établir l'accord de l'Europe sur les modifications qu'il deviendrait nécessaire d'apporter aux traités sus mentionnés. Le mode le plus apte à amener cette entente nous paraît être la réunion d'une conférence des puissances signataires du traité de Paris 1856 et du protocole de Londres de 1871.' Austria, as a signatory of the treaties referring to the East, has always reserved its share of influence in regulating the future treaty of peace. This has been acknowledged by the Russian government; and thus the Austrian government, now that the preliminaries of peace have been signed, proposes a conference of the powers who signed the treaty of 1856. On the 9th instant the Austrian government proposed, that instead of the conference at Baden-Baden, as previously contemplated, a congress should be assembled at Berlin. Her majesty's government replied that they had no objection to this change, but that they considered 'that it would be desirable to have it understood, in the first place, that all questions dealt with in the treaty of peace between Russia and Turkey should be considered as subject to be discussed in the congress; and that no alteration in the condition of things previously established by treaty should be acknowledged as valid until it has received the assent of the powers.' On the 12th March Count Beust was told that her majesty's government must be perfectly clear on the points mentioned in the letter to him of the 9th instant, before they could definitively agree to go into congress. On the 13th, her majesty's government explained further the first condition:—'That they must distinctly understand, before they can enter into congress, that every article in the treaty between Russia and Turkey will be placed before the congress, not necessarily for acceptance, but in order that it may be considered what articles require acceptance or concurrence by the several powers, and what do not.' On the 14th the Russian ambassador communicated the following telegram from Prince Gortschakoff:—'Toutes les grandes puissances savent déjà que le texte complet du traité préliminaire de paix avec la Porte leur sera communiqué dès que les ratifications auront été èchangées, ce qui ne saurait tarder, Il sera simultanément publié ici. Nous n'avons rien à cacher.' All the great powers know that the complete text of the preliminary treaty will be communicated to them as soon as the ratifications have been exchanged. It will be published here at the same time. We have nothing to conceal. On the 17th Lord A. Loftus reported that he had received the following memorandum from Prince Gortschakoff:—'In reply to communication made by Lord A. Loftus of the despatch by which Lord Derby has replied to the proposal of Count Beust relating to the meeting of the congress at Berlin, I have the honour to repeat the assurance which Count Schouvaloff has been already charged to give to her majesty's government—viz., that the preliminary treaty of peace concluded between Russia and Turkey shall be textually communicated to the great powers before the meeting of the congress, and that in the congress itself each power will have the full liberty of its appreciations and of its action.' In a despatch received on the 18th, Lord A. Loftus stated that Prince Gortschakoff had said to him that of course he could not impose

silence on any member of the congress, but he could only accept a discussion on those portions of the treaty which affected European interests. Lord Derby having asked Count Schouvaloff for a reply from Prince Gortschakoff, his Excellency informed him, on the 19th, that he was 'charged to represent to her majesty's government that the treaty of peace concluded between Russia and Turkey—the only one which existed, for there was no secret engagement—would be communicated to the government of the Queen in its entirety, and long before ('*bien avant*') the assembling of the congress. The government of the Queen, in like manner as the other great powers, reserved to themselves at the congress their full liberty of appreciation and action. This same liberty which she did not dispute to others, Russia claimed for herself. Now, it would be to restrict her, if, alone among all the powers, Russia contracted a preliminary engagement.' On the 21st, Lord Derby replied that her majesty's government could not recede from the position already clearly defined by them, that they must distinctly understand, before they could enter into congress, that every article in the treaty between Russia and Turkey would be placed before the congress, not necessarily for acceptance, but in order that it might be considered what articles required acceptance or concurrence by the other powers, and what did not.

"Her majesty's government were unable to accept the view now put forward by Prince Gortschakoff, that the freedom of opinion and action in congress of Russia, more than of any other power, would be restricted by this preliminary understanding. Her majesty's government therefore desired to ask whether the government of Russia were willing that the communication of the treaty *en entier* to the various powers should be treated as a placing of the treaty before the congress, in order that the whole treaty, in its relation to existing treaties, might be examined and considered by the congress. On the 26th Count Schouvaloff wrote to Lord Derby that the imperial cabinet deemed it its duty to adhere to the declaration which he was ordered to make to the government of the Queen, and which was stated in the letter which he had the honour to address to him, dated the 19th of March. As different interpretations had been given to the 'liberty of appreciation and action' which Russia thought it right to reserve to herself at the congress, the imperial cabinet defined the meaning of the term in the following manner:—'*It leaves to the other powers the liberty of raising such questions at the congress as they might think it fit to discuss, and reserves to itself the liberty of accepting or not accepting the discussion of these questions.*'

"Her majesty's government deeply regret the decision which the Russian government have thus announced. How far the stipulations of the treaty of San Stefano would commend themselves as expedient to the judgment of the European powers, it is not at present possible to decide. But even if a considerable portion of them were such as were likely to be approved, the reservation of a right, at discretion, to refuse to accept a discussion of them in a congress of the powers, would not on that account be the less open to the most serious objection. An inspection of the treaty will sufficiently show that her majesty's government could not, in a European congress, accept any partial or fragmentary examination of its provisions. Every material stipulation which it contains involves a departure from the treaty of 1856. By the declaration annexed to the first protocol of the conference held in London in 1871, the plenipotentiaries of the great powers, including Russia, recognised 'that it is an essential principle of the law of nations that no power can liberate itself from the engagements of a treaty, nor modify the stipulations thereof, unless with the consent of the contracting powers by means of an amicable arrangement.' It is impossible for her majesty's government, without violating the spirit of this declaration, to acquiesce in the withdrawal from the cognizance of the powers of articles in the new treaty which are modifications of existing treaty engagements, and inconsistent with them. The general nature of the treaty, and the combined effect of its several stipulations upon the interests of the signatory powers, furnish another and conclusive reason against the separate discussion of any one portion of those stipulations apart from the rest. The most important consequences to which the treaty practically leads are those which result from its action as a whole upon the nations of south-eastern Europe. By the articles erecting the new Bulgaria, a strong Slav State will be created under the auspices and control of Russia, possessing important harbours upon the shores of the Black Sea and the

Archipelago, and conferring upon that power a preponderating influence over both political and commercial relations in those seas. It will be so constituted as to merge in the dominant Slav majority a considerable mass of population which is Greek in race and sympathy, and which views with alarm the prospect of absorption into a community alien to it not only in nationality, but in political tendency and in religious allegiance, The provisions by which this new State is to be subjected to a ruler whom Russia will practically choose, its administration framed by a Russian commissary, and the first working of its institutions commenced under the control of a Russian army, sufficiently indicate the political system of which in future it is to form a part. Stipulations are added which will extend this influence even beyond the boundaries of the new Bulgaria. The provision, in itself highly commendable, of improved institutions for the population of Thessaly and Epirus, is accompanied by a condition that the law by which they are to be secured shall be framed under the supervision of the Russian government. It is followed by engagements for the protection of members of the Russian church, which are certainly not more limited in their scope than those articles of the treaty of Kainardji upon which the claims were founded which were abrogated in 1856. Such stipulations cannot be viewed with satisfaction either by the government of Greece or by the powers to whom all parts of the Ottoman empire are a matter of common interest. The general effect of this portion of the treaty will be to increase the power of the Russian empire in the countries and on the shores where a Greek population predominates, not only to the prejudice of that nation, but also of every country having interests in the east of the Mediterranean Sea. The territorial severance from Constantinople of the Greek, Albanian, and Slavonic provinces, which are still left under the government of the Porte, will cause their administration to be attended with constant difficulty and even embarrassment; and will not only deprive the Porte of the political strength which might have arisen from their possession, but will expose the inhabitants to a serious risk of anarchy. By the other portions of the treaty analogous results are arrived at upon other frontiers of the Ottoman empire. The compulsory alienation of Bessarabia from Roumania, the extension of Bulgaria to the shores of the Black Sea, which are principally inhabited by Mussulmans and Greeks, and the acquisition of the important harbour of Batoum, will make the will of the Russian government dominant over all the vicinity of the Black Sea. The acquisition of the strongholds of Armenia will place the population of that province under the immediate influence of the power which holds them; while the extensive European trade which now passes from Trebizond to Persia will, in consequence of the cessions in Kurdistan, be liable to be arrested at the pleasure of the Russian government by the prohibitory barriers of their commercial system. Provision is made for an indemnity, of which the amount is obviously beyond the means of Turkey to discharge, even if the fact be left out of account that any surplus of its revenues is already hypothecated to other creditors. The mode of payment of this indemnity is left, in vague language, to ulterior negotiations between Russia and the Porte. Payment may be demanded immediately, or it may be left as an unredeemed and unredeemable obligation to weigh down the independence of the Porte for many years. Its discharge may be commuted into a yet larger cession of territory, or it may take the form of special engagements subordinating in all things the policy of Turkey to that of Russia. It is impossible not to recognise in this provision an instrument of formidable efficacy for the coercion of the Ottoman government, if the necessity for employing it should arise.

"Objections may be urged individually against these various stipulations; and arguments, on the other hand, may possibly be advanced to show that they are not individually inconsistent with the attainment of the lasting peace and stability which it is the highest object of all present negotiations to establish in the provinces of European and Asiatic Turkey. But their separate and individual operation, whether defensible or not, is not that which should engage the most earnest attention of the signatory powers. Their combined effect, in addition to the results upon the Greek population and upon the balance of maritime power which have been already pointed out, is to depress, almost to the point of entire subjection, the political independence of the government of Constantinople. The formal jurisdiction of that government extends over geographical positions which

must under all circumstances be of the deepest interest to Great Britain. It is in the power of the Ottoman government to close or to open the Straits which form the natural highway of nations between the Ægean Sea and the Euxine. Its dominion is recognised at the head of the Persian Gulf, on the shores of the Levant, and in the immediate neighbourhood of the Suez Canal. It cannot be otherwise than a matter of extreme solicitude to this country that the government to which this jurisdiction belongs should be so closely pressed by the political outposts of a greatly superior power, that its independent action, and even existence, is almost impossible. These results arise, not so much from the language of any single article in the treaty, as from the operation of the instrument as a whole. A discussion limited to articles selected by one power in the congress would be an illusory remedy for the dangers to English interests and to the permanent peace of Europe which would result from the state of things which the treaty proposes to establish. The object of her majesty's government at the Constantinople conference was to give effect to the policy of reforming Turkey under the Ottoman government, removing well-grounded grievances, and thus preserving the empire until the time when it might be able to dispense with protective guarantees. It was obvious that this could only be brought about by rendering the different populations so far contented with their position as to inspire them with a spirit of patriotism, and make them ready to defend the Ottoman empire as loyal subjects of the Sultan. This policy was frustrated by the unfortunate resistance of the Ottoman government itself, and, under the altered circumstances of the present time, the same result cannot be attained to the same extent by the same means. Large changes may, and no doubt will, be requisite in the treaties by which south-eastern Europe has hitherto been ruled. But good government, assured peace, and freedom for populations to whom those blessings have been strange, are still the objects which this country earnestly desires to secure. In requiring a full consideration of the general interests which the new arrangements threaten to affect, her majesty's government believe that they are taking the surest means of securing those objects. They would willingly have entered a congress in which the stipulations in question could have been examined as a whole in their relation to existing treaties, to the acknowledged rights of Great Britain and of other powers, and to the beneficent ends which the united action of Europe has always been directed to secure. But neither the interests which her majesty's government are specially bound to guard, nor the well-being of the regions with which the treaty deals, would be consulted by the assembling of a congress whose deliberations were to be restricted by such reservations as those which have been laid down by Prince Gortschakoff in his most recent communication.

"Your Excellency will read this despatch to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and give him a copy of it.—I am, &c.,

(Signed) "SALISBURY."

This despatch naturally caused intense excitement in Russia and amongst the Liberal party. It was objected to on the score that it was calculated to lead to war, as it was, more or less, a defiance of Russia, and, moreover, contained no definite proposal, but was confined to criticism.

These objections were true and untrue. The despatch certainly did contain a defiance of Russia, but only in case Russia should object to yield in conformity with the criticisms contained in the document, and all of which resulted in one very definite proposal, or rather demand—namely, that Russia should undertake to lay the whole treaty of San Stefano before the powers in congress, in order to allow those powers to determine how each article separately, or in conjunction with all or any of the rest, affected the previous treaties of 1856 and 1871.

Nothing could be plainer or simpler than this position of the British government; but so many quibbles were made use of on all sides, in England, amongst the office-seekers, as well as in Russia, that weeks were wasted in refuting the most puerile arguments.

That the position taken up by Lord Salisbury in his despatch was warranted by the course of events, and that his defiance of Russia, such as it was, was also justified, is amply proved by a retrospect of the course of the negotiations, and the relations between England and Russia since the commencement of the dispute in the East.

Lord Derby, in his reply to the circular of Prince Gortschakoff, announcing and vindi-

cating the commencement of the war between Russia and the Porte, had urged many reasons and considerations why he could not agree with the circular; why he thought the Russian government had made out no case whatever for their belligerent conduct; and, finally, after having urged many reasons of that kind, he concluded with this paragraph—"The course on which the Russian government has entered, moreover, involves graver and more serious considerations. It is in contravention of the stipulations of the treaty of Paris, 1856, by which Russia and the other signatory powers engaged, each on its own part, to respect the independence and territorial integrity of the Ottoman empire, and the conference of London of 1871, at the close of which this stipulation was affirmed by the Russian plenipotentiary, who signed the declaration, affirming it to be an essential principle of the law of nations, that no power can liberate itself from the engagements of a treaty, or modify the stipulations thereof, unless with the consent of the contracting parties, by means of an amicable settlement. In taking action against Turkey of its own accord, having recourse to arms without further consultation, the Emperor of Russia separated himself from the European concert which had been maintained, and, at the same time, departed from the course to which he himself authoritatively recorded his assent."

This announcement was made at the beginning of the war, as far back as May 1st, 1877. It was upon the principles of that declaration that Lord Beaconsfield founded his policy; and had not the above engagement been entered into by the Russian emperor, if it had not been held a solemn one in the face of Europe, no policy like that would have been adopted by England. Consequently, these principles were acted upon when government received private information that negotiations were about to commence between the belligerent powers. No sooner had the information reached them than the Secretary of State addressed to her majesty's ambassador at St. Petersburg, instructions to state, that in order to avoid possible misconceptions, and in view of reports which had reached her majesty's government, they were of opinion that any treaty between Russia and the Porte, affecting the treaties of 1856 and 1871, must be a European treaty, and would not be valid without the assent of the powers who were parties to those treaties. On the 23rd of January, having received no answer from Russia with respect to these representations, Lord Derby telegraphed to Lord Loftus, pressing for an answer; but on the 24th of January, ten days after the original representation, Lord Loftus announced, that though he had received no answer himself, he believed that Prince Gortschakoff accepted his original representation regarding the opinion of her majesty's government, which did not necessarily require an answer; but, if an answer was required, it would probably be given by his majesty's ambassador in London; and accordingly, on the day after, a message was received by Count Schouvaloff, and communicated to Lord Derby in the shape of an extract from the telegram from Prince Gortschakoff:—"We repeat the assurance that we do not intend to settle by ourselves European questions having reference to the peace that is to be made." Meanwhile, information reached government of the negotiations that were taking place between Russia and the Porte at Kesanlik—negotiations which were conducted with the utmost secrecy and mystery. Lord Derby, therefore, on the 29th of January, addressed the following despatch to Lord A. Loftus:—"I have to instruct your Excellency to state to the Russian government, that her majesty's government, recognising in the arrangement made by the Russian government with the Turkish government at Kesanlik the conclusion of an armistice and the basis of a peace, declare that so far as those arrangements are calculated to modify European treaties, and to affect general and British interests, they are unable to recognise in them any validity, unless they are made a subject of a formal agreement between the parties to the treaty of Paris." At the same time, Lord Derby sent a circular in identical language to her majesty's ambassadors at all the Courts, ending with this additional sentence:—"Her majesty's government entertains the hope that the view of the case as we have stated it, which is entirely based upon the treaties, and more especially upon the treaty of London of 1871, will receive the assent of the powers who were parties to that treaty." On the 30th of January, the following reply was received from the Russian government in a despatch from Lord A. Loftus:—"I received your lordship's despatch yesterday, containing declarations

relative to the validity of the treaty of peace, and I have this morning communicated them to his highness. Prince Gortschakoff stated, that to effect an armistice certain bases of peace were necessary, but that they were only to be considered as preliminary. He stated categorically that the questions therein of European interests would be concerted with the European powers, and gave an assurance to that effect." To the same effect were the statements of the Russian ambaasador in London; and there is no doubt that Count Schouvaloff made no representation to her majesty's government which he was not justified in making by the instructions which he possessed.

This is the diplomatic history of the month of January, the month in which parliament assembled. The above declarations by the Russian minister, which her majesty's government were induced to believe satisfactory, were also deemed satisfactory to the Austrian government; because, immediately after their receipt—that is, in the early days of February—a formal invitation was received from the government of Austria to a conference to be held at Vienna—a communication made with the knowledge of Russia, and, to use the language of the despatch, "appreciated" by Russia. A distinct understanding ("reglement definitif") was to be arrived at with regard to the general affairs touched by the war, and in which all necessary modifications might, with the concurrence of the signatory powers, be effected in the previous treaties, to harmonise them with the present situation. Thus it was avowedly as a signatory to the treaties of 1856 and 1871 that Austria sent the invitations, and it was in their character as signatories that the powers received them. The month of March was not rich in diplomatic documents, but it was not an uneventful month. During the whole of that period Austria was busy in conferring with the different Courts of Europe, and making arrangements for the meeting of the congress. There were many suggestions made. There was the project that the congress should assemble at Vienna; but objections were made by some powers to the meeting being held in a capital city. Then there were discussions as to the presidency, to the locality, and to the name of the meeting—whether it should be called a congress or a conference, both of which are exactly the same—and whether it should be presided over by a Secretary of State, or by some other minister. All these were discussions which occupied many minds; but they did not occupy the mind of the British government: that government never made the slightest difficulty on those hands. There were persons mentioned, perhaps, of whom they did not highly approve as presidents of the conference—as, for instance, Prince Gortschakoff; they did not always approve of the locality which was suggested; but they never made any objection of any kind. They thought that the interests of peace were of too vast a magnitude to weigh, for a moment, with these comparatively petty considerations; and so far as government were concerned, as to whether it was to be a conference or a congress that was to be held, whether it was to assemble at Vienna or at Berlin, or who was to be the president of the conference, or matters of that kind, no difficulties at all were made by them. Government were anxious that this congress or conference should meet, and they held that its meeting was the only means then attainable by which the peace of Europe could be obtained. Thus, early in March, an invitation arrived from Austria to meet the congress at Berlin. The objections which had been made to Vienna as being a capital city seemed to have been waived, and a congress at Berlin was invited. Without a moment's hesitation government accepted that proposition, and asked no reason why Berlin should be favoured instead of Vienna. All that was wanted was a meeting of the congress; but, in order that there should be no delay, and remembering the most critical events that had taken place in February, when Austria was carrying on these preliminaries for the minor purposes of the negotiation, and remembering that during the whole of that time secret negotiations were carried on between Russia and the Porte, and that during those negotiations the Russian armies were advancing, and, if not occupying, encircling Constantinople—and remembering, also, that they had felt it their duty to advise her majesty to send her fleet to the Sea of Marmora, government considered that it was very important, that when they assented to a congress at Berlin, the policy of her majesty's government should be again, in an unmistakable manner, expressed. Accordingly, the Secretary of State, on the 4th of March, wrote to Count Beust, that "her majesty's government, however, con-

sidered that it would be desirable to have it understood, in the first place, that the whole question of the treaty between Russia and Turkey should be considered a subject to be discussed in the congress, and that no alteration in the condition of things previously established should be acknowledged till it had received the consent of the powers." Therefore, notwithstanding the eventful and the perilous circumstances that were occurring, government were consistent in maintaining the great principle which they vindicated before the war commenced, which they repeated on other occasions, and of which, when the congress was about to meet, they felt it their duty to remind the other powers. A day or two afterwards, Lord Derby—uneasy, probably from some rumours that may have reached him, or some slight indications of the Russian policy—wrote, on the 13th of March :—

"With reference to my despatch of the 8th instant, I have to request your Excellency to inform Count Andrassy, that in order to avoid any misapprehension as to the meaning of their recent declaration contained in my note to Count Beust of the 9th instant, her majesty's government desire to state that they must distinctly understand, before they enter into congress, that every article in the treaty between Russia and Turkey will be placed before the congress, not necessarily for acceptance, but in order that it may be considered what articles require acceptance or concurrence by the several powers, and what do not." After some slight delay, government received the following communication from Prince Gortschakoff, dated the 17th of March :—

"In answer to the communication by Lord Augustus Loftus of the despatch in which Lord Derby has answered the proposal of Count Beust respecting the meeting of a congress at Berlin, I have the honour to repeat the assurance which Count Schouvaloff has already been instructed to give to the government of her Britannic majesty—namely, that the preliminary treaty of peace concluded between Russia and Turkey will be textually communicated to the great powers before the meeting of the congress, and that, in the congress itself, each power will have the full liberty of its appreciations and of its action ('la pleine liberté de ses appréciations et de son action')."

Now, of the meaning of "liberty of its appreciation and of its action," different interpretations may, no doubt, be furnished; but it was an expression of classical obscurity, in which Delphi itself could hardly be more perplexing. Then comes a note which, on the 21st of March, the Secretary of State addressed to Count Schouvaloff :—

"Her majesty's government have considered the communication which you were authorised by Prince Gortschakoff to make on the 19th inst. Her majesty's government cannot recede from the position already clearly defined, that they must distinctly understand, before they enter into congress, that every article of the treaty between Russia and Turkey should be placed before the congress, not necessarily for acceptance, but in order that it may be considered what articles require acceptance or concurrence of the other powers, and what do not. Her majesty's government are unable to accept the view now put forward by Prince Gortschakoff, that the freedom of opinion and action in congress of Russia, more than every other power, may be restricted by this preliminary understanding. Her majesty's government further desire to ask the government of Russia whether the communication of the treaty in its entirety to the various powers, shall be treated as a placing of the heads before the congress, in order that the whole treaty may be considered and examined at the congress."

To this government received a conclusive answer. "I lost no time," said Count Schouvaloff, "in communicating to Prince Gortschakoff the tenor of the letter you did me the honour to address to me on the 21st." As different interpretations had been given to the "liberty of appreciation and action" which Russia thought it right to reserve to herself at the congress, the imperial cabinet defined the meaning of the term in the following manner :—"It leaves to the other powers the liberty of raising such questions at the congress as they might think it fit to discuss, and *reserves to itself the liberty of accepting, or not accepting, the discussion of these questions.*" Now this simply meant that, though any of the powers might raise objections, Russia reserved her right, not to discuss them! Thus, however ambiguous the language was in previous instances, however various may have been the expressions used, there is no doubt that the correspondence between the two Courts ended in a refusal, on the part of Russia, of that which England believed

to be a just, a necessary, and an absolutely indispensable condition of her entering into the congress; and which, as was contended by all Europe, Russia, by her previous engagements as one of the signatories of the treaties of 1856 and 1871, was bound to comply with—viz., to submit the treaty of San Stefano for discussion in the congress.

That treaty consisted, as we have seen, of twenty-nine articles, and, with the exception of mere technical ones, every article was a deviation of some sort, if not a violation. It was for this reason that it was negotiated in secrecy, and encircled in mystery from the beginning to such a degree, that the Porte was commanded by Russia not to allow a single stipulation to be known to the neutral powers—not even to the neutral powers who were the allies of Russia, and without whose neutrality Russia could not have accomplished its purposes, and who would never have adopted that policy of neutrality unless they had believed that Russia was bound by the treaties of 1856 and 1871. In the first place, the treaty of San Stefano entirely abrogated and abolished what is called Turkey in Europe—the dominion of the Ottoman empire in Europe. It created, in the first place, a large State which, under the name of Bulgaria, is inhabited by many races who are not Bulgarians. It reached to the shores of the Black Sea; it seized upon the ports of that sea; it extended to the coasts of the Ægean, and it appropriated the ports of that coast. It provided for the government of this new Bulgaria by a prince who was to be selected by Russia; its administration was to be organised and supervised by a commissary of Russia; and this new State was to be garrisoned for an indefinite period of years, but certainly for two years, by Russian troops. But it was not merely this vast district—this vast extent of country—which was taken from the Porte, and in which the government of Russia was substituted for that of Turkey; but by provisions and stipulations in the treaty, the distant provinces of Greece, of Epirus and Thessaly, and Bosnia, were almost entirely cut off from Turkey, and were invested with privileges—that is to say, new laws, which were to be devised and supervised by Russia: so that it may be fairly said that the whole of the dominions in Europe of the Ottoman Porte were taken from it, and, for its power and administration, those of Russia to be substituted. The case was similar in Asia. The arrangements with regard to Asia would have converted the Black Sea almost as much into a Russian lake as the Caspian. The harbour of Batoum, which had not been acquired by conquest, and was still in the possession of the Porte, was seized by Russia. All the strongholds of Armenia were seized by Russia. The same process which was to be applied to European Turkey, was also to be applied to the province of Armenia; and the rest of that great province, which was nominally left to Turkey, was to be subjected to laws devised and supervised by Russia. Then, besides all this, there were the claims of Russia on that district of Bessarabia of which she was deprived after the Crimean war. This was not a trifling matter, or one in which a mere local interest was at stake. The clause in the treaty of Paris with regard to the cession of the district of Bessarabia was a clause upon which Lord Palmerston placed the utmost stress and importance. It involved, he said, the emancipation of the Danube; and it was Lord Palmerston, and not a local interest, that insisted upon the insertion of that clause in the treaty of Paris. It was inserted in the original preliminaries. An attempt was made by Russia to evade the fulfilment of that article; and Lord Palmerston considered it of such importance, that even the congress of Paris was, at one time, nearly broken up because of the efforts to evade the carrying of that cession into effect. Therefore, this closing of seas and of rivers, this securing of the freedom of the Danube, which was the great boast of the congress of Vienna, and was almost the only remaining achievement, was a matter of European interest which was of great moment, for it also concerned the navigation of the Black Sea and British commerce there. Again, if the treaty of San Stefano had been sanctioned by Europe, British commerce carried on from Trebizond, a mere roadstead, through Persia and Central Asia, would be stopped through the cession of Kurdistan. It concerned, also, the free navigation of the Straits; because if this treaty were carried into effect, one consequence would be that the Sultan of Turkey would be reduced to a state of absolute subjection to Russia. It was impossible to reconcile that either with the freedom of the Straits or the opening of the navigation of the Black Sea, or all those rights and privileges which Europe had hitherto enjoyed with regard to those waters, because

they were in the possession of a nominally independent sovereign. It simply meant the subjugation of Turkey, and leaving Constantinople in the hands of a power so enfeebled and so subjected to Russia, as to virtually and practically, in the long run, place the command of that fine situation in the hands of Russia, and Russia only.

All these considerations, which had more or less found expression in Lord Salisbury's despatch, were sufficient to induce parliament, by a large majority, to approve of the action which the government had taken; and on the following day, April 2, the proclamation calling out the reserves was published in the *London Gazette*, and posted up in the usual places, where it attracted large crowds, who generally approved it.

How imprudent it would have been for government to rely upon such vague terms as "full liberty of appreciation," &c., was proved by a slight but remarkably characteristic incident. Sir H. Elliot had informed his government that Prince Gortschakoff had declared that he would not allow the Bessarabian question to be discussed at the congress. In the published correspondence, the authority for this statement was mentioned as a "trustworthy person;" and the Opposition, thinking they had got the opportunity to cast discredit on the government sources of information, vehemently insisted on knowing who this trustworthy person was. It turned out to be the Roumanian agent at Vienna, who had received the following despatch from the Roumanian minister, M. Cogalniceano, and had communicated it to Sir H. Elliot:—

"Bucharest, March 16, 1878.

"At my request, General Ghika has had an explanation with Prince Gortschakoff on the question of Bessarabia and the intentions of Russia with regard to it. Prince Gortschakoff declared to our agent, that notwithstanding our clamouring, both at home and abroad, the Russian decision was irrevocable; that she would not bring this question before the congress, because it would be an offence to the emperor; that if another power wished to do so, she would not be a party to it; that it was with us that she wished to treat; that if she could not succeed in making us give in, she would take Bessarabia from us by force; that if we made an armed resistance, it would be fatal for Roumania."

It is true this was denied by the Russian government; but the only result of the denial, as far as government were concerned, was that Lord Salisbury declared that he was very glad he did not feel called upon to express an opinion as to which of the two parties spoke the truth.

After this exposure, and the decided steps taken by the British government, the Russian Chancellor thought fit to reply without delay to Lord Salisbury's circular; and on April 19th, a memorandum, dated April 7th, was published by the *Times* in a special edition late at night; Sir W. Harcourt entering the House of Commons quite breathless, triumphantly bearing aloft several dozens of the paper still reeking from the press. The memorandum itself was couched in the following terms:—

"First. It is not the case that the treaty of San Stefano creates a new Bulgaria, or a strong Slav State, under the control of Russia. Bulgaria existed,* although oppressed. Europe acknowledged this, and wished to remedy it. The conference of Constantinople indicated the measures which it considered necessary in order to obtain this result. In suggesting them the plenipotentiaries certainly had no intention of rendering them ineffectual. It must be admitted that their object was to endow Bulgaria with a national existence and real administrative self-government. In such a case, a State of Bulgaria, though divided into two powers, would have been constituted in embryo, and, developing under the protection of Europe, would have led to the result which the treaty of San Stefano seeks to arrive at. The refusal of the Porte, and the war which followed, prevented, according to the admission of the Marquis of Salisbury himself, the return, pure and simple, to the programme of the conference of Constantinople. The treaty of San Stefano has simply rendered the consent of the Porte obligatory to a more complete, precise, and practical programme of reforms; but the fact that the treaty of San Stefano is merely a preliminary one, indicates that the Russian cabinet only wished to establish the principle without prejudicing its definitive application, which necessitated technical investigations, an exact appreciation of geographical necessities, and the conciliation of numerous interests. This is why many of the articles are drawn up in

* This was absurdly untrue. Bulgaria, before the war, only extended to the Balkans, and not to the Ægean, absorbing half Roumelia.

vague terms, leaving room for future understanding upon the modifications deemed necessary.

"Second. The treaty of San Stefano does not place the new State under the control of Russia. The Russian cabinet has done what it did for Moldo-Wallachia in 1830. Experience shows that the work accomplished then in the principalities was useful, and contributed to the prosperity of those provinces. It cannot be said that the European equilibrium has in any way suffered from this measure, or that Russia has gained any preponderating influence through it.* It may be added that, if Moldo-Wallachia, which owes its existence to Russia, that borders it, has succeeded in rendering itself perfectly independent of her, we may *à fortiori* reckon upon the same result for Bulgaria, the territory of which, in a certain anticipated contingency—the cession of the Dobrudscha to Roumania—would be separated from Russia.

"Third. The maximum term of two years was fixed for the provisional occupation of Bulgaria, because that lapse of time was judged necessary in order to maintain order and peace, and protect the Christian and Mussulman populations against reciprocal reprisals, reorganise the country, introduce national institutions and a native militia, and also because if the occupation had been indefinite it might have been looked upon as a preliminary to taking possession of the province, which in no way entered into the views of the imperial cabinet. It need not be said that, the term being approximative, the imperial cabinet is quite ready to abridge it as much as possible without injuring the success of the difficult work that had to be accomplished in the interests of the general peace.

"Fourth. The delimitation of the State of Bulgaria was indicated only in general terms. The sole fixed principle laid down is that of the majority of the population, and certainly it is difficult to imagine one more equitable or more rational. It meets the objections deduced from the difference of race of the minority, the interests of which have, moreover, been guaranteed by express stipulations; but the application of that principle has been reserved for the mixed commission, the local investigations of which can alone dispel all the uncertainty surrounding these disputed questions. It has been objected to the preliminary treaty that it assigns to Bulgaria ports on the Black Sea; but the Constantinople conference itself judged that, without outlets upon the sea, that country could not prosper. As to the ports on the Ægean, the commercial development of Bulgaria was alone in view; and certainly Russia would not profit by that development, but England and the powers whose Mediterranean commerce is much more active than that of Russia, and which will always be a powerful agent for the maintenance of their influence.

"Fifth. The preliminary treaty in no way places Bulgaria under the domination of a ruler chosen by Russia. It is formally stipulated that the ruler shall be elected by native administrative councils, with the confirmation of the Porte and the assent of Europe, and that the members of the reigning dynasties shall be excluded. It is not easy to see what better guarantees could be given for the freedom of the election. As to the organisation of the principality, it is confided to an assembly of native notables. The Russian commissary has merely to exercise the right of surveillance, in concert with the Ottoman commissary. Moreover, an understanding between the great powers and the Porte is expressly reserved in order to assign to the Russian commissaries special delegates, pending the provisional measures taken by the authorities. The Russians have no intention, as is affirmed, of making Bulgaria enter the Russian political system. Scarcely anything has been changed in the institutions to which the country is accustomed. Attention has merely been given to the execution of the law, which was defective. Some new arrangements have been introduced—the abolition of exemption by purchase from military service; the abolition of the tithes, and their replacement by a more normal impost; the abolition of the farming of the taxes, the principal source of abuses; and finally, the right assigned to the Christians in mixed localities to challenge, during the elections, such Mussulmans as are known to have been guilty of acts of fanatical persecution against the Christians. In addition, the state of siege in which the country was placed during the war rendering indispensable the nomination of Russian governors, Bulgarian vice-governors were everywhere assigned to them, in order that after the peace, and as tranquillity became re-established in the country, the

* It enabled the Russians to march their armies safely through Roumania into the very heart of Turkey.

latter might be substituted for the Russian governors, without interrupting the regular course of the administration of the country. The exclusive object of all these preliminary measures was, to protect the national development, and render possible the meeting of the first Bulgarian assembly summoned to settle the institutions of the principality.

"Sixth. The assertion that the treaty of San Stefano would extend Russian influence beyond the limits of Bulgaria by stipulating for improved institutions in Epirus and Thessaly cannot but occasion surprise. If Russia had made no stipulations in favour of these provinces, she would have been accused of sacrificing the Greeks to the Slavs. If she had stipulated for the vassal autonomy, that is censured in the case of Bulgaria, she would have been accused of entirely destroying the Ottoman empire, and of establishing Russian influence there. The imperial cabinet has always understood the mission assigned to it by history as protector of the Christians in the East, without regard to race or sect. If it has made more complete and more precise stipulations in favour of Bulgaria, it is because that country was the principal cause and scene of the war, and because Russia had acquired positive rights as a belligerent; but in confining herself to stipulate improved institutions for the Greek provinces, she reserved to the great powers the faculty of claiming more extended ameliorations. It is equally incorrect to say that the treaty of San Stefano has stipulated that those institutions were traced in a Russian direction. The general type to which they have been assimilated by the treaty is that of the Cretan settlement—which was agreed to by the Porte under the influence of the great powers. The treaty stipulated that the application of these arrangements should be carried out by a special commission, in which the native element would be largely represented. It is true it compels the Porte to consult Russia before executing the stipulations, but does not prohibit it from also consulting the representatives of friendly powers.

"Seventh. The subsequent clause respecting the protection of the members of the Russian church must have been quite misunderstood to be assimilated to that of the treaty of Kainardji, abolished 1856. The clause of Kainardji concerned the Greek orthodox religion, and might embrace all the Christian subjects of the Sultan professing that religion. The clause of the treaty of San Stefano mentions exclusively monks, priests, and pilgrims, either Russian or of Russian origin, and stipulates in their favour only the same rights, advantages, and privileges which belong to ecclesiastics of other nationalities. After this it is impossible to consider the assertion just, that the stipulations, as a whole, of San Stefano are of a nature to increase the power of the Russian empire in countries where the Greek population predominates, to the prejudice of that nation, and of all the countries having interests in the East and the Mediterranean.

"Eighth. The assertion is at least exaggerated that the San Stefano stipulations respecting the retrocession of Bessarabia, the extension of Bulgaria to the Black Sea, and the acquisition of the port of Batoum, would render the will of Russia predominant over the whole of the districts of the Black Sea. Russia powerfully contributed in the past to emancipate Greece and Roumania.* It is not easy to see in what manner her power has more profited thereby than that of other States. The retrocession of Bessarabia by Roumania would be simply a return to the order of things, modified twenty-two years ago, for motives which no longer have any existence, legal title, or even pretext, since the liberty of the navigation of the Danube has been placed under the control and guarantee of the international commission,† more especially from the moment when Roumania proclaims her independence and Europe seems disposed to recognise it. It should be remarked, moreover, that this retrocession does not include the whole of the part of Bessarabia ceded in 1856. The delta of the Danube is excluded, and the proposal of the Russian government is to restore it to Roumania, from which it was taken in 1857. This circumstance considerably reduces the importance of the retrocession demanded, from the point of view of its influence upon the navigation of the mouths of the Danube.

"Ninth. Batoum is the only good port on

* But only in order to break up a strong, or at any rate a moderately strong, Turkey into a series of small powers, whose antagonisms would prevent them from opposing any serious resistance to Russia.

† This did not prevent Russia from blocking up the river from the Black Sea to the Austrian frontier, stopping all navigation, and doing serious damage when it suited her in '76 and '77.

this coast which suits the commerce and the security of Russia, withdrawing from a war which she has carried on by herself, and at her exclusive cost. It is, therefore, by no means a gratuitous concession; it is far from being the equivalent of the pecuniary indemnity which it would represent. As to the acquisitions in Armenia, they have only a defensive value. It is possible that England would prefer to see these strong positions in the hands of the Turks; but from the same motives Russia attaches value to their possession for her own security, in order not to have to lay siege to them in every war that may take place, as with the fortress of Kars, which she has had to take three times in the course of half a century. Cessions of territory are a natural consequence of war. If England had wished to save Turkey from them, all she had to do was to join Russia, as was twice proposed to her, at the time of the Berlin memorandum, and again during the mission of Count Elstow Sumarakow to Vienna, with the view of exercising a collective maritime pressure on the Porte, which would probably have been sufficient to attain the results now gained at the cost of so much bloodshed. The English government, having refused these proposals, ought not now to deny to Russia, who has shed her blood, the right to demand the establishment of a condition of things which will henceforth relieve her from the necessity of similar sacrifices, or at any rate will render them less burdensome.* It is wholly impossible to understand the consequences which are attempted to be derived from these rectifications of frontier, as regards the freedom of European commerce, from Trebizond by way of Persia. These assertions are in contradiction with those more than once advanced by different members of the British cabinet, according to which the actual possession by Russia of Erzeroum and Trebizond would in nowise endanger English interests. The rectifications of frontier in Asia stipulated in the treaty of San Stefano are far from having this extent. It is to push distrust to extravagance to affirm that they place Russia in a position to impede by prohibitive barriers the commercial system of Europe.

"Tenth. The complaint which has been made respecting the indemnity claimed of Turkey in the treaty of San Stefano is certainly unfounded. The amount of this indemnity bears no proportion to the oppressive burdens which the war has imposed on Russia. It may be that the amount exceeds Turkey's present means of payment, and increases the difficulty she experiences of satisfying her creditors. But it should be remembered that Turkey failed in her obligations to her foreign creditors before the war, and in consequence of the disorders caused by her bad administration.† It may be hoped that if peace is established on those reasonable bases which the treaty of San Stefano has in view, and to which the sanction of Europe would give a durable and solid character, there would result for Turkey a diminution of expenditure, and an increase of resources which would place her in a position to respond to the claims of her foreign creditors. It was in view of these possible results that the stipulations of the treaty of San Stefano relative to the indemnity were left in the vagueness which is now made a ground of complaint. If the amount of the indemnity is criticised, much more would have been the requirement of immediate payment. No precise mode of payment had been insisted on: we might have encroached upon some source of revenue already hypothecated to the foreign creditors of the Porte. In the treaty of San Stefano this has been avoided by reserving the mode of payment for ulterior settlement. It is true that by taking this precaution we are exposed to the suspicion of designing to paralyse or to dominate Turkey for a series of years, or else to commute the indemnity for new territorial acquisitions. It would have been more simple‡ and natural to suppose that the design was to consider the interests of Turkey, as well as those of Europe, and to uphold the Turkish government in the path of a faithful observance of its engagements, and of pacific relations profitable for all. But against suspicion and distrust no remedy avails.

"Eleventh. At the conclusion of the despatch of the Marquis of Salisbury, we learn with pleasure that the object of the government of her Britannic majesty, and its desire, are always to ensure the good government, peace, and liberty of the populations to which these benefits are wanting. We see

* The government refused to act thus—above all, because it would have been contrary to treaty arrangements, and would have premised an alliance with Russia, and an identity of interests which did not and could not exist.

† And, it must be remembered, in consequence of General Ignatieff's evil advice to the Sultan, which, after due allowance for party feeling and exaggerated reports, can no longer be doubted.

‡ Excessively simple!

with equal satisfaction the admission frankly made that this policy has been frustrated by the unfortunate resistance of the Ottoman government itself; that in presence of the modified circumstances of the present time, the same result cannot be obtained to the same extent by the same means—that is, the programme of the conference of Constantinople—and that great changes may, and no doubt will be necessary in the treaties by which the south-east of Europe has hitherto been governed. If we add to these considerations that the reiterated refusals of the English government to associate itself to a material collective pressure to be exercised upon the Porte have prevented Europe from obtaining pacifically the results desired by the London cabinet itself, we cannot but recognise that the war and the peace of San Stefano have responded to the exigencies of the situation that the Marquis of Salisbury has explained with great frankness and much elevation of ideas. That situation may be thus summed up:—The existing treaties have been successively infringed for twenty-two years—first, by the Turkish government, which has not fulfilled its obligations towards the Christians; then by the united principalities; by the French occupation of Syria; by the conference of Constantinople itself, which constituted an interference in the internal affairs of the Ottoman empire. The Marquis of Salisbury has himself recognised that great changes must and ought to be made.* Under present circumstances we have yet to learn how his lordship means to practically harmonise these treaties, and the rights recognised by Great Britain and other powers, with the friendly desire towards the realisation of which the united action of Europe has always been directed, of good government, peace, and liberty for the populations to which these benefits have hitherto been wanting. It remains also to be made known how, without the preliminary bases laid down by the San Stefano treaty, his lordship means to attain the object desired by all while taking fairly into account the rights acquired by Russia for the sacrifices she has borne—and borne alone—in order to render the realisation of them possible. The despatch of the Marquis of Salisbury contains no reply to these questions.† This is why it seems that the considerations it contains would have more naturally found an entire liberty of appreciation and of action, had the objections been accompanied by practical propositions of a nature to ensure an understanding for the solution of the actual difficulties in the general interest of a solid and durable pacification of the East."

Now, although this reply of Prince Gortschakoff's was excessively colourless, and left no clue as to his future intentions—whether he meant to accede to Lord Salisbury's demands that the whole of the treaty of San Stefano should be considered as having been laid before congress, still it raised hopes in the best-informed quarters amounting to conviction, that Russia would ultimately yield, and only wanted to gain time to exercise all her influence and persuasion upon other powers to assist her, or, at any rate, not to oppose her.

One of the great difficulties in Prince Gortschakoff's way was the attitude of Austria. If he could have been sure that Austria would allow herself to be compromised by an occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and thus take part in a practical division of Turkey, his course of action would have been clearly marked out. But he was not sure to what extent Austria could be involved. There were, it is true, many factors on which he could rely;—on the discontent of the Hungarians, on the ambition of the Italians, the desire of Germany to interfere in Austrian affairs, &c., &c.: but all the factors were more or less uncertain—almost as uncertain as the intentions of the British government.

It was therefore absolutely necessary to ascertain exactly—or as exactly as possible—what were the minimum demands of Austria and England to be put forward at a congress. This was also the opinion of Prince Bismarck, who stated roundly and plainly, that unless the respective cabinets could agree as to the minimum demands and the maximum concessions, it would be useless for him to issue invitations or fix the day for congress to assemble.

Prince Bismarck therefore advised the three cabinets of London, Vienna, and St. Petersburg, to negotiate separately on these points; and when an understanding was arrived at, he would be prepared to name the day for congress to assemble.

* But the dispute was as to the means by which those changes were to be effected.

† This is not true. The Marquis of Salisbury plainly stated that the object desired could be obtained by a congress, before which Russia should agree to lay the preliminary treaty which she concluded at San Stefano.

This was ultimately agreed to; and whilst General Ignatieff took the sense of the Vienna cabinet on Austro-Russian questions and interests, Count Schouvaloff acquired from Lord Salisbury exact and precise information as to what Great Britain would demand, and what she would concede. With this information Count Schouvaloff proceeded to St. Petersburg, the stipulation on all sides being that the negotiations should be kept strictly secret.

While all this was going on, however, the military preparations continued on all sides. Austria had partially mobilised her troops, and had also taken a credit of £6,000,000. Russia kept her armies in readiness to resume hostilities at any moment, and took measures in Roumania to secure her flank and rear against any Austrian attack; and the British government displayed the utmost activity in naval and military preparations, and kept a strict watch upon all the Russian movements.

Consequently, though the chances of a congress meeting had really greatly increased, it was only behind the scenes that this was known. Otherwise matters were apparently of a nature eminently calculated to inspire alarm. But the least disquieting incident was the sudden information, published on April 17th, that the British government had ordered the following troops from India:—The 9th Bengal cavalry, the 1st Bombay light cavalry, the 2nd Ghoorkas, the 13th and 31st Bengal regiments, the 25th Madras regiment, two regiments of Bombay native infantry, two field batteries of artillery from Bombay, two companies of sappers and miners from Bombay, and two from Madras.—This step was highly approved of by the great majority of the public, especially as the Russians had announced their intention of fitting out a fleet of vessels to prey upon British commerce in the event of war, and were bringing an enormous pressure to bear upon the Porte to induce it to surrender Varna, Schumla, and Batoum. To this, however, the Porte refused to consent, alleging, with much force, that as the treaty of San Stefano was only preliminary, and had, according to the Russians themselves, to be sanctioned by Europe before it became valid, they could not be expected to fulfil its provisions until this sanction had been obtained. Thus for the moment there was a pause in the great drama pending the decision of the Czar as to the congress; and in the meantime Roumanians, Turks, Greeks, Serbs, Lazes, Armenians, Kurds, Albanians, Pomaks, and Bosnaks, all went more or less their own peculiar ways, endeavouring to acquire a position which would entitle them to a hearing or consideration at the congress.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE FIGHT FOR THE SICK MAN'S LEGACY.

FROM the Adriatic to the Caspian, from the Danube to the Ægean Sea, all the rival races, tongues, and nationalities had been thrown into a flutter of excitement by the treaty of San Stefano. Everybody hated everybody else, and nobody trusted the other. It was a very whirlpool of conflicting passions; and round this whirlpool stood frowning and forbidding the hard granite rocks of Russia and England, and at the foot of these rocks lay the shifty, shifting, graceless quicksands of Austria—a danger to friends as well as to foes, but deservedly swept partially away by the turbulent flood washing their treacherous borders.

Everybody was more or less disenchanted with his *protegés* and friends. The Hungarians began to lose their admiration for the Turks as soon as they saw that the tide of war had set in irrevocably against the Porte, and that probably they, the brave and valiant Magyars, would have to fight their own battle. In England, even Mr. Forbes announced that he felt obliged to confess that the Bulgarians, in American parlance, were a big "fraud;" whilst in Russia, one of the prominent journals published the following account of the course of events:—

"July, 1876.—Wild enthusiasm. Complete enchantment with the Servians. Desire for war.

"October, 1876.—Despondency. Dis-

enchantment with regard to the Servians; hostility towards them; and regret for what has been done for them.

"November, 1876. — Enthusiasm for a war in the interest of the Bulgarians. Pity for, and sympathy with them.

"April, 1877.—Complete ecstasy. Brotherly love for the Bulgarians. Dissatisfaction with the Servians.

"August and September, 1877. Despondency in consequence of failures (before Plevna and elsewhere). Silent irritation against the Bulgarians. Readiness to abandon the whole thing if only a way could be found out of it.

"December, 1877. — Intoxication from success. Desire to carry the thing out to the end. Bad feeling towards the Bulgarians.

"February, 1878.—Wild delight at the peace and the yielding disposition of Turkey. Sympathy with Turkey and corresponding coolness towards the Bulgarians. Passionate determination to insist on the acquisition of Batoum. Consciousness of the necessity of this acquisition. Indifference to the question of England and Austria.

"May, 1878.—Complete disenchantment on the score of the Bulgarians. Suspicions of insincerity on the part of the Turks. Talk about Batoum not being so necessary for us as it had formerly seemed. Something like disgust with the Eastern Question. Talk about getting the thing finished anyhow."

This is a very fair picture of the actual state of Russian opinion. There was only one sentiment which remained unchanged—that was hostility to and hatred of England and everything English. This feeling was even extended to the matter of coats. Amongst the enterprising speculators who arrived at Buyukdere during the presence of the Russian officers was a ready-made-clothes dealer, who hoped to make money by supplying a civil costume to the Russian officers. A Russian officer did come to him one day, and he wanted a coat; and, after looking at several, he found one which he said he would buy, as it fitted him as well as if it had been made for him. The tailor agreed with him, of course, but thoughtlessly remarked, in descanting upon the qualities of the garment, that it was the latest style worn in London, and was known as the "Salisbury coat." "The what coat?" asked the Russian. The dealer repeated that the coat was named after Lord Salisbury, and the Russian immediately pulled it off, picked up his uniform, and walked out of the shop.

Another matter which greatly disenchanted the Russians, was the expenditure caused by the prolongation of negotiations, and which amounted to more than the amount spent during the actual hostilities. This was but natural, inasmuch as, during active operations, there was never any question of payment for stores captured and contributions levied on the Turkish towns and villages. With the cessation of hostilities, however, payment to a certain extent had to be made, so that between the 13th of March and the 27th of May, 1878, the paper money in circulation increased by more than 69,000,000 roubles, and 100,000,000 of exchequer bonds were issued. Thus, in the space of two months and a-half, the national debt had been increased, in round numbers, by 170,000,000—that is to say, by considerably more than 2,000,000 a day, whilst during the war the monthly cost was not more than 30,000,000. The probability of this heavy daily expenditure being continued during several weeks, and perhaps months, was, of course, not a pleasant prospect, especially for those who believed—and their name was legion—that the congress would end in a new war. In addition also to their troubles abroad, the Russian government had its hands full at home with Nihilist and Socialist conspiracies and riots, the excitement in consequence reaching its height when General Trepoff, the Minister of Police, was fired at and severely wounded by a woman named Vera Sassulitch; and the would-be assassin, though she confessed her crime, was acquitted by a jury in St. Petersburg.

The whole story is too characteristic of Russian society to be omitted here. Vera Sassulitch's attempt was connected with a trial of certain Nihilists, which lasted for a considerable time, and which ended finally in the acquittal of the majority. Amongst those who had previously been convicted of an attempt on the security of the State, and of plotting against the government, was a man named Bogoliuboff, who, before being sent to penal servitude, had been kept for some time in a House of Detention of the Ministry of Justice, used only for persons under arrest. Now, in Russia, since the new legal enactments, the internal regulations of the law courts and other legal

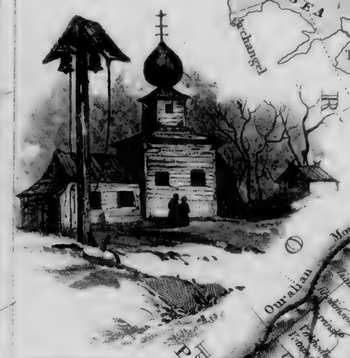
establishments were independent of the ordinary police agents and *gendarmes*, who have not even access to these places. General Trepoff having proceeded to this house, and having seen that Bogoliuboff was taking a walk in the yard, with several persons under arrest, pointed out this breach of the regulations, and ordered the man to retire. Bogoliuboff, not knowing who the general was, answered with rudeness, keeping his cap upon his head and refusing to remove it, for which acts General Trepoff gave orders to the authorities that he should receive twenty-four strokes with a birch as a punishment. Although Bogoliuboff had already forfeited his civil rights, this order was nevertheless arbitrary and illegal. There was a kind of insurrection in the prison in consequence, and the fact soon became known to the Nihilists outside, who corresponded among themselves throughout the empire. Mdlle. Vera Sassulitch, also a Nihilist, and in love with Bogoliuboff, swore to avenge him. She accordingly watched for General Trepoff, and as he was coming out of a confectioner's shop, held the muzzle of a revolver close to him and fired, placing his life for several weeks in danger. On April 12, she was brought to trial and was acquitted by the jury, although she admitted before that body and the judges, that in attempting the life of General Trepoff she had been actuated by a spirit of revenge and with the premeditated intention of killing him. It must be admitted that an acquittal under such circumstances as these was scarcely to be expected. Still, the verdict was received with applause by the people in court, composed in a large measure, it need hardly be said, of adherents of the accused woman. There were, meanwhile, in the reserved seats several eminent personages — among others the Chancellor of the Empire, Prince Gortschakoff, who held General Trepoff in high esteem. Without waiting for the departure of the crowd of Nihilists and students who blocked up and surrounded the building in which the court sits, the Chancellor immediately caused Mdlle. Sassulitch to be set at liberty. Scarcely had she set foot in the street when she was loudly cheered by the mob—so great was the indignation at General Trepoff having inflicted corporal chastisement on Bogoliuboff; and the curious, who always assemble on such occasions, began to follow her, shouting all the time. Seeing this, a local functionary showed her into a vehicle, that she might return home in peace. But immediately the boldest of the students endeavoured to mount upon the vehicle and take the place of the driver. Being prevented from doing this, they followed for some distance, and at last the mob became so dense that the vehicle was obliged to stop. Mdlle. Sassulitch alighted from it; then, the police endeavouring to restore the circulation, an affray took place, amidst which two shots were fired, one striking a student in the forehead and stretching him on the ground stone dead, and the other wounding a woman. Mdlle. Sassulitch herself re-entered her residence safe and sound; but the next morning she had already disappeared, and successfully baffled the police in their attempts to re-arrest her; so that Prince Gortschakoff's stratagem of setting her at liberty completely failed in its treble object.

Then, besides being troubled at home by conspiracies and outbreaks of Nihilists and Socialists, the Russians were also harassed by insurrection in the rear of their victorious armies. The remnants of Suleiman Pasha's armies who had escaped to the Rhodope made common cause with the Pomaks inhabiting that region, and took to arms to such an extent that it was considered necessary to send a commission to inquire into their grievances, and the general condition of Thrace. In reply to the commissioners, the Pomak delegates declared that they were driven to arms by the abominable cruelties practised upon them by Bulgarians, who had, they alleged, hunted them down like wild beasts. Some exaggeration it was natural to expect in their account, but there were many patent facts which substantiated the complaints of the Thracian Moslems and rendered their despair intelligible. From Adrianople to Philippopolis nothing was to be seen but the blackened ruins of deserted villages. The Mahommedans of that region who had not time to fly before the Russian advance overtook them were pillaged, slaughtered, or dispersed as soon as the Russians entered the district. The attention of the Russian commanders was absorbed in military arrangements, and while they were thus occupied the Bulgars improved the shining hour and enjoyed a glorious feast of blood, rape, and plunder; and this condition of affairs lasted for some time after the signature of peace. There were, indeed, Bul-

garians who took no part in these acts of ferocity; but the great majority pursued the Moslem with fanatical hate, bent, seemingly, on his extermination. The first act of Russian organisation in new Bulgaria was to place the police and the magistracy in the hands of the Bulgars, and to disarm all the Mahommedan population. Thus the Bulgars were invested with powers which enabled them to follow up the persecution of the Moslems with telling effect, using the law as their instrument of oppression. "I have seen," said Wassa Effendi, one of the Turkish commissioners, "a Mahommedan's house sold over his head by decree of a Bulgar magistrate for a paltry sum, and the buyer forthwith destroy it and sell the materials." The Mahommedan fugitives who, furnished with Russian passes from head-quarters at San Stefano, had returned to their former homes, were not permitted to take possession of their property. The Bulgarian police entirely ignored the Russian permit. It is true that a Russian officer presided over every tribunal; but as he did not understand Bulgarese, he could exercise no real check over the proceedings on the Bench. Bulgarian delinquents thus enjoyed a very wide liberty, and were never convicted on the accusation either of Moslem or Greek. Round about Philippopolis the commissioners saw camped in the marshes several thousand Mahommedan refugees literally rotting away with miasmatic diseases. They were only permitted to encamp in these pestilential spots, not being even suffered to depart and join their brethren in the mountains. A ration of three-quarters of a pound of bread was allowed by the municipality to the children, and that body also offered work on the roads to the men. But the able-bodied men were so few, the wages so small, and the payment so tardy that few found relief in this manner. When the commissioners expostulated with General Stolepine, commanding at Philippopolis, on the carelessness, indifference, and incapacity displayed by the Russian officers in the execution of civil functions, his Excellency replied that there was nothing astonishing in the fact. The officers so employed were, he said, all military men, totally untrained for civil employment, and for the most part very ignorant; had they been capable men they would have been retained for civil employment in Russia. In the town of Philippopolis the police compelled the Mahommedan residents to sweep the streets. While the commissioners were in Philippopolis a raid against the fez worn by all Ottoman subjects except the Bulgars was made by the Bulgarian populace, and for two days this symbol of allegiance to the Sultan was snatched from the head of every wearer who dared to appear with it in the street, and then torn and trampled under foot. The third day the fury calmed down, Greeks, Catholics, and Jews who were fez-wearers before having sought peace under shelter of that shaggy shako of sheepskin which Bulgarians wear, and which is called a calpak. "If we suppose," says Wassa Effendi, "that Greeks and Catholics fare much better than the Moslems, we are certainly under a delusion." While the commission was sitting in Philippopolis the Bulgarians attacked a Catholic institution in a suburban village, stripped the *curé* of the church naked, and in his presence violated the sisters of the institution. "My note-book," added Wassa Effendi, "is full of cases of cruelty, injustice, or outrage which from day to day came within the range of my own observation." With regard to the mission with which Wassa Effendi and his colleague, Samih Pasha, were charged, it was, as the Russians who asked for it knew it would be, an utter failure. No amount of persuasion would induce these unfortunate people to surrender themselves to the Christian mercies of the Bulgars. The commissioners invited the chiefs to come and confer with them, but the chiefs refused. A deputation composed of Turkish and Russian officers was therefore despatched to the mountain to hold a parley with the commanders of the militia of the Pomak nation, the style assumed by the combatants of the Rhodope. The deputation was received at the Pomak outposts, and conducted to the tent of the chief, who spoke to them as follows:—

"We are here solely to protect ourselves from the Bulgars. All through the war we were hunted and massacred. After the war, misled by false promises of the Russians, we went back to our homes, where we were again hunted and massacred. You yourselves have seen our ruined villages. We saw that our extermination was planned, and we prefer fighting for our lives to being butchered like sheep. We will molest no one, but we will defend ourselves against attack. We shall not descend into the plain, for we are not insurgents; we are not here to attack, but only to defend. We will listen to no advice, nor believe any pro-

RUSSIA IN ASIA









SKORSKARSKOI PAGOST

TROITSK

KAMTCHATKAN DOGS

For continuation of Russia in Asia see Map of Independent Tartary

Ceded to Russia by the Chinese 1853

SCALE

Longitude East from Greenwich

The Illustrations by H. Warren & Engraved by J. H. Kernot.

The Map, Drawn & Engraved by J. Rapkin

mises. We will not lay down our arms; in our greatest agony we appealed for help and protection in vain. We have only ourselves to trust to. We have no political project, no ideas of revolt."

The deputation wished to see another chief superior to the author of the foregoing declaration, but the Pomaks would not consent to take the Russian officers to him. At first the Turkish delegates refused to be separated from their Russian colleagues; but on the Pomaks pointing out that on their own ground it was for them to make their own rules, the Turkish officers consented to go without the Russians to the presence of a leading member of the provisional government of the Pomak people. The big chief held much the same language as the little chief outside had before held, but added:—

"We have no serious cause of complaint against the Russians. From time to time they have even protected us against the Bulgars, but they are quite powerless to give us efficacious and constant protection. They have not the means to do so. The Bulgars have massacred us, are massacring us, and will massacre us; so we will listen to no promise, to no advice. We will not lay down our arms; and now that you have heard that, go to your homes and come here no more."

The officers of the deputation stated that the Pomaks occupied strategic points, and were organised and encamped as an army in time of war. Another deputation, despatched later, was turned back by the outposts. They saw abundance of cattle and of agricultural implements; also great numbers of women and children. It was the belief of the commissioners, that if the Russians had been at all equal to the task they undertook, and had made any serious effort to protect life and property and maintain justice between Christian and Mussulman, the subsequent difficulties would not have arisen. There was, however, strong reason to believe that General Ignatieff planned the expulsion or extermination of the Mussulmans; as, it will be remembered, the first decision regarding the fugitives was that they should not be permitted to return to their homes. When this decision, against which Austria protested, was revoked, it was already too late. Most of the mischief had been done, and the Bulgars had broken loose from the control of their liberators. The position of the Pomaks was most pitiable. The commission was held and it failed, but its failure gave to the Russians a warrant for attacking the Pomaks in their mountain refuge; so that those who escaped getting their throats cut had only to look forward to being shot by the Russian troops.

Much the same state of things prevailed on the Greek frontiers in Thessaly, in Albania, along the Montenegrin frontier, and in Crete. All parties, the Turks included, expected wonders from the Berlin congress; and interesting to the participators in all these local struggles as their individual deeds might be, Europe did but little more than shrug her shoulders and say, "I told you so." In fact, everybody triumphantly said to everybody else, no matter to what phase of the question he referred, "I told you so." And the strange part of it all was, that almost every one of these vain-glorious persons was right—such was the diversity of interests, and such was the multitude of possibilities and probabilities which allowed persons of the most divergent opinions to be right on some point or other of one and the same question, the said point, of course, appearing to the arguer to exhaust the whole subject.

Meantime, however, the negotiations for the assembling of the congress had gradually come to a conclusion. Each of the cabinets concerned had at last found a method of arranging the basis upon which each thought it could successfully dupe the other; and thus at last the grand news gradually leaked out, towards the end of May, 1878, that all difficulties had been smoothed away, and that the congress would meet in Berlin on June 13, 1878.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE BERLIN CONGRESS.

For many days after it had been definitely settled that the congress was to meet at Berlin, this city was highly excited. For, although the attempts of Hoedel and Nobiling on the old emperor's life had cast a certain gloom over the town, the buoyant spirits of the Berliners could not long be damped, especially as the choice of their town for so important a meeting was a direct homage to the new position of glory which Germany had attained in consequence of her successful war across the Rhine.

Great, also, was the excitement in all the other capitals—least of all, perhaps, in Paris, which considered itself, somehow or other, defrauded out of the congress; and in St. Petersburg, where hopes were low, and fears were high. In London, on the other hand, there was almost a pæan of expectant victory rising above the subdued murmur of the Liberal malcontents, and entirely drowning the hoarse wail of Mr. Gladstone, when it was known that the modern Dick Whittington of politics, Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield, was about to cross the seas and enter the lists against the wily Chancellor of the White Czar. No pains were spared duly to impress this fact upon the world at large. The newspapers—above all, the *Times*, popularly supposed to have been specially purchased by the Queen for the private use of Lord Beaconsfield and Prince Bismarck—sent hosts of correspondents to the city on the Spree, and opened enormous accounts at the Berlin bankers for ordinary and extraordinary expenses. There were there M. Blovitz, a Franco-Bohemian, the ordinary correspondent of the *Times* at Paris, and who afterwards became known, for a short time, as M. *de* Blovitz. There was Mr. Mackenzie Wallace, who was special correspondent at St. Petersburg; and there was M. L. Abel, a talented Prussian, who was the standing correspondent at Berlin. Then there was M. E. Simon, of the *Mémorial Diplomatique* of Paris; Herr Skreijschowski, of the *Politik* at Prague; M. Etienne, of the *Neue Freie Presse*, and about 100 more, all ready to chronicle word and deed, and say what ought to be, what ought not to be, and what might, could, and should have been.

As for the plenipotentiaries and diplomats, with or without a seat at the green table, their name was legion. *Great Britain* was represented by three plenipotentiaries—Lord Beaconsfield, Marquis of Salisbury, Lord Odo Russell. Secretaries—Mr. Montagu Corry, Mr. Philip Currie, Mr. Henry Neville Dering, Mr. Hertslet, Mr. Algernon Turnor, Mr. Austin Lee, Hon. J. Bertie, Hon. Eric Barrington, Mr. Charles Hopwood, Mr. E. Le Marchant Gosselin, Mr. Arthur Balfour, Lieutenant-General Sir Lintorn Simmons, Captain Edwards, Captain Ardagh, and Captain Fitzgerald.

Germany.—Prince Bismarck, Under-Secretary of State Von Bülow, Ambassador Prince Hohenlohe Schillingfürst. Secretaries—Privy Councillor of Legation Bücher, Envoy Von Radowitz, Councillors of Legation Busch and Baron Holstein, Secretaries of Legation Von Bülow, Count Herbert Bismarck, and Count Rantzan.

Russia.—Plenipotentiaries—Ambassador Count Schouvaloff, Ambassador Baron D'Oubril, Prince Gortschakoff. Secretaries—Privy Councillor Baron Jomini, Councillor of State Baron Fredericks, Secretary of Legation Count Adlerberg, General Anjutschin, Colonels Bobrikoff and Bogoluboff, and Councillors Sorokin and Toonoff.

Austria.—Plenipotentiaries—Count Andrassy, Ambassador Count Karolyi, Privy Councillor Baron Haymerle. Secretaries—Chief of Section Baron Schwegel, Envoy Herr von Teschenberg, Councillors Baron Hübner, Von Kosiek, Doczy, Von Ascher, Secretary Von Peschy, Baron Mayer, and Baron Pasette.

France.—Plenipotentiaries—M. Waddington, Ambassador Comte de St. Vallier. Secretaries—M. Després, Directeur des Affaires Politiques; M. Duclerc, Sous Chef de Cabinet; Secretaries of Embassy, Comte de Mouy, Fourchon, Paul Després de la Motte, Attachés Comte Montalivet, Vicomte de Beaucaire.

Italy.—Plenipotentiaries—Count Corti,

Ambassador Count Launay. Secretaries—Councillors of Embassy Curtopassi and Chevalier Tosi, Secretaries Marquis Bialbi and Marquis de Malaspina.

Turkey.—Plenipotentiaries—Alexander Carathéodori Pasha, Ambassador Sadoullah Bey, General Mehemed Ali Pasha. Secretaries—Parnies Effendi, Conseiller du Ministére des Affaires Etrangères; Feridoun Bey, Chef de Département au Ministère des Affaires Etrangères; Secrétaire d'Ambassade Ohan Bagdadlian Effendi; Hatchik Effendi, Navum Effendi, Chefs de Bureau au Ministère des Affaires Etrangères.

Besides these, there were in Berlin, but without any right to a seat at the congress, the Roumanian ministers, MM. Bratiano and Cogalniceano; the Montenegro Senators, Petrovitch and Radonitsch; the Servian premier, Ristics; and the Greek minister, M. Delyannis.

The Radziwill Palace, shortly before purchased by the German government, and assigned to Prince Bismarck as his official residence, immediately after being taken possession of by the new tenant, was destined to become the scene of this most distinguished diplomatic assembly. The palace, an old-fashioned structure in the flat *renaissance* characteristic of the later style of the 18th century, occupies three sides of a quadrangle, the fourth being taken up by a paved court, with a garden in front. Unpretending in size and design, the building has yet an aristocratic air. The large windows of the central section betoken noble halls; the low side wings indicate indifference to the use of space; while the obsolete architecture, and the time-worn, discoloured bricks of the roof, combine with the new pointing of the walls to show antiquity in an excellent state of repair. The interior of the building is in keeping with the front view. A wide hall and a spacious staircase lead to the central circular saloon, which was the appointed home of the congress. All the apartments are in white stucco, with Grecian columns, perhaps a little bare, but noble in their chaste and lofty simplicity. There is a special entrance to the wing inhabited by Princess Bismarck, guarded by well-proportioned statues of Germania and Borussia. Close to the saloon, the ceiling of which is decorated with the escutcheons of the various German States, is Prince Bismarck's study and a reception-hall, furnished in gorgeous Persian taste. All these rooms, with several adjoining chambers appointed as *bureaux*, were allotted to the congress. From the first three rooms large folding-doors open upon a splendid old park, the umbrageous recesses of which might be visited by the plenipotentiaries either for private *tête-à-têtes* or for recreation after the fatigues of the exhausting debates. In accordance with the taste of the prince and princess, the furniture of the house, especially in the sitting-rooms, is very unpretending. The prince himself was in good health, the excitement of the grand meeting acting as a tonic upon his poor susceptible nerves. So that there was no further talk of his resignation, which had been spoken of, as it always is when things go wrong—that is, not exactly to his mind.

But though Prince Bismarck was nominally the central planet round which the rest of the brilliant galaxy revolved, Lord Beaconsfield was a star of more than the first magnitude, difficult as it may be to imagine such a dimension.

The reception given to Lord Beaconsfield, on the one hand, and Prince Gortschakoff on the other, offered a significant contrast. Lord Beaconsfield's journey from the German frontier to Berlin was a veritable triumph. Curiosity and enthusiasm everywhere prevailed, and people thronged to the station to see him. At Cologne, where there was two hours' notice of his approach, the station was invaded by Germans, who greeted him with hurrahs; and had he looked round him, he might have seen the Grand Duke of Oldenburg, who, not wishing to make himself conspicuous, took off his hat like the rest of the crowd. On re-entering the saloon, Lord Beaconsfield found it decorated with flowers; and when, on starting, he expressed his thanks for this attention, and sent a rose to the lady who superintended these arrangements, fresh cheers greeted this act of gallantry. At Berlin there was the same eagerness; and here, in the Kaiserhof Hotel, the Crown Princess prepared a mark of distinction by a present of flowers and strawberries from the new palace nurseries at Potsdam—a present which gave rise to many pleasant remarks that a dukedom was waiting for the successful earl. Nothing of the kind, however, was there for Prince Gortschakoff. He knew that the man against whom he had so long been pitted was receiving the homage of Germany, which was indifferent about himself. His arrival made no stir,

nor disturbed the usual solitude prevailing around the Russian embassy. Here, however, was the very danger which engaged the attention of all the prominent members of the congress. The simultaneous presence of Lord Beaconsfield and Prince Gortschakoff was one, and perhaps the principal, cause which might derange all calculations. The latter was in a state of health which made him nervous. He felt that he was nearing his end, and he would not have liked to sink below the horizon without leaving behind him a ray of glory. He would not have liked to end with a defeat. Lord Beaconsfield, younger and in better preservation than the prince, was at the pinnacle of his career, and aspired to a crowning triumph. Between the two men any question might become a personal one, and reason would then no longer suffice to solve it. The great and only chance of averting this danger lay with Prince Bismarck, who, for many reasons, did not at that moment desire to see a conflict break out that might have involved himself, as it undoubtedly would have done had the congress dissolved without agreeing. What might happen afterwards did not so much matter.

Punctually at the appointed time, June 13th, at two o'clock, the first sitting of the congress was opened by Prince Bismarck in the grand hall of his new official residence. An hour before the meeting a crowd assembled in the Wilhelmstrasse to see the plenipotentiaries alight. The first to arrive were the Italian ambassadors, Count Corti and Count Launay, in grand uniforms covered with gold lace and embroidery. They were speedily followed by Count Andrassy, dressed as a Honved hussar, and Count Karolyi, conspicuous in the furred cloak peculiar to the Hungarian magnate. Then came, in official garb, Prince Gortschakoff and Baron D'Oubril, Baron Haymerle, Count Schouvaloff, M. Waddington, Count St. Vallier, and the German and British plenipotentiaries. The first sitting was entirely taken up with the exchange of credentials and other indispensable preliminaries.

The moment of the opening of the congress was marked by the hoisting of the German standard on the flag-staff of the Chancellor's mansion. Prince Bismarck invited the members to take their seats at the semicircular table placed in the centre of the spacious hall, where they sat according to the alphabetical order of the names of the countries represented by them.

At the commencement of the sitting, as pre-arranged, Count Andrassy, in the name of all the members of the congress, expressed the hope that the health of his majesty would soon be restored, and mentioned the unanimous anxiety of Europe for his prompt recovery. Count Andrassy also expressed the satisfaction of the plenipotentiaries at the reception Germany had given them. Prince Bismarck replied, expressing his belief in the success of the congress, and his particular desire to see perfect harmony established among the eminent representatives of Europe. The appointment of secretaries to the congress was then proceeded with, Herr Bucher and M. de Mouy being chosen. Deputy-secretaries, in case of their absence, were also nominated. Prince Herbert Bismarck was among the latter. The secretaries were then immediately introduced and officially presented to the congress by Prince Bismarck. Prince Bismarck then solicited secrecy for the deliberations. The members present agreed to this, but no promise or oath was demanded. Lord Beaconsfield then addressed the congress upon the advisability of withdrawing the Russian and British forces from before Constantinople; but Count Schouvaloff objected on the score of the danger of an outbreak. Here the matter dropped, and it was then resolved to adjourn till Monday, in order to give the members time to become personally better acquainted with each other, and to negotiate between themselves as much as possible before the divers subjects were broached in congress itself.

The day then wound up with a grand dinner at the palace; whilst the Crown Princess invited Lord Beaconsfield to a domestic tea, Lord Salisbury remaining at work in the English embassy.

So far, therefore—that is, for twelve hours—everything had passed off most happily. So did the first twelve hours of the following day; but then there came a thunderbolt.

The very day after congress had met, and its members pledged themselves to secrecy, the *Globe* printed the text of an agreement between the governments of England and Russia, signed at the Foreign Office on the 30th of May. The agreement comprised two memorandums. The title of the first memorandum was, "Project of a Memorandum determining the points upon which

an understanding has been established between the governments of Russia and Great Britain, and which will serve as a mutual engagement for the Russian and English plenipotentiaries at the congress."

After a preamble, expressing the desire of the Russian and English governments to establish an understanding that may obviate the settlement of the Eastern Question by the sword, the memorandum runs thus:—

"1. England discards the longitudinal division of Bulgaria, but the representative of Russia reserves to himself to point out the advantages of it to the congress, promising, nevertheless, not to insist upon it against the definitive opinion of England.

"2. The arrangement of the boundaries of Southern Bulgaria should be modified in such a manner as to remove them from the Ægean Sea, according to the southern delimitation of the Bulgarian provinces proposed by the conference of Constantinople. This does not concern the question of the frontiers so much as it refers to the exclusion of the littoral of the Ægean Sea—that is to say, to the west of Lagos. From this point to the coast of the Black Sea the discussion of the frontier will remain free.

"3. The western frontiers of Bulgaria should be rectified upon the base of nationalities so as to exclude from that province the non-Bulgarian populations. The western frontiers of Bulgaria ought not to pass in principle a line traced from close to Novi-Bazar to Koursha Balkan.

"4. The Bulgaria replaced in the limits which are mentioned in the points 2 and 3 shall be divided into two provinces—namely:—The one to the north of the Balkans should be endowed with political autonomy, under the government of a prince; and the other to the south of the Balkans should receive a large measure of administrative self-government (*autonomie administrative*)—for instance, like that which exists in English colonies—with a Christian governor named, with the acquiescence of Europe, for five to ten years.

"5. The Emperor of Russia attaches a peculiar importance to the retreat of the Turkish army from Southern Bulgaria. His majesty does not see any security or guarantee for the Bulgarian population in the future if the Ottoman troops are maintained there. Lord Salisbury accepts the retreat of the Turkish troops from Southern Bulgaria, but Russia will not object to what is enacted by the congress respecting the mode and the cases where the Turkish troops would be allowed to enter the southern province to resist an insurrection or invasion, whether in a state of execution or in a state of menace. England, nevertheless, reserves to herself to insist at the congress on the right of the Sultan to be able to canton troops on the frontiers of Southern Bulgaria. The representative of Russia reserves to himself, at the congress, complete liberty in the discussion of this last proposition of Lord Salisbury.

"6. The British government demands that the superior officers (*chefs supérieurs*) of the militia in Southern Bulgaria should be named by the Porte with the consent of Europe.

"7. The promises concerning Armenia stipulated by the preliminary treaty of San Stefano should not be made exclusively to Russia, but to England also.

"8. The government of her Britannic majesty taking, as well as the imperial government, a warm interest in the future organisation of the Greek provinces of the Balkan Peninsula, the Article 15 of the preliminary treaty of San Stefano shall be modified in such a manner that the other Powers, and notably England, may have, like Russia, a consulting voice in the future organisation of Epirus, Thessaly, and the other Christian provinces resting under the dominion of the Porte.

"9. In so far as the war indemnity is concerned, his majesty the emperor has never had the intention of converting it into territorial annexations, and he does not refuse to give assurances in this respect. It is understood that the war indemnity will not deprive the English government of its rights as creditor, and it will, in this respect, remain in the same state that it stood before the war. Without contesting the final decision which Russia will take with respect to the amount of the indemnity, England reserves to herself to point out to the congress the serious objections which she sees to it.

"10. As to the valley of Alashkert and the town of Bayazid, that valley being the great transit route for Persia, and having an immense value in the eyes of the Turks, his majesty the emperor consents to restore it to them; but he has demanded and obtained, in exchange, the cession to Persia of the little territory of Khotour, which the commissioners of the two mediatory Courts have found just to restore to the Shah.

"11. The government of her Britannic majesty would have to express its profound regret in the event of Russia insisting definitively upon the retrocession of Bessarabia. As, however, it is sufficiently established that the other signatories to the treaty of Paris are not ready to sustain by arms the delimitation of Roumania, stipulated in that treaty, England does not find herself sufficiently interested in this question to be authorised to incur alone the responsibility of opposing herself to the change proposed, and thus she binds herself not to dispute the decision in this sense. In consenting not to contest the desire of the Emperor of Russia to occupy the port of Batoum and to guard his conquests in Armenia, the government of her majesty do not hide from themselves that grave dangers, menacing the tranquillity of the populations of Turkey in Asia, may result in the future by this extension of the Russian frontier. But her majesty's government are of opinion that the duty of protecting the Ottoman empire from this danger, which henceforth will rest largely (*d'une mesure speciale*) upon England, can be effected without exposing Europe to the calamities of a fresh war. At the same time the government of the Queen take cognizance of the assurance given by his imperial majesty that in the future the Russian frontier will be no more extended on the side of Turkey in Asia. Her majesty's government being consequently of opinion that the modifications of the treaty of San Stefano, approved in this memorandum, suffice to mitigate the objections that they find in the treaty in its actual form, engage themselves not to dispute the articles of the preliminary treaty of San Stefano which are not modified by the ten preceding points if, after the articles have been duly discussed in congress, Russia persists in maintaining them.

"It may be, that during the discussions in congress the two governments may find it preferable to introduce, of a common accord, fresh modifications, which it would be impossible to foresee; but, if the understanding respecting these new modifications be not established between the Russian and English plenipotentiaries, the present memorandum is destined to serve as a mutual engagement in congress for the plenipotentiaries of Russia and Great Britain.

"In faith of which this document has been signed by the Russian ambassador at London and the principal Secretary of State of her Britannic majesty.—Done at London the 30th of May, 1878.

"SCHOUVALOFF.
"SALISBURY."

The second memorandum forms an annex to the first, and was signed by both plenipotentiaries on the same date. It runs as follows:—

"Besides the stipulations of the preceding memorandum, the British government reserve to themselves to point out to the congress the following points:—

"(*a*) The English government reserve to themselves to demand of the congress the participation of Europe in the administrative organisation of the two Bulgarian provinces.

"(*b*) The English government will discuss in congress the duration and the nature of the Russian occupation of Bulgaria and of the passage through Roumania.

"(*c*) The name to be given to the southern province.

"(*d*) Without touching on the territorial question, the British government reserve to themselves to discuss the questions of the navigation of the Danube, in which matter England has rights by treaty.

"(*e*) The English government reserve to themselves to discuss in congress all questions relative to the Straits. But the Russian ambassador at London takes cognizance of the verbal communication which he has made to the principal Secretary of State—that is to say, the imperial cabinet stands by the declaration of Lord Derby of the 6th of May, 1877, and notably:—'The existing arrangements made under European sanction which regulate the navigation of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles appear to them (the British government) wise and salutary; and there would be, in their judgment, serious objections to their alteration in any material particular.' And the Russian plenipotentiary will insist at the congress on the *status quo*.

"(*f*) The English government will address to his majesty the Sultan a request to promise Europe to protect equally on Mount Athos the monks of other nationalities.

"SCHOUVALOFF.
"SALISBURY."

This memorandum was received with very mixed feelings in all quarters. It was profoundly displeasing to that faction at

St. Petersburg which thought even the treaty of San Stefano too mild, and which would have risked a conflict with England rather than have allowed the government of Constantinople to escape from a state of vassaldom to the Czar. It was equally displeasing to a large party in England. Expectations, it will be remembered, were spread before the conference of Constantinople. A small section of the public was afterwards as much annoyed as the great mass of the people was gratified by the moderate spirit of the instructions which Lord Salisbury carried to the Turkish capital, and by the proposals which he himself made for the improvement of the Ottoman empire. Precisely the same kind of surprise came to many people again. The ministerial plans for the future of Turkey were found to be national in the best sense of the term, short of delaying war, and hence they were disappointing alike to an active party which would cancel all the Russian conquests, and to another equally active band which would clear away the whole of the Ottoman administration. What, it was asked, has the government gained by obtaining the vote of credit for six millions, by bringing the Indian troops to Malta, and by constituting itself the champion of international law?

The answer is very simple. In the first place, if government had not used firm language and made military preparations—played the same game of brag, in fact, to which we have already alluded—the Russians might have done much more than enforce the treaty of San Stefano. They could have found a score of pretexts for entering Constantinople itself. In fact, the blundering and the rashness of the Turks would have given the Grand Duke Nicholas some such excuse every forty-eight hours. Perhaps he might have taken up and expressed his purpose of holding a strong position on one side or other of the Bosphorus, and thus the action of the Russian troops would have made it indescribably difficult to prevent the outbreak of another war. But the firm front of the government did much more than prevent the Russian army from passing beyond San Stefano. It also brought about some highly important changes in the conditions of peace. The first, as the agreement between the two powers shows, was in the administrative arrangements for European Turkey. The treaty of San Stefano virtually included the whole of that country within the limits of one great Bulgaria. Bosnia and Herzegovina were, indeed, left to the Porte; but, as they were cut off from Constantinople by the new province, the connexion between them and Constantinople could not have lasted for a month, though, at the same time, there cannot be the least doubt that the treaty presupposed the annexation of these provinces by Austria, to whom they were offered, and by whom they were virtually accepted. The Greek provinces were also left; but, as they were also to be separated from the capital by Bulgaria, they would also have fallen away. A strip of territory along the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmora was to remain under the direct authority of the Porte; but it was to be so small that it would have afforded little revenue and slender military protection. Thus the government of Constantinople, whatever the future character of it might be, would have had a formidable neighbour in the new State; and it is difficult to say what would have been the strength or the tendencies of such a province. That danger was prevented by the agreement of the two governments. Thus Constantinople was emancipated for the moment, at least from influences which might have been fatal to its independence. It was to be left in possession of territory not only considerably larger than the portion which was specified in the treaty of San Stefano, but stretching along the coast of the Ægean, and offering an unimpeded passage to all the provinces which were still connected with the Porte. Another great change was the division of Bulgaria into two parts. The Northern, stretching from the Danube to the Balkans, was, it is true, to be virtually independent of Constantinople; but such a change had been made inevitable by the war. The Southern Bulgaria, on the other hand, was not to receive much greater powers of self-government than those suggested by the preliminary conference of Constantinople. The Sultan would be able to appoint the chief officers of the local militia, and the congress had liberty to provide that, in case of emergency, he might garrison the strong places of the province. The two Bulgarias together were not to be so large as the one mapped out at San Stefano. That to the south of the Balkans was not to touch the Ægean or go so far to the west as in General Ignatieff's bold draught, and was

in some respects smaller than that which was sketched at the conference. Thus the Slavs were to be prevented from swamping the Greek communities on the shores of the Ægean Sea and towards the west of Turkey. Government also stipulated that it, as well as Russia, should have a share in determining the administrative arrangements of the Balkan peninsula. Both the Bulgarias were to be fashioned by the congress instead of by Russia; and, so far, the treaty of San Stefano was repealed. Nor had Russia made good her claim to decide what kind of self-government was to be given to the Greek provinces. She was to share that power with England and the rest of Europe. The memorandum of agreement showed, therefore, that government had gained much, even in European Turkey; but still more important were the stipulations with respect to the Asiatic provinces. The relinquishment of Bayazid and the valley of the Alashkert was in itself a considerable change. It was trivial, however, in comparison with the arrangements foreshadowed by some short phrases in the memorandum. The government, after stating that it would not prevent the Czar from occupying Batoum and keeping his conquests in Armenia, added that, in consequence of such an extension of the Russian frontier, the tranquillity of the populations of Turkey in Asia would probably be menaced by grave dangers. Hence it took note of the assurance given by the emperor, that the frontiers of Russia should not in future be extended further into Turkey in Asia. That was the record of a highly important pledge. It was a promise made, not to a weak government like the Porte, or to the European powers collectively, but to England individually. Thus Russia recognised the special right of England to protect the Asiatic part of the Ottoman territory. To free that point from the slightest ambiguity, Lord Salisbury inserted a still more significant phrase. The duty of guarding Turkey in Asia will henceforth, he said, "rest in a special manner on England." Thus Russia put her seal to a document which unequivocally stated that England may assert a right of guardianship over Asia Minor.

But having said so much, all that can be said in favour of the memorandum, or the policy which dictated it, is exhausted.

Though it was condoned, belauded, and exalted as a clever work, meeting the exigencies of the moment for the sake of peace, there was a deep concealed feeling against it. It was felt unworthy of England, and people were glad to forget it, and glad when it was merged in the decisions of the congress and buried out of sight, it was hoped, for ever. In two words, it was felt that this memorandum, which practically resulted in a partition of Turkey and a share of the spoil, and in defiance of former treaties, ill became a country whose boast had been, up to the last moment, that it was prepared to defend those treaties at any cost, and had fraudulently appropriated the applause of Europe on that score at the very moment its government was violating its cherished principles and treaties.

Henceforth it was easy to foresee that the decisions of the congress would be closed more or less on the principles and conditions laid down in this document. It was equally evident that some similar arrangement had been arrived at between Russia and Austria; of which arrangement England was as well aware as Austria had been aware of the Anglo-Russian agreement.

That Austria was aware of the arrangement is proved by one small but significant fact. That is, that when asked in the Austrian chamber whether the document published by the *Globe*, through the instrumentality of a writer paid at the rate of 10*d.* an hour for copying it, was authentic, Count Andrassy replied in exactly the same terms as his British colleague, the Marquis of Salisbury—that the document in question was unauthenticated and "unworthy of your lordship's confidence."

What the Anglo-Austro-Russian agreement was, became evident from the sitting on June 28th.

The sitting might well be entitled the morganatic marriage of Bosnia with Count Andrassy. It might be said that the congress, after having occupied itself with the Bulgarian drama, had now proceeded to the high Bosnian and Herzegovinian comedy. It was a patent fact, that ever since the commencement of the insurrection in Turkey, Austria had cast longing eyes towards this province, the cradle of the insurrection which resulted in the meeting of the congress. Count Andrassy's persistent coquetry had finished by triumphing over time and difficulties; but even at the last moment he had not the courage to lead the object he coveted publicly to the altar. Congress was kind enough to facilitate a morganatic

marriage between them. But though Count Andrassy only married Bosnia and Herzegovina with his left hand for the moment, it was quite well understood that it would not be long before the hand changed. In short, congress decided unanimously—the Turks excepted—that Austria should proceed to the military occupation of Bosnia, and have charge of the administration of that country. At the beginning of the sitting, Count Andrassy rose and read a *mémoire*, which might be called an indirect demand of marriage. He showed that for a whole year Austria was alarmed at the insurgent condition prevailing on her frontiers, and at the agitation which crossed them and spread into the interior of the Austrian empire. He pointed out that Austria had 150,000 Bosnian refugees on her hands, who refused to return to Bosnia while it remained under Turkish domination, which could afford them neither existence nor security, and that they would prefer to support the misery and humiliation of exile and Austrian charity to returning to their homes, either already devastated or threatened with being so later. Count Andrassy showed that Turkey was not in a position to maintain tranquillity in this province; that it would remain in a state of misery and revolutionary agitation against the domination of Turkey; that this revolutionary agitation would infallibly reach the adjoining Slav populations; and that congress, if it allowed such a state of things to exist, would have serious responsibilities as regards the future tranquillity of Europe. Count Andrassy added that he did not ask public marriage with Bosnia—that is to say, he did not ask that the province should be annexed to Austria—he only begged the congress to come to some solution; and if this solution appeared to him practical and acceptable, Austria would be the first to adhere to it.

The Marquis of Salisbury then rose, and following the example of Prince Bismarck, constituted himself the honest broker of the indirect union of Bosnia with the Austrian empire. The Marquis of Salisbury also read a *mémoire*. In it he declared that England was penetrated by the justness of the observations of the first Austrian plenipotentiary; and as his noble friend rejected public appropriation, and contented himself with left-hand annexation, he proposed to the congress to decide that Austria be charged to occupy Bosnia and Herzegovina, and administer them; that it was of public interest for Europe to place these provinces under the direct protection of a powerful State; that this State could only be the empire of Austria, which was the immediate neighbour of Bosnia and Herzegovina; and that it was on this empire that the task devolved of bringing the insurrection to an end.

M. Waddington, acting as first witness of the proposed union, then begged to be heard, and declared that, after having listened to the two papers which had just been read, he thought Lord Salisbury's proposal should be adopted by the congress in the interest of Turkey herself, seeing that the continued possession of Bosnia and Herzegovina would constitute for that power a weak point, imposing on it sacrifices out of proportion either to its own resources or those of Bosnia, and would expose it on that side to fresh troubles and fresh claims. He concluded by saying that, in the name of France, he adhered to the proposal just submitted to the congress by the Marquis of Salisbury.

Count Corti, without formulating precise restrictions, put several indirect questions, to which, however, he called for no answer. He agreed, but without any great heartiness, with the proposal submitted to congress, and no doubt thought of a future morganatic marriage between himself and—say, the Italian Tyrol!

Prince Gortschakoff adhered purely and simply to Lord Salisbury's motion without any further remarks.

Germany, in the person of Prince Bismarck, who presided over the congress, kept silent, and a moment of suspense followed. It was naturally expected that the mother of the brood whose fate was in question should also express her opinion, and perhaps, that in recalling all the trouble caused her by the province, Turkey would show herself delighted at the idea of getting rid of it in any way whatever. But the maternal heart contains unsearchable mysteries. At last the Turkish plenipotentiary rose, and he, too, read a *mémoire*. Turkey, he said in substance, could not possibly consent to the separation demanded of her. She was only bound, he said, by the treaty of San Stefano, and the demand in question exceeded the limits of that document. Turkey herself was in a position to protect and administer Bosnia, and what the powers proposed to do for her she could take upon herself to accom-

plish. Apart from this, however, the Turkish plenipotentiaries had formal instructions which forbade them to consent to this concession; and without wishing to hamper the work of the congress or shirk the obligations imposed on them by the decisions of this assembly, they declared they could not agree to the proposal of the Marquis of Salisbury.

Hereupon Lord Beaconsfield rose, and declared that England could not but adhere to the motion she had made—that Bosnia and Herzegovina, if left in the keeping of the Porte, would unnecessarily tend to break up that cohesive state of the empire deemed essential to her by the friends of Turkey themselves, and by those who wished to procure for Europe a lasting peace. He called to mind in a trenchant manner how Turkey, even before the war, and when still in the plenitude of her power, was not able to get the better of an insurrection which had broken out in Herzegovina, and stated that, consequently, it was impossible for Europe, in a still worse state of affairs in Turkey, to confide to the Porte the security of these provinces, which must call forth the solicitude of Europe. He concluded by calling for the adoption of the motion before the congress.

Finally, Prince Bismarck rose, and expressed his astonishment that the Turkish plenipotentiaries hesitated to yield to the unanimous opinion of the congress. He reminded them that the congress, by efforts which had been uninterrupted, and by incessant mutual concessions, had determined to restore to Turkey provinces far more considerable than those in question, and which she had renounced by the treaty of San Stefano. With regard to the restrictive instructions referred to by the Turkish plenipotentiaries, he urged them to ask for new directions at once which would permit them to give their adhesion to the views of the congress.

The proposal of the Marquis of Salisbury was then submitted to and adopted unanimously by the members of the congress, except Turkey and Austria, who abstained from voting. Thereupon the bridegroom, Count Andrassy, rose and declared that he accepted the bride presented to him by the congress for better, for worse.

But whilst this morganatic marriage of Count Andrassy with the fair Illyria, or Bosnia, was being consummated in a matter-of-fact prosaic manner before a number of more or less amused witnesses, nobody thought that the sedate widower, the essence of all the proprieties, one of the bulwarks of the State, and a pillar of the church—perhaps even a warden of the parish church at Hughenden—had actually contracted a clandestine marriage with a lady of, to say the least, the most doubtful mythological antecedents. Yet so it was. The aged Earl of Beaconsfield had actually wedded the ever youthful, though somewhat notorious Cyprian Venus. With this fair lady he had actually been secretly passing his honeymoon at Berlin, jealously screening her charms and beauties from the gaze of the vulgar herd, until at the last moment when that delectable period was about to end, he led the fair damsel forth from her place of concealment, and proudly introduced her—not to the profane criticisms of a congress—but to the *élite* of the world assembled at Berlin—introduced her to them as his youthful bride, whom all were to admire, but none to approach with undue familiarity.

On July 9th—a few days before the signature of the treaty of Berlin—parliament was presented with a correspondence containing the terms of a convention between Great Britain and Turkey, concluded on June 4, 1878, and setting forth, in the following despatch by Lord Salisbury, some of the reasons for such a convention:—

No. 1.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. Layard.

"Foreign Office, May 30th, 1878.

"Sir,—The progress of the confidential negotiations which have for some time past been in progress between her majesty's government and the government of Russia, make it probable that those articles of the treaty of San Stefano which concern European Turkey will be sufficiently modified to bring them into harmony with the interests of the other European powers, and of England in particular.

"There is, however, no such prospect with respect to that portion of the treaty which concerns Turkey in Asia. Is is sufficiently manifest that, in respect to Batoum and the fortresses north of the Araxes, the government of Russia is not prepared to recede from the stipulations to which the Porte has been led by the events of the war to consent. Her majesty's government have consequently been forced to consider the effect which these agreements, if they are neither annulled nor counteracted, will have

upon the future of the Asiatic provinces of the Ottoman empire and upon the interests of England, which are closely affected by the condition of those provinces.

"It is impossible that her majesty's government can look upon these changes with indifference. Asiatic Turkey contains populations of many different races and creeds, possessing no capacity for self-government, and no aspirations for independence, but owing their tranquillity and whatever prospect of political well-being they possess entirely to the rule of the Sultan. But the government of the Ottoman dynasty is that of an ancient but still alien conqueror, resting more upon actual power than upon the sympathies of common nationality. The defeat which the Turkish arms have sustained, and the known embarrassments of the government will produce a general belief in its decadence, and an expectation of speedy political change, which in the East are more dangerous than actual discontent to the stability of a government. If the populations of Syria, Asia Minor, and Mesopotamia see that the Porte has no guarantee for its continued existence but its own strength, they will, after the evidence which recent events have furnished of the frailty of that reliance, begin to calculate upon the speedy fall of the Ottoman domination, and to turn their eyes towards its successor.

"Even if it be certain that Batoum, and Ardahan, and Kars will not become the base from which emissaries of intrigue will issue forth, to be in due time followed by invading armies, the mere retention of them by Russia will exercise a powerful influence in disintegrating the Asiatic dominion of the Porte. As a monument of feeble defence on the one side, and successful aggression on the other, they will be regarded by the Asiatic population as foreboding the course of political history in the immediate future, and will stimulate, by the combined action of hope and fear, devotion to the power which is in the ascendant, and desertion of the power which is thought to be falling into decay.

"It is impossible for her majesty's government to accept, without making an effort to avert it, the effect which such a state of feeling would produce upon regions whose political condition deeply concerns the Oriental interests of Great Britain. They do not propose to attempt the accomplishment of this object by taking military measures for the purpose of replacing the conquered districts in the possessisn of the Porte. Such an undertaking would be arduous and costly, and would involve great calamities, and it would not be effective for the object which her majesty's government have in view, unless subsequently strengthened by precautions which can be taken almost as effectually without incurring the miseries of a preliminary war. The only provision which can furnish a substantial security for the stability of Ottoman rule in Asiatic Turkey, and which would be as essential after the re-conquest of the Russian annexations as it is now, is an engagement on the part of a power strong enough to fulfil it, that any further encroachments by Russia upon Turkish territory in Asia will be prevented by force of arms. Such an undertaking, if given fully and unreservedly, will prevent the occurrence of the contingency which would bring it into operation, and will, at the same time, give to the populations of the Asiatic provinces the requisite confidence that Turkish rule in Asia is not destined to a speedy fall.

"There are, however, two conditions which it would be necessary for the Porte to subscribe before England could give such assurance.

"Her majesty's government intimated to the Porte, on the occasion of the conference at Constantinople, that they were not prepared to sanction misgovernment and oppression; and it will be requisite, before they can enter into any agreement for the defence of the Asiatic territories of the Porte in certain eventualities, that they should be formally assured of the intention of the Porte to introduce the necessary reforms into the government of the Christian and other subjects of the Porte in these regions. It is not desirable to require more than an engagement in general terms, for the specific measures to be taken could only be defined after a more careful inquiry and deliberation than could be secured at the present juncture,

"It is not impossible that a careful selection and a faithful support of the individual officers to whom power is to be intrusted in those countries would be a more important element in the improvement of the condition of the people than even legislative changes; but the assurance required to give England a right to insist on satisfactory arrangements for these pur-

poses, will be an indispensable part of any agreement to which her majesty's government could consent. It will further be necessary, in order to enable her majesty's government efficiently to execute the engagements now proposed, that they should occupy a position near the coast of Asia Minor and Syria. The proximity of British officers, and, if necessary, British troops, will be the best security that all the objects of this agreement shall be attained. The island of Cyprus appears to them to be in all respects the most available for this object. Her majesty's government do not wish to ask the Sultan to alienate territory from his sovereignty, or to diminish the receipts which now pass into his treasury. They will, therefore, propose that, while the administration and occupation of the island shall be assigned to her majesty, the territory shall still continue to be part of the Ottoman empire, and that the excess of the revenue over the expenditure, whatever it at present may be, shall be paid over annually by the British government to the treasury of the Sultan.

"Inasmuch as the whole of this proposal is due to the annexations which Russia has made in Asiatic Turkey, and the consequences which it is apprehended will flow therefrom, it must be fully understood that if the cause of the danger should cease, the precautionary agreement will cease at the same time. If the government of Russia should at any time surrender to the Porte the territory it has acquired in Asia by the recent war, the stipulations in the proposed agreements will cease to operate, and the island will be immediately evacuated.

"I request, therefore, your Excellency to propose to the Porte to agree to a convention to the following effect, and I have to convey to you full authority to conclude the same on behalf of the government:—

"'If Batoum, Ardahan, Kars, or any of them, shall be retained by Russia, and if any attempt shall be made at any future time by Russia to take possession of any further portion of the Asiatic territories of the Sultan, as fixed by the definitive treaty of peace, England engages to join the Sultan in defending them by force of arms. In return the Sultan promises to England to introduce necessary reforms (to be agreed upon later between the two powers) into the government of the Christian and other subjects of the Porte in these territories; and, in order to enable England to make necessary provision for executing her engagement, the Sultan further consents to assign the island of Cyprus to be occupied and administered by England.'—I am, &c.,

"SALISBURY."

No. 2.

Sir A. H. Layard to the Marquis of Salisbury.

"Therapia, June 5, 1878.

"My Lord,—I have the honour to enclose the convention of defensive alliance between England and Turkey to secure the Sultan's territories in Asia for the future against Russia, signed yesterday at the imperial palace of Yeldiz by his Excellency Safvet Pasha, the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, and myself, as her majesty's ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary.

"I have, &c.,

(Signed) "A. H. LAYARD."

(Enclosure in No. 2.)

Convention of Defensive Alliance between Great Britain and Turkey, signed June 4, 1878.

"Her majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, and his imperial majesty the Sultan, being mutually animated with the sincere desire of extending and strengthening the relations of friendship happily existing between the two empires, have resolved upon the conclusion of a convention of defensive alliance with the object of securing for the future the territories in Asia of his imperial majesty the Sultan.

"Their majesties have accordingly chosen and named as their plenipotentiaries, that is to say:—

"Her majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, the Right Honourable Austen Henry Layard, her majesty's ambassador extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary at the Sublime Porte;

"And his imperial majesty the Sultan, his Excellency Safvet Pasha, Minister for Foreign Affairs of his imperial majesty;

"Who, after having exchanged their full powers, found in due and good form, have agreed upon the following Articles:—

"ART. 1.—If Batoum, Ardahan, Kars, or any of them shall be retained by Russia, and if any attempt shall be made at any future time by Russia to take possession of any further territories of his imperial majesty the Sultan in Asia, as fixed by the definitive treaty of peace, England engages to join his imperial majesty the Sultan in defending them by force of arms.

"In return, his imperial majesty the Sultan promises to England to introduce necessary reforms, to be agreed upon later between the two powers, into the government, and for the protection of the Christian and other subjects of the Porte in these territories: and in order to enable England to make necessary provision for executing her engagement, his imperial majesty the Sultan further consents to assign the island of Cyprus to be occupied and administered by England.

"ART. 2.—The present convention shall be ratified, and the ratifications thereof shall be exchanged, within the space of one month, or sooner if possible.

"In witness whereof the respective plenipotentiaries have signed the same, and have affixed thereto the seal of their arms.

"Done at Constantinople, the fourth day of June, in the year one thousand eight hundred and seventy-eight.

(L. S.) "A. H. LAYARD.
(L. S.) "SAFVET."

No. 3.

Sir A. H. Layard to the Marquis of Salisbury.

(Received July 8.)

"Therapia, July 1, 1878.

"My Lord,—I have the honour to enclose the original annex to the convention entered into between England and Turkey, for the occupation of the island of Cyprus by the former, signed this day by the grand vizier and myself.

"Your lordship will perceive that I have made the alterations in Articles 3 and 4, as instructed by your lordship, to prevent the Porte from claiming as average revenue under the third clause the yield of land which it has let or sold under the fourth. The grand vizier insisted upon inserting in Article 3 the amount of surplus of revenue over expenditure, but it is provided that the sum mentioned is to be verified hereafter.

"The Article providing that Turkey shall not be called upon, in case of the evacuation of the island, to pay for improvements, &c., was withdrawn from the annex on the assurance given by me to the grand vizier that your lordship would cause a revised Article to be framed in the sense desired by his highness, but at the same time meeting the objections put forward by your lordship.

"I have, &c.,

(Signed) "A. H. LAYARD."

(Enclosure in No. 3.)

Annex to the Convention of Defensive Alliance between Great Britain and Turkey, signed June 4, 1878.

"The Right Honourable Sir A. H. Layard, G.C.B., and his highness Safvet Pasha, now the grand vizier of his majesty the Sultan, have agreed to the following annex to the convention signed by them, as plenipotentiaries of their respective governments, on the 4th of June, 1878:—

"ANNEX.—It is understood between the two high contracting parties, that England agrees to the following conditions relating to her occupation and administration of the island of Cyprus:—

"1. That a Mussulman religious tribunal (Mehkéméi Shéri) shall continue to exist in the island, which will take exclusive cognizance of religious matters, and of no others, concerning the Mussulman population of the island.

"2. That a Mussulman resident in the island shall be named by the Board of Pious Foundations in Turkey (Evkaf), to superintend, in conjunction with a delegate to be appointed by the British authorities, the administration of the property, funds, and lands belonging to mosques, cemeteries, Mussulman schools, and other religious establishments existing in Cyprus.

"3. That England will pay to the Porte whatever is the present excess of revenue over expenditure in the island; this excess to be calculated upon and determined by the average of the last five years, stated to be 22,936 purses, to be duly verified hereafter, and to the exclusion of the produce of State and Crown lands let or sold during that period.

"4. That the Sublime Porte may freely sell and lease lands and other property in Cyprus belonging to the Ottoman Crown and State (Arazii Miriyé vé Emlaki Houmayoun), the produce of which does not form part of the revenue of the island referred to in Article 3.

"5. That the English government, through their competent authorities, may purchase compulsorily, at a fair price, land required for public improvements, or for

other public purposes, and land which is not cultivated.

"6. That if Russia restores to Turkey Kars, and the other conquests made in Armenia during the last war, the island of Cyprus will be evacuated by England, and the convention of the 4th of June, 1878, will be at an end.

"Done at Constantinople, the 1st day of July, 1878.

(Signed) "A. H. LAYARD.
"SAFVET."

This convention was a plain declaration to the world, that for the future England meant to put an end to all mischievous ambiguities regarding Turkey. Government would no longer be entangled in the snare of a common engagement for an uncertain object, such as the seventh clause of the treaty of Paris of 1856, regarding the guarantees for the integrity of the Turkish empire. As the proceedings of the congress proved, England did not abandon her right to make her voice heard, if it should seem necessary, in respect to changes in European Turkey. But the military guarantee for which she became responsible would be henceforth one and simple—*i.e.*, to resist by force of arms any future attempt by Russia to take possession of any further territories of the Sultan in Asia as fixed by the definitive treaty of peace; and an undertaking thus fully and unreservedly given could not, as Lord Salisbury urged, but tend to "prevent the occurrence of the contingency which would bring it into operation."

There was certainly much to fire the imagination in the bond which practically added Cyprus to the possessions of the English Crown. Cyprus is a type of the islands and the provinces which make up the loose fabric of the Ottoman empire. The old records of our civilisation begin in those lands, and the technicalities of the Eastern Question are blended with the most familiar names of Biblical story or classic legend. Cyprus has gone through the usual vicissitudes of places over which conquest after conquest has rolled. The Greek, the Roman, the Saracen, the Crusader, the Genoese, the Venetian, and the Turk have all in turn been its masters and woven its name into the literature of Europe. They have all used it for purposes of conquest, and for little else. The idea that the masters of a dependency should look to the welfare of its people is a modern addition to political morality, and the light of it has never shone on Cyprus. The Crusaders employed it as a resting-place, the Italian republics as a source of wealth, and the Turks as a place for the production of revenue. As the Ottoman empire has made little change in its fiscal practices, Cyprus lived under a system admirably fitted for stifling human energy, and the island is in much the same state as it was generations ago. But henceforth everything will be changed. The strength, the quietude, and the security of British rule will bring capital to the place and offer a rich field for commercial enterprise. Harbours will be deepened or constructed. There will be a naval station, and thus the constant bustle of English activity. If a railway should ever be made from any port of the Levant to the Persian Gulf, Cyprus may become a place of some commercial importance. In fact, the best news which it has ever heard in the course of its long history is, that it has passed under the rule of England. The Mussulman as well as the Christian part of the population did not fail to rejoice over the arrival of an English governor, as nations do when delivered from foreign occupation. Cyprus will now be able to profit by some of the prosperity that has come to Western lands which were peopled by wandering tribes when it had already a considerable place in history.

To England the possession will be of much maritime importance. It might have seemed that Mitylene would have been a better naval station, because it is within easy sail of the Dardanelles; but, in truth, it would always be easy for the greatest of maritime powers to close that narrow passage without permanently lying in wait at the entrance. If Constantinople is in some ways an incomparable port, it has the disadvantage of being more easily sealed up than many naval stations even of the fifth and sixth magnitude. Cyprus, on the other hand, is much better adapted for protecting the most important link in the chain of British communications with the sea, since it is the nearest island to the Suez Canal. Short of a position in Egypt close to the Canal itself, Cyprus is the best place that England could have occupied. But for many reasons the taking of Egyptian territory was impracticable, and the possession of the island is attended with certain special advantages. It will enable British ships to be always in the neighbourhood of the Canal, and it will put an end to the fear that the passage

could be stopped. At the same time it practically makes England the master of Syria. It has sometimes been predicted that Russia would gradually steal through Armenia until she should reach the Gulf of Alexandretta, and thus make herself a Mediterranean power. In still bolder flights of fancy it has been supposed that she would push through the Syrian Desert until she should reach Egypt, and cut off the route to India. These are not very wise speculations. But, even if they were once high probabilities, they need now cause no alarm. Cyprus closes the Gulf of Scanderoon, the point to which Russia would naturally come if she should meet with no resistance, and the port of the same name could at any time be occupied by British ships. It is one of the finest natural harbours in the world. Indeed, some enthusiastic witnesses maintain that it is the finest. Others qualify the description by saying that, at certain seasons of the year, the violence of the winds makes the anchorage uncertain. There can be no doubt, at least, that the place is made terribly unhealthy by the marshes with which it is surrounded. Still, if the port were to become necessary for any of the purposes specified in the engagement with Turkey, those marshes might be drained. Batoum, which was once very unhealthy, is said to have lost its bad repute since the draining of the marshes behind the town. And such is the configuration of the coast, that the power which commands any one part of the way can bar the whole of the coast-road to Egypt. The space between the mountains and the sea is so narrow that, sallying from Cyprus or Alexandretta, a naval power could cut it at any point. As for the idea that an invading army could gradually creep towards Egypt through the Syrian Desert, it is enough to say that England must first of all have to lose the command of the sea, and therefore the power of sending troops to positions which could be easily held by a small force.

Cyprus is thus, on the whole, the best station that could have been chosen. The Porte will now be expected to develop the vast natural resources of its Asiatic empire, or, at least, to let that task be done by others. The country must now be opened up by roads, and, perhaps, by railways. Something more will doubtless be heard of the scheme to construct a railway through the Euphrates or the Tigris Valley—a proposition which the select committee of the House of Commons investigated in 1872, and to which it gave a qualified assent. A good many facts and opinions may then be culled from the evidence of the witnesses against as well as for the project. To construct a line through more than 900 miles of thinly populated and sometimes desert country would certainly be a bold enterprise. But, if the government should think that such a railway is necessary to insure the safety of British communications with India, the starting-point would in any case be commanded by Cyprus. That island will, in fact, be an admirable naval station, whether for the purpose of protecting the Suez Canal, securing a second road to India, or giving Great Britain the requisite authority in its relations with the Porte.

With this convention, the Anglo-Russian agreement, and the Austro-Hungarian commission to occupy Bosnia and Herzegovina, interest in the doings of the congress culminated for the moment, and the subsequent negotiations were hurried over with but a scant show of decency; and on July 13th—just one month after the assembling of congress—the Berlin treaty of peace was signed in the Chancellor's mansion at Berlin. To perform the solemn act the plenipotentiaries appeared in uniform, attended by their secretaries and staffs. The ceremony was opened by Prince Bismarck thanking the plenipotentiaries for the zeal evinced in promoting the pacific result of the debates, and for the assistance they had kindly given him in accelerating the prompt and satisfactory despatch of business. Dwelling upon the mutual concessions made, the prince regarded them as a good omen for the future, and was fain to hope that the conciliatory attitude assumed by all parties concerned would have permanent results for the consolidation of peace.

The seven copies of the treaty, printed on parchment and bound in red morocco leather, were then placed on the table and signed by the plenipotentiaries, the seals having been previously affixed by the secretaries. The parting scene had now arrived. The French name of his country beginning with an A, Count Andrassy, according to the alphabetical order of precedence observed by the congress, rose to deliver the following address to the president of the assembly:—

"Gentlemen,—At this, the moment when our efforts have resulted in a general under-

standing, it would be impossible for us not to render homage to the eminent statesman who has directed our labours. He has invariably aimed at assuring and consolidating peace. With this in view, he has devoted all his endeavours to reconcile differences, and put an end as speedily as possible to the uncertainty which weighed so heavily on Europe. Thanks to the wisdom and the untiring energy with which our president has guided our labours, he has contributed in a high degree to the prompt success of the work of pacification which we undertook in common. I feel sure, therefore, of meeting with the unanimous assent of this august assembly in proposing to offer our warmest thanks to his most serene highness Prince Bismarck. And while we are now about to separate, I think I shall furthermore best respond to your feelings by uttering our respectful gratitude for the gracious hospitality we have received from his majesty the German emperor and his august imperial family."

All the members rose to signify their recognition of the services rendered by the German Chancellor in directing the debates. Prince Bismarck said a few words of thanks, and all was over. The sitting occupied nearly an hour. When the plenipotentiaries left the palace there was a large concourse of people in the Wilhelmplatz, waiting to profit by the last opportunity of seeing the diplomatic celebrities. Prince Gortschakoff was carried down-stairs. Lord Beaconsfield seemed in good health, and looked grave and gratified as he entered his carriage to drive to the Crown Prince's palace. M. Waddington had a private interview with Prince Bismarck after the sitting. Count Schouvaloff had his little son with him, the boy having apparently been taken to the entrance-hall to give him an opportunity of remembering the event. Princess Bismarck, Countess Bismarck, and a few other ladies looked down upon the ceremony from a box in the hall, while Herr von Werner, the painter, whose brush was to perpetuate the congress, sat at the table with the plenipotentiaries.

At six o'clock in the afternoon the Crown Prince and Crown Princess entertained 170 persons, including the plenipotentiaries, ambassadors, envoys, and entire diplomatic staff, at a grand dinner in the White Hall of the old Schloss. All the princes and princesses of the royal family were present. After the second dish his imperial highness rose and proposed the following official toast:—

"The hopes with which a month ago, in the name of the emperor, I greeted the illustrious statesmen assembled in congress have been happily realised. The work of achieving peace, so much desired by Europe, has just been crowned by their efforts. As interpreting the feelings of my august father, I rejoice to render homage to the wisdom and the spirit of conciliation which have brought about this great result. The understanding which has just been established will be a new pledge of peace and public weal. The assistance of Germany is secured beforehand in all tending to assure and preserve these great blessings. In the name of his majesty, I drink to the health of the sovereigns and governments whose representatives have signed, on this memorable date, the treaty of Berlin."

Thus ended the first act of the great drama which began in 1876, when the curtain rose upon the wild mountains and forests of Bosnia and Herzegovina, lurid with the gleam of fires, and re-echoing with the clang and clash of war.

For two long years the sanguinary scenes shifted, now to Servia, now to Montenegro, to Bulgaria, to Asia, till the curtain fell at Berlin.

Yet, scarcely was the ink dry with which the treaty of peace was written, when the curtain rose again for the second act, after a stormy overture, upon the selfsame scene which opened the first act—upon the wild mountain lands of Bosnia and Herzegovina, upon the same lurid conflagrations, and the same clang and clash of war.

Such was the first practical commentary upon the treaty of peace, which required the united labours of ninety diplomatists for thirty days to conclude.

Consequently it fully deserves a chapter to itself.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE TREATY OF BERLIN.

THE following despatch from the Marquis of Salisbury, enclosing a copy of the treaty signed at Berlin, July 13, 1878, was presented to parliament on July 19, 1878.

The Marquis of Salisbury to her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State.

(Received July 15.)

"Berlin, July 13, 1878.

"Sir,—I have the honour to enclose a copy of the treaty which was signed to-day at Berlin by the seven signatory powers of the treaty of Paris.

"The treaty is one of unusual length, and enters fully into the various questions raised by the treaty of San Stefano, so far as they affect the dispositions of the treaty of Paris. The alterations which are made in the preliminary treaty are very large, and extend to nearly all the articles of that instrument. Their general effect has been to restore, with due security for good government, a very large territory to the government of the Sultan, and they tend powerfully to secure from external assault the stability and independence of his empire. Provisions having for their object to insure entire equality of all religions before the laws have been applied to all the territories affected by the treaty.

"The policy which has received the sanction of the congress of Berlin is generally coincident with that which has been sustained by her majesty's government since the treaty of San Stefano was published, and which was indicated in the circular of the 1st of April. A statement has been made, and constantly repeated, especially upon the continent, that the views set forth in that despatch have been abandoned in the subsequent action of her majesty's government. To obviate the continuance of such a misconception, it may be well to point out in detail how far the decisions to which her majesty's government have assented in the congress of Berlin correspond with the language of the circular.

"The essential contention of the circular, that the articles of the preliminary treaty, as being a departure from the treaty of Paris, must be discussed by congress as a whole, has, it is hardly necessary to say, both in theory and practice, been admitted to the largest possible extent. Of the detailed objections made in the circular to the treaty of San Stefano, the first and the most important is couched in the following terms:—

"The most important consequences to which the treaty practically leads are those which result from its action as a whole upon the nations of South-Eastern Europe. By the articles creating the new Bulgaria, a strong Slav State will be created under the auspices and control of Russia, possessing important harbours upon the shores of the Black Sea and the Archipelago, and conferring upon that power a preponderating influence over both the political and commercial relations in those seas.

"It will be so constituted as to merge in the dominant Slav majority a considerable mass of population which is Greek in race and sympathy, and which views with alarm the prospect of absorption into a community alien to it, not only in nationality, but in political tendency and religious allegiance.

"The provision by which this new State is to be subjected to a ruler whom Russia will practically choose, its administration framed by a Russian commissary, and the first working of its institutions commenced under the control of a Russian army, sufficiently indicates the political system of which in future it is to form a part.

"It will be seen that all these objections have been removed by the treaty of Berlin. It has radically changed the disposition of the vast region to which, in the treaty of San Stefano, the name of Bulgaria is given. Nearly two-thirds of it have been replaced under the direct political and military rule of the Sultan: and in this re-transfer are included Thrace and Macedonia, in which the Greek populations affected by that instrument are almost exclusively to be found. Bulgaria, speaking generally, is now confined to the river barrier of the Danube, and, consequently, has not only ceased to

possess any harbour on the Archipelago, but is removed by more than 100 miles from the neighbourhood of that sea. On the Euxine the important port of Burgas has been restored to the government of Turkey; and Bulgaria retains less than half the seaboard originally assigned to it, and possesses no other port except the roadstead of Varna, which can hardly be used for any but commercial purposes. The new Slav State, therefore, is no longer strong—no longer merges in a Slav majority any considerable mass of Greek population, and will certainly not confer upon Russia any preponderating influence over either the political or commercial relations of those seas.

"The events of the late war must for many years secure to Russia a great authority in this State, which will be assisted by affinity of language and similarity of religion. But the influences under which its institutions were to have been formed and to have commenced their working, will no longer be specially Russian. The Russian and Ottoman commissaries, who will supervise the election of the prince and the selection of a constitution by the 'notables,' will be placed under the authority of the conference of ambassadors at Constantinople, acting through a consular commission upon the spot; and the retirement of the Russian army from the province must take place before the period at which the working of the new institutions is to begin. Its administration, therefore, will be framed by others besides a Russian commissary, and the first working of its institutions will not be commenced under the control of a Russian army.

"The territorial severance from Constantinople of the provinces left under the government of the Porte by the extension of Bulgaria to the Ægean, was another of the results indicated by the circular of the 1st of April, as tending to weaken the political strength of the government of Turkey. The restriction of Bulgaria to the valley of the Danube has necessarily restored the continuity of the dominions remaining to the Porte. The special protection which is stipulated for ecclesiastics of the Russian religion, and for Russian monasteries on Mount Athos, and the power reserved to the Russian government of shaping the institutions to be given to the rest of European Turkey, were objected to by her majesty's government as tending to increase the power of the Russian empire in the countries and on the shores where a Greek population predominates.

"These exclusive stipulations have been entirely abandoned. The treaty contains large provisions for securing religious liberty to all persons, natives or foreigners, living within the Ottoman dominions; but no special privileges are created for the members of any single nation. Improved institutions will be given to Thessaly and Epirus, but their form will be determined in the last resort, not by the government of Russia, but by a European commission.

"The pecuniary indemnity, to which many objections were taken by her majesty's government, has been excluded altogether from the treaty of Berlin. The congress declined to revise a contract which was no infraction of the treaty of Paris, and which it was, therefore, within the competence of two independent powers to conclude. But declarations were made in congress, and are recorded upon the protocol, which profoundly modify its practical effect. The Russian plenipotentiaries declared that Russia would not seek to annex territory in satisfaction of the indemnity, and that they would not contend that it should be preferred either to debts guaranteed by other governments, or to debts in respect to which Turkish revenues had been hypothecated. The English plenipotentiaries declared that they could not recognise in the indemnity any claim of priority over the debts of any kind which were anterior to it in date. It results from these declarations that Turkey is not internationally bound, and cannot be compelled to pay any portion of the indemnity until the claims of the creditors of loans anterior to the war have been paid in full. If the prosperity of Turkey should ever increase to such a height as to satisfy this condition, then the indemnity may be undoubtedly demanded. But in such a contingency it will no longer be a disproportional, or even a heavy burden upon the finances of Turkey. The stipulation must be regarded as one which in its actual form is not contrary to international law, but of which the performance must, in the nature of things, be postponed to a period infinitely remote.

"The replacement under Turkish rule of Burgas, and the southern half of the seaboard of Bulgaria on the Euxine, and the strictly commercial character assigned by

the treaty to Batoum, have largely obviated the menace to the liberty of the Black Sea which was contained in the original proposals. The retrocession of the district of Bayazid necessarily removes all apprehensions of any obstacle being interposed to arrest the European trade from Trebizond to Persia.

"So far, the congress has applied an adequate remedy to all the dangers which, in the judgment of her majesty's government, were threatened by the treaty of San Stefano.

"On the other hand, the provisions of the treaty of Berlin have not withdrawn from Russia any of the Armenian strongholds which had been acquired in the late war, though a portion of the annexed district has been surrendered.

"Her majesty's government have already provided by arrangements, external to the action of the congress, suitable precautions against the dangers threatened by those annexations.

"This completes the list of the detailed objections advanced against the treaty of San Stefano in the circular of April. With the exception of those last named, which are dealt with by the recent convention with Turkey, these objections have all been met by the treaty of Berlin.

"But in that circular it was emphatically declared that it is not to any of those details, taken separately, that the opposition of England was chiefly directed. 'Their separate and individual operation, whether defensible or not, is not that which should engage the most earnest attention of the signatory Powers. Their combined effect, in addition to the results upon the Greek populations, and upon the balance of maritime power, which have been already pointed out, is to depress, almost to the point of entire subjection, the political independence of the government of Constantinople. It cannot be otherwise than a matter of extreme solicitude that that government should be so closely pressed by the political outposts of a greatly superior Power, that its independent action or even existence is almost impossible.'

"To these three cardinal objections the congress of Berlin has supplied an entire remedy. The Greek populations no longer fall within the boundaries of the autonomous Slav principality; and all Russian influence has been removed to a distance from the shores of the Ægean Sea. The same territorial arrangements have the effect of attaining the essential aim which in their recent negotiations her majesty's government have had in view—the independent existence and action of the government of Constantinople. The political outposts of Russian power have been pushed back to the region beyond the Balkans, and its opportunities for establishing influence in the reduced Bulgaria have been materially diminished.

"The Sultan's dominions have been provided with a defensible frontier, far removed from his capital. The interposition of the Austrian power between the two independent Slav States, while it withdraws from him no territory of strategical or financial value, offers him a security against renewed aggression on their part which no other possible arrangement could have furnished. Rich and extensive provinces have been restored to his rule; at the same time that careful provision against future misgovernment has been made, which will, it may be hoped, assure their loyalty, and prevent a recurrence of the calamities which have brought the Ottoman power to the verge of ruin.

"Arrangements of a different kind, but having the same end in view, have provided for the Asiatic dominions of the Sultan security for the present, and the hope of prosperity and stability in the future.

"Whether use will be made of this—probably the last—opportunity which has been thus obtained for Turkey by the interposition of the Powers of Europe, and of England in particular, or whether it is to be thrown away, will depend upon the sincerity with which Turkish statesmen now address themselves to the duties of good government and the task of reform.

"I have, &c.,

"SALISBURY."

To facilitate future reference we give the official English text of the treaty.

(Translation.)

"In the name of the Omnipotent God.

"Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, His Majesty the Emperor of Germany, King of Prussia, His Majesty the Emperor of Austria, King of Bohemia, &c., Apostolic King of Hungary, the President of the French Republic, His Majesty the King of Italy, His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, and His Majesty the Emperor of the Ottomans, desiring to regulate with a view to European order, conformably to the stipulations of the Treaty of Paris of 30th of March, 1856, the questions raised in the East by the events of the last years

and by the war terminated by the preliminary Treaty of San Stefano, have been unanimously of opinion that the meeting of a Congress would offer the best means of facilitating an understanding.

"Their said Majesties and the President of the French Republic have, in consequence, appointed as their Plenipotentiaries, to wit:

"Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, the Right Honourable Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield, Viscount Hughenden, Peer of Parliament, Member of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, First Lord of Her Majesty's Treasury, and Prime Minister of England; the Most Honourable Robert Arthur Talbot Gascoyne Cecil, Marquis of Salisbury, Earl of Salisbury, Viscount Cranborne, Baron Cecil, a Peer of Parliament, Member of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; and the Right Honourable Lord Odo William Leopold Russell, Member of Her Majesty's Privy Council, Her Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at the Court of His Majesty the Emperor of Germany, King of Prussia;

"His Majesty the Emperor of Germany, King of Prussia, Otho, Prince Bismarck, His President of the Council of Ministers of Prussia, Chancellor of the Empire; Bernard Ernest de Bulow, His Minister of State and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; and Chlodwig Charles Victor, Prince of Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, Prince of Ratibor and Corvey, His Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the French Republic, Great Chamberlain of the Crown of Bavaria;

"His Majesty the Emperor of Austria, King of Bohemia, &c., and King Apostolic of Hungary, Jules, Count Andrassy of Csik of Szent-Király and Karasna-Horka, Grandee of Spain of the First Class, Privy Councillor, His Minister of the Imperial Household and for Foreign Affairs, Lieutenant Field-Marshal in His Armies; Louis Count Károlyi of Nagy-Károlyi, Chamberlain and Privy Councillor, His Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at the Court of His Majesty the Emperor of Germany, King of Prussia; and Henri, Baron de Haymerle, Privy Councillor, His Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at the Court of His Majesty the King of Italy;

"The President of the French Republic, William Henry Waddington, Senator, Member of the Institute, Minister Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; Charles Raymond de la Croix de Chevrière, Count de Saint-Vallier, Senator, French Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at the Court of His Majesty the Emperor of Germany, King of Prussia; and Félix Hippolyte Desprez, Councillor of State, Minister Plenipotentiary of the First Class, charged with the direction of Political Affairs at the Department for Foreign Affairs;

"His Majesty the King of Italy, Louis, Count Corti, Senator, His Minister for Foreign Affairs; and Edward, Count de Launay, His Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at the Court of His Majesty the Emperor of Germany, King of Prussia;

"His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, Alexander, Prince Gortschakoff, His Chancellor of the Empire; Peter, Count de Schouvaloff, General of Cavalry, His Aide-de-Camp General, Member of the Council of the Empire, and His Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at the Court of Her Britannic Majesty; and Paul d'Oubril, Privy Councillor, His Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at the Court of His Majesty the Emperor of Germany, King of Prussia;

"And His Majesty the Emperor of the Ottomans, Alexander Carathéodory Pasha, His Minister of Public Works; Mehemet Ali Pasha, Mushir of His Armies; and Sadoullah Bey, His Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at the Court of His Majesty the Emperor of Germany, King of Prussia;

"Who, according to the propositions of the Court of Austria-Hungary, and on the invitation of the Court of Germany, met at Berlin furnished with full powers, which were found in good and due form.

"An understanding having been happily established between them, they have agreed to the following stipulations:—

"ARTICLE I.—Bulgaria is constituted an autonomous and tributary principality under the suzerainty of his imperial majesty the Sultan; it will have a Christian government and a national militia.—2. The principality of Bulgaria will include the following territories:—The frontier follows on the north the right bank of the Danube from the former frontier of Servia up to a point to be determined by a European commission to the east of Silistria, and thence runs to the Black Sea to the south of Mangália, which is included in Roumanian territory. The Black Sea forms the eastern boundary of Bulgaria. On the south the frontier follows upwards from its mouth the mid-channel of the brook near which are situated the villages of Hodzakiöj, Selam-Kiöj, Aivadsik, Kulibe, Sudzuluk; crosses obliquely the valley of the Deli-Ka mcik, passes south of Belibe and Kemhalik and north of Hadzimahale after having crossed the Deli-Kamcik at 2½ kilom. above Cengei; reaches the crest at a point situated between Tekenlik and Aidos-Bredza, and follows it by Karnabad Balkan, Prisevica Balkan, Kazan Balkan to the north of Kotel as far as Demir Kapu. It proceeds by the principal chain of the Great Balkan, the whole length of which it follows up to the summit of Kosica. There it leaves the crest of the Balkan, descends southwards between the villages of Pirtop and Duzanci, the one being left to Bulgaria and the other to Eastern Roumelia, as far as the brook of Tuzlu Dere, follows that stream to its junction with the Topolnica, then the latter river until it meets the Smovskio Dere near the village of Petricevo, leaving to Eastern Roumelia a zone with a radius of 2 kilom. above that junction, ascends between the brooks of Smovskio Dere and the Kamenica, following the line of the watershed so as to turn to the south-west at the level of Voinjak and reach directly the point 875 of the Austrian Staff map. The frontier line cuts at right angles the upper basin of the brook of Ichtiman Dere, passes between Bogdina and Karaúla, so as to rejoin the line of the watershed separating the basins of the Isker and the Marica, between Camurli and Hadzilar, follows that line by the summits of Velina Mogila, the 'col' 531, Zmailica Vrh, Sumnatica, and adjoins the administrative boundary of the Sandjak of Sofia between Sivri Tas and Cadir Tepe. From Cadir Tepe, the frontier, taking a south-westerly direction, follows the watershed between the basins of the Mesta Karasu on the one side and the Struma Karasu on the other, runs along the crests of the mountains of Rhodope called Demir Kapu, Iskoftepe, Kadimesar Balkan, and Aiji Gedük up to Kapetnik Balkan, and thus joins the former administrative frontier of the Sandjak of Sofia. From Kapetnik Balkan the frontier is indicated by the watershed between the valleys of the Rilska reka and of the Bistrica reka, and follows the ridge called Vodenica Planina, descending into the valley of the Struma at the junction of this river with the Rilska reka, leaving the village of Barakli to Turkey. It ascends then south of the village of Jelesnica, and reaches by the shortest line the chain of Golema Planina at the summit of Gitka, and rejoins there the former administrative frontier of the Sandjak of Sofia, leaving, however, to Turkey the whole of the basin of the Suha reka. From Mount Gitka the western frontier goes towards Mount Crni Vrh by the mountains of Karvena Jabuka, following the former administrative limit of the Sandjak of Sofia in the upper part of the basins of Egrisu and of the Lepnica, ascends with it the crests of Babina Polana, and reachesMount Crni Vrh. From Mount Crni Vrh the frontier follows the watershed between the Struma and the Morava by the summits of the Streser, Vilogolo, and Mesid Planina, rejoins by the Gacina, Crna Trava, Darkovska, and Drainica Plan, then the Descani Kladanec, the watershed of the High Sukowa and of the Morava, goes straight to the Stol, and descends from it so as to cut the road from Sofia to Pirot, 1,000 metres north-west of the village of Segusa. It ascends in a straight line the Vidlic Planina and thence Mount Radocina in the chain of the Kodza Balkan, leaving to Servia the village of Doikinci, and to Bulgaria that of Senakos. From the summit of Mount Radocina the frontier follows towards the west the crest of the Balkans by Ciprovec Balkan and Stara Planina up to the former eastern frontier of the principality of Servia, near to the Kula Smiljova Cuka, and thence that former frontier as far as the Danube, which it rejoins at Rakovitza. This delimitation shall be fixed on the spot by the European commission, on which the signatory Powers shall be represented. It is understood —*a*. That this commission will take into consideration the necessity for his imperial majesty the Sultan to be able to defend the Balkan frontiers of Eastern Roumelia. —*b*. That no fortifications may be erected within a radius of 10 kilom. from Samakow.—3. The Prince of Bulgaria shall be freely elected by the population, and confirmed by the Sublime Porte, with the assent of the Powers. No member of the reigning dynasties of the great European Powers may be elected Prince of Bulgaria. In case of a vacancy in the princely dignity, the election of the new prince shall take place under the same conditions and with the same forms.—4. An assembly of notables of Bulgaria, convoked at Tirnova, shall, before the election of the prince, draw up the organic law of the principality. In the districts where Bulgarians are intermixed with Turkish, Roumanian, Greek, or other populations, the rights and interests of these populations shall be taken into consideration as regards the elections and the drawing up of the organic law.—5. The following points shall form the basis of the public law of Bulgaria:—The difference of religious creeds and confessions shall not be alleged against any person as a ground for exclusion or incapacity in matters relating to the enjoyment of civil and political rights, admission to public employments, functions, and honours, or the exercise of the various professions and industries in any locality whatsoever. The freedom and outward exercise of all forms of worship are assured to all persons belonging to Bulgaria, as well as to foreigners, and no hindrance shall be offered either to the hierarchical organisation of the different communions, or to their relations with their spiritual chiefs.—6. The provisional administration of Bulgaria shall be under the direction of an imperial Russian commissary until the completion of the organic law. An imperial Turkish commissary, as well as the consuls delegated *ad hoc* by the other Powers, signatory of the present Treaty, shall be called to assist him so as to control the working of this provisional *regime*. In case of disagreement amongst the consular delegates, the vote of the majority shall be accepted, and in case of a divergence between the majority and the imperial Russian commissary or the imperial Turkish commissary, the representatives of the signatory Powers at Constantinople, assembled in conference, shall give their decision.—7. The provisional *régime* shall not be prolonged beyond a period of nine months from the exchange of the ratifications of the present Treaty. When the organic law is completed the election of the Prince of Bulgaria shall be proceeded with immediately. As soon as the prince shall have been installed, the new organisation shall be put into force, and the principality shall enter into the full enjoyment of its autonomy.—8. The treaties of commerce and of navigation as well as all the conventions and arrangements concluded between foreign Powers and the Porte, and now in force, are maintained in the principality of Bulgaria, and no change shall be made in them with regard to any Power without its previous consent. No transit duties shall be levied in Bulgaria on goods passing through that principality. The subjects and citizens and commerce of all the Powers shall be treated in the principality on a footing of strict equality. The immunities and privileges of foreigners, as well as the rights of consular jurisdiction and protection as established by the capitulations and usages, shall remain in full force so long as they shall not have been modified with the consent of the parties concerned.—9. The amount of the annual tribute which the principality of Bulgaria shall pay to the Suzerain Court— such amount being paid into whatever bank the Porte may hereafter designate—shall be fixed by an agreement between the Powers signatory of the present Treaty at the close of the first year of the working of the new organisation. This tribute shall be calculated on the mean revenue of the territory of the principality. As Bulgaria is to bear a portion of the public debt of the empire, when the Powers fix the tribute they shall take into consideration what portion of that debt can, on the basis of a fair proportion, be assigned to the principality.—10. Bulgaria takes the place of the imperial Ottoman government in its undertakings and obligations towards the Rustchuk-Varna Railway Company, dating from the exchange of the ratifications of the present Treaty. The settlement of the previous accounts is reserved for an understanding between the Sublime Porte, the government of the principality, and the administration of this company. The principality of Bulgaria, likewise, so far as it is concerned, takes the place of the Sublime Porte in the engagements which the latter has contracted, as well towards Austria-Hungary as towards the company, for working the railways of European Turkey in respect to the completion and connection, as well as the working of the railways situated in its territory. The conventions necessary for the settlement of these questions shall be concluded between Austria-Hungary, the Porte, Servia, and the principality of Bulgaria immediately after the conclusion of peace.—11. The Ottoman army shall no longer remain in Bulgaria; all the old fortresses shall be razed at the expense of the principality within one year, or sooner if possible; the local government shall immediately take steps for their demolition, and shall not construct fresh ones. The Sublime Porte shall have the right of disposing as it likes of the war material and other effects belonging to the Ottoman government which may have remained in the fortresses of the Danube already evacuated in virtue of the armistice of the 31st January, as well as of those in the strongholds of Schumla and Varna.—12. Mussulman proprietors or others who may take up their abode outside the principality, may continue to hold there their real property, by farming it out, or having it administered by third parties. A Turco-Bulgarian commission shall be appointed to settle, within a period of two years, all questions relative to the mode of alienation, working, or use on the account of the Sublime Porte, of property belonging to the State and religious foundations (Vakoufs), as well as of the questions regarding the interests of private persons engaged therein. Persons belonging to the principality of Bulgaria, who shall travel or dwell in the other parts of the Ottoman empire, shall be subject to the Ottoman authorities and laws.—13. A province is formed south of the Balkans which will take the name of 'Eastern Roumelia,' and will remain under the direct political and military authority of his imperial majesty the Sultan, under conditions of administrative autonomy. It shall have a Christian governor-general.—14. Eastern Roumelia is bounded on the north and north-west by Bulgaria, and comprises the territories included by the following line:—Starting from the Black Sea the frontier follows upwards from its mouth the mid-channel of the brook near which are situated the villages of Hodzakiöj, Selam-Kiöj, Aivadsik, Kulibe, Sudzuluk, crosses obliquely the valley of the Deli Kamcik, passes south of Belibe and Kemhalik, and north of Hadzimahale, after having crossed the Deli-Kamcik at 2½ kilom. above

Cengei; reaches the crest at a point situated between Tekenlik and Aidos-Bredza, and follows it by Karnabad Balkan, Prisevica Balkan, Kazan Balkan to the north of Kotel as far as Demir Kapu. It proceeds by the principal chain of the Great Balkan, the whole length of which it follows up to the summit of Kosica. At this point the western frontier of Roumelia leaves the crest of the Balkan, descends southwards between the villages of Pirtop and Duzanci—the one being left to Bulgaria and the other to Eastern Roumelia, as far as the brook of Tuzlu Dere, follows that stream to its junction with the Topolnica, then the latter river until it meets the Smovskio Dere near the village of Petricevo, leaving to Eastern Roumelia a zone with a radius of 2 kilom. above that junction, ascends between the brooks of Smovskio Dere and the Kamenica, following the line of the watershed so as to turn to the south-west at the level of Voinjak and reach directly the point 875 of the Austrian Staff map. The frontier line cuts at right angles the upper basin of the brook of Ichtiman Dere, passes between Bogdina and Karaúla, so as to rejoin the line of the watershed separating the basins of the Isker and the Marica, between Camurli and Hadzilar, follows that line by the summits of Velina Mogila, the 'col' 531, Zmailica Vrh, Sumnatica, and rejoins the administrative boundary of the Sandjak of Sofia between Sivri Tas and Cadir Tepe. The frontier of Roumelia leaves that of Bulgaria at Mount Cadir Tepe, following the line of the watershed between the basins of the Marica and of its affluents on one side, and of the Mesta Karasu and of its affluents on the other, and takes the direction south-east and then south along the crest of the Despoto Dagh Mountains, towards Mount Kruschowa (whence starts the frontier line of the Treaty of San Stefano). From Mount Kruschowa the frontier is the same as the line laid down by the Treaty of San Stefano; that is to say, the chain of the Black Balkans (Kara Balkan), the mountains Kulaghy-Dagh, Eschek-Tschepellü, Karakolas, and Ischiklar, from whence it descends due south-east till it reaches the river Arda, and follows the mid-channel of this river up to a point close to the village of Adacali, which remains to Turkey. From this point the frontier line ascends the crest of the Bestepe-Dagh, which it follows, then descends and crosses the Maritza, at a point situated 5 kilom. above the bridge of Mustafa Pasha; thence it takes a northerly direction by the line of the watershed between Demirhanli Dere and the small affluents of the Maritza to Küdeler Baïr, whence it runs east to Sakar Baïr; from this point it crosses the valley of the Tundza in the direction of Büjük Derbend, which is left to the north, as also is Soudzak. From Büjük Derbend it regains the line of the watershed between the affluents of the Tundza on the north and those of the Maritza on the south, up to the level of Kaibilar, which is included in Eastern Roumelia, and passes to the south of V. Almali between the basin of the Maritza to the south and the various streams which flow straight into the Black Sea, between the villages of Belevrin and Alatli; it follows to the north of Karanlik the crests of Vosna and Zuvak, the line which separates the waters of the Duka and those of the Karagac-Su, and rejoins the Black Sea between those two rivers.—15. His majesty the Sultan shall have the right of providing for the defence of the land and sea frontiers of the province by erecting fortifications on those frontiers, and maintaining troops there. Internal order is maintained in Eastern Roumelia by a native gendarmerie assisted by a local militia. In forming these corps, the officers of which are nominated by the Sultan, regard shall be paid in the different localities to the religion of the inhabitants. His imperial majesty the Sultan undertakes not to employ irregular troops, such as Bashi-Bazouks and Circassians, in the garrisons of the frontiers. The regular troops detailed for this service must not in any case be billeted on the inhabitants. When they pass through the province they shall not make a stay there.—16. The governor-general shall have the right of summoning the Ottoman troops in the event of the internal or external security of the province being threatened. In such an eventuality the Sublime Porte shall inform the representatives of the Powers at Constantinople of such a decision, as well as of the exigencies which justify it.—17. The governor-general of Eastern Roumelia shall be nominated by the Sublime Porte, with the assent of the Powers, for a term of five years.—18. Immediately after the exchange of the ratifications of the present Treaty, a European commission shall be formed to arrange, in concert with the Ottoman Porte, the organisation of Eastern Roumelia. This commission will have to determine, within three months, the powers and functions of the governor-general, as well as the administrative, judicial, and financial system of the province, taking as its basis the various laws for the vilayets and the proposals made in the eighth sitting of the Conference of Constantinople. The whole of the arrangements determined on for Eastern Roumelia shall form the subject of an imperial firman, which will be issued by the Sublime Porte, and which it will communicate to the Powers.—19. The European commission shall be charged to administer, in concert with the Sublime Porte, the finances of the province until the completion of the new organisation.—20. The treaties, conventions, and international arrangements of any kind whatsoever, concluded or to be concluded between the Porte and foreign Powers, shall apply in Eastern Roumelia as in the whole Ottoman empire. The immunities and privileges acquired by foreigners, whatever their status, shall be respected in this province. The Sublime Porte undertakes to enforce there the general laws of the empire on religious liberty in favour of all forms of worship.—21. The rights and obligations of the Sublime Porte with regard to the railways of Eastern Roumelia are maintained in their integrity.—22. The strength of the Russian corps of occupation in Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia, which shall be composed of six divisions of infantry and two divisions of cavalry, shall not exceed 50,000 men. It shall be maintained at the expense of the country occupied. The army of occupation will preserve its communications with Russia not only through Roumania, in accordance with arrangements to be concluded between the two States, but also through the ports of the Black Sea, Varna, and Bourgas, where it may, during the period of occupation, organise the necessary depôts. The period of the occupation of Eastern Roumelia and Bulgaria by the imperial Russian troops, is fixed at nine months from the date of the exchange of the ratifications of the present Treaty. The imperial Russian government undertakes that within a further period of three months the passage of its troops across Roumania shall cease, and that principality shall be completely evacuated.—23. The Sublime Porte undertakes scrupulously to apply in the Island of Crete the organic law of 1868, with such modifications as may be considered equitable. Similar laws adapted to local requirements, excepting as regards the exemption from taxation granted to Crete, shall also be introduced into the other parts of Turkey in Europe for which no special organisation has been provided by the present Treaty. The Sublime Porte shall depute special commissions, in which the native element shall be largely represented, to settle the details of the new laws in each province. The schemes of organisation resulting from these labours shall be submitted for examination to the Sublime Porte, which, before promulgating the Acts for putting them into force, shall consult the European commission instituted for Eastern Roumelia.—24. In the event of the Sublime Porte and Greece being unable to agree upon the rectification of frontier suggested in the 13th Protocol of the Congress of Berlin, Germany, Austria-Hungary, France, Great Britain, Italy, and Russia reserve to themselves to offer their mediation to the two parties to facilitate negotiations.—25. The provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina shall be occupied and administered by Austria-Hungary. The government of Austria-Hungary, not desiring to undertake the administration of the Sandjak of Novi-Bazar, which extends between Servia and Montenegro in a south-easterly direction to the other side of Mitrovitza, the Ottoman administration will continue to exercise its functions there. Nevertheless, in order to assure the maintenance of the new political state of affairs, as well as freedom and security of communications, Austria-Hungary reserves the right of keeping garrisons and having military and commercial roads in the whole of this part of the ancient vilayet of Bosnia. To this end the governments of Austria-Hungary and Turkey reserve to themselves to come to an understanding on the details.—26. The independence of Montenegro is recognised by the Sublime Porte and by all those of the high contracting parties who had not hitherto admitted it.—27. The high contracting parties are agreed on the following conditions:—In Montenegro the difference of religious creeds and confessions shall not be alleged against any person as a ground for exclusion or incapacity in matters relating to the enjoyment of civil and political rights, admission to public employments, functions, and honours, or the exercise of the various professions and industries in any locality whatsoever. The freedom and outward exercise of all forms of worship shall be assured to all persons belonging to Montenegro, as well as to foreigners, and no hindrance shall be offered either to the hierarchical organisation of the different communions, or to their relations with their spiritual chiefs.—28. The new frontiers of Montenegro are fixed as follows:—Starting at Ilino-brdo to the north of Klobuk, the line descends to the Trebinjcica towards Grancarevo, which remains to Herzegovina, then ascends the course of that river up to a point 1 kilom. below its confluence with the Cepelica, and from thence passes by the most direct line on to the heights which border the river Trebinjcica. It then proceeds in the direction of Pilatova, leaving that village to Montenegro, and continues along the heights in a northerly direction, maintaining as far as possible a distance of 6 kilom. from the Bilek-Korito-Gacko road, up to the 'col' between the Somina Planina and Mount Curilo, whence it proceeds in an easterly direction by Vratkovici, leaving this village to Herzegovina, up to Mount Orline. Starting from this point, the frontier, leaving Ravno to Montenegro, goes straight to the north-north-east, crossing the summits of the Lebersnik and of the Volujak, then descends by the shortest line on to the river Piva, which it crosses, and rejoins the river Tara, passing between Crkvica and Nedvina. From this point it ascends the Tara to Mojkovac, from which place it passes along the crest of the ridge as far as Siskojezero. Leaving this point, it coincides with the former frontier as far as the village of Sekulare. From there the new frontier passes along the crests of the Mokra Planina, the village of Mokra remaining to Montenegro; it then reaches the point 2166 on the Austrian Staff map, following the principal chain and the line of the watershed between the Lim on the one side, and the Drin as well as the Cievna (Zem) on the other. It then coincides with the existing boundaries between the tribe of the Kuci-Drekalovici on one side, and the Kucka-Krajna, as well as the tribes of the Klementi and Grudi, on the other, to the plain of Podgorica, from whence it proceeds towards Plavnica, leaving the Klementi, Grudi, and Hoti tribes to Albania. Thence the new frontier crosses the lake near the Islet of Gorica-Topal, and, from Gorica-Topal, takes a straight line to the top of the crest, whence it follows the watershed between Megured and Kalimed, leaving Mrkovic to Montenegro, and reaching the Adriatic at V. Kruci. On the north-west the frontier will be formed by a line passing from the coast between the villages of Susana and Zubci, and terminating at the extreme south-east point of the existing frontier of Montenegro on the Vrsuta Planina.—29. Antivari and its sea-board are annexed to Montenegro under the following conditions:—The districts situated to the south of that territory, in accordance with the delimitation above laid down, as far as the Boyana, including Dulcinjo, shall be restored to Turkey. The commune of Spica, as far as the southernmost point of the territory indicated in the detailed description of the frontiers, shall be incorporated with Dalmatia. Montenegro shall have full and complete freedom of navigation on the Boyana. No fortifications shall be constructed on the course of that river except such as may be necessary for the local defence of the stronghold of Scutari, and they shall not extend beyond a distance of 6 kilom. from that town. Montenegro shall have neither ships of war nor flag of war. The port of Antivari and all the waters of Montenegro shall remain closed to the ships of war of all nations. The fortifications situated on Montenegrin territory between the lake and the coast shall be razed, and none shall be rebuilt within this zone. The administration of the maritime and sanitary police, both at Antivari and along the coast of Montenegro, shall be carried out by Austria-Hungary by means of light coast-guard boats. Montenegro shall adopt the maritime code in force in Dalmatia. On her side Austria-Hungary undertakes to grant consular protection to the Montenegrin merchant flag. Montenegro shall come to an understanding with Austria-Hungary on the right to construct and keep up across the new Montenegrin territory a road and a railway. Absolute freedom of communication shall be guaranteed on these roads.—30. Mussulmans or others possessing property in the territories annexed to Montenegro, who may wish to take up their residence outside the principality, can retain their real property either by farming it out, or by having it administered by third parties. No one shall be liable to be expropriated otherwise than by legal process for the public welfare, and with a previous indemnity. A Turco-Montenegrin commission shall be appointed to settle, within a period of three years, all questions relative to the mode of alienation, working, or use, on the account of the Sublime Porte, of property belonging to the State and religious foundations (Vakoufs), as well as of the questions regarding the interests of private parties engaged therein.—31. The principality of Montenegro shall come to a direct understanding with the Ottoman Porte with regard to the establishment of Montenegrin agents at Constantinople, and at certain places in the Ottoman empire where the necessity for them shall be admitted. Montenegrins travelling or residing in the Ottoman empire shall be subject to the Ottoman laws and authorities, according to the general principles of international law, and the customs established with regard to Montenegrins.—32. The Montenegrin troops shall be bound to evacuate within twenty days from the date of the ratification of the present Treaty, or sooner if possible, the territory that they occupy at present beyond the new limits of the principality. The Ottoman troops shall evacuate the territories ceded to Montenegro within the same period of twenty days. A supplementary period of fifteen days shall, however, be granted to them, as well for evacuating the fortresses and withdrawing the stores and material of war from them, as for drawing up inventories of the implements and articles which cannot be immediately removed.—33. As Montenegro is to bear a portion of the Ottoman public debt for the new territories assigned to her by the Treaty of Peace, the representatives of the Powers at Constantinople shall determine the amount of the same in concert with the Sublime Porte on an equitable basis.—34. The high contracting parties recognise the independence of the principality of Servia, subject to the conditions set forth in the following Article.—35. In Servia the difference of religious creeds and confessions shall not be alleged against any person as a ground for exclusion or incapacity in matters relating to the enjoyment of civil and political rights, admission to public employments, functions, and honours, or the exercise of the various professions and industries, in any locality whatsoever. The

freedom and outward exercise of all forms of worship shall be assured to all persons belonging to Servia, as well as to foreigners, and no hindrance shall be offered either to the hierarchical organisation of the different communions, or to their relations with their spiritual chiefs. —36. Servia receives the territories included in the following delimitation :—The new frontier follows the existing line ascending the mid-channel of the Drina from its confluence with the Save, leaving Mali Zwornik and Sakhar to the principality, and continues to follow the former boundary of Servia as far as the Kopaonik, leaving it at the summit of the Kanilug. From that point it follows at first the western boundary of the Sandjak of Nisch by the southern spur of the Kopaonik, by the crests of the Marica and Mrdar Planina, which form the watershed between the basins of the Ibar and Sitnica on one side, and that of the Toplica on the other, leaving Prepolac to Turkey. It then turns to the south by the watershed between the Brvenica and the Medvedja, leaving the whole of the basin of the Medvedja to Servia ; follows the crests of the Goljak Planina (which forms the watershed between the Kriva-Rjeka on one side, and the Poljanica, Veternica, and Morawa on the other), as far as the summit of the Poljanica. It then follows the spur of the Karpina Planina as far as the confluence of the Koinska and the Morawa, crosses this river, and ascends by the watershed between the Koinska brook and the stream which falls into the Morawa near Neradovce, to reach the Sv. Ilija Planina above Trgoviste. Thence it follows the crest of the Sv. Ilija as far as Mount Kljuc, and passing by the points marked 1516 and 1547 on the map, and by the Babina Gora, it reaches Mount Crni-Vrh. From Mount Crni-Vrh, the new delimitation coincides with that of Bulgaria, that is to say :—The line of frontier follows the watershed between the Struma and the Morava by the summits of Streser, Vilogolo, and Mesid Planina, rejoins by the Gacina, Crna Trava, Darkovska, and Drainica Plan, then the Descani Kladanec, the watershed of the High Sukowa and of the Morava, goes straight to the Stol, and descends from it so as to cut the road from Sofia to Pirot, 1,000 metres north-west of the village of Segusa. It ascends in a straight line the Vidlic Planina, and thence Mount Radocina in the chain of the Kodza Balkan, leaving to Servia the village of Doikinci, and to Bulgaria that of Senakos. From the summit of Mount Radocina the frontier follows towards the north-west, the crest of the Balkans by Ciprovec Balkan and Stara Planina up to the former eastern frontier of the principality of Servia, near to the Kula Smiljova cuka, and thence that former frontier as far as the Danube, which it joins at Rakovitza.—37. Until the conclusion of fresh arrangements no change shall be made in Servia in the actual conditions of the commercial intercourse of the principality with foreign countries. No transit duties shall be levied on goods passing through Servia. The immunities and privileges of foreign subjects, as well as the rights of consular jurisdiction and protection, as at present existing, shall remain in full force so long as they shall not have been modified by mutual consent between the principality and the Powers concerned.—38. The principality of Servia takes the place, so far as it is concerned, of the Sublime Porte in the engagements which the latter has contracted as well towards Austria-Hungary as towards the company for the working of the railways of Turkey in Europe, in respect to the completion and connection, as well as the working of the railways to be constructed on the territory newly acquired by the principality. The conventions necessary for settling these questions shall be concluded, immediately after the signature of the present Treaty, between Austria-Hungary, the Porte, Servia, and, within the limits of its competency, the principality of Bulgaria.—39. Mussulmans possessing property in the territories annexed to Servia, who may wish to reside outside the principality, may retain their real property, either by farming it out or by having it administered by third parties. A Turco-Servian commission shall be appointed to settle, within a period of three years, all questions relative to the mode of alienation, working, or use, on the account of the Sublime Porte, of the property belonging to the State and religious foundations (Vakoufs), as well as of the questions regarding the interests of private persons engaged therein. —40. Until the conclusion of a treaty between Turkey and Servia, Servian subjects travelling or residing in the Ottoman empire shall be treated according to the general principles of international law.—41. The Servian troops shall be bound to evacuate within fifteen days from the exchange of the ratifications of the present Treaty the territory not comprised within the new limits of the principality. The Ottoman troops shall evacuate the territories ceded to Servia within the same term of fifteen days. A supplementary term of an equal number of days shall, however, be granted to them as well for evacuating the fortresses and withdrawing the provisions and material of war as for drawing up the inventory of the implements and objects which cannot be removed at once.—42. As Servia is to bear a portion of the Ottoman public debt for the new territories assigned to her by the present Treaty, the representatives at Constantinople shall fix the amount of it in concert with the Sublime Porte on an equitable basis. —43. The high contracting parties recognise the independence of Roumania, subject to the conditions set forth in the two following articles.—44. In Roumania the difference of religious creeds and confessions shall not be alleged against any person as a ground for exclusion or incapacity in matters relating to the enjoyment of civil and political rights, admission to public employments, functions, and honours, or the exercise of the various professions and industries in any locality whatsoever. The freedom and outward exercise of all forms of worship shall be assured to all persons belonging to the Roumanian State, as well as to foreigners, and no hindrance shall be offered either to the hierarchical organisation of the different communions, or to their relations with their spiritual chiefs. The subjects and citizens of all the Powers, traders or others, shall be treated in Roumania, without distinction of creed, on a footing of perfect equality.—45. The principality of Roumania restores to his majesty the Emperor of Russia that portion of the Bessarabian territory detached from Russia by the Treaty of Paris of 1856, bounded on the west by the mid-channel of the Pruth, and on the south by the mid-channel of the Kilia Branch and the Stary-Stamboul mouth.—46. The islands forming the Delta of the Danube, as well as the Isle of Serpents, the Sandjak of Toultcha, comprising the districts (cazas) of Kilia, Soulina Mahmoudie, Isaktcha, Toultcha, Matchin, Babadagh, Hirsovo, Kustendje, Medjidie, are added to Roumania. The principality receives in addition the territory situated to the south of the Dobroutcha as far as a line starting from the east of Silistria and terminating on the Black Sea, south of Mangalia. The frontier line shall be determined on the spot by the European commission appointed for the delimitation of Bulgaria.—47. The question of the division of the waters and the fisheries shall be submitted to the arbitration of the European commission of the Danube.—48. No transit duties shall be levied in Roumania on goods passing through the principality.—49. Roumania shall have power to make conventions to determine the privileges and attributes of consuls in regard to protection within the principality. Existing rights shall remain in force so long as they shall not have been modified by the mutual consent of the principality and the parties concerned.—50. Until the conclusion of a treaty between Turkey and Roumania, fixing the privileges and attributes of consuls, Roumanian subjects travelling or residing in the Ottoman empire, and Ottoman subjects travelling or residing in Roumania, shall enjoy the rights guaranteed to the subjects of other European Powers.—51. With regard to public works and other enterprises of a like

nature, Roumania shall be substituted for the Sublime Porte as regards its rights and obligations throughout the ceded territory.—52. In order to increase the guarantees which assure the freedom of navigation on the Danube which is recognised as of European interest, the high contracting parties determine that all the fortresses and fortifications existing on the course of the river from the Iron Gates to its mouths shall be razed, and no new ones erected. No vessel of war shall navigate the Danube below the Iron Gates with the exception of vessels of light tonnage in the service of the river police and Customs. The 'stationnaires' of the Powers at the mouths of the Danube may, however, ascend the river as far as Galatz.—53. The European commission of the Danube on which Roumania shall be represented is maintained in its functions, and shall exercise them henceforth as far as Galatz in complete independence of the territorial authorities. All the treaties, arrangements, acts, and decisions relating to its rights, privileges, prerogatives, and obligations are confirmed.—54. One year before the expiration of the term assigned for the duration of the European commission the Powers shall come to an understanding as to the prolongation of its powers, or the modifications which they may consider necessary to introduce.—55. The regulations respecting navigation, river police, and supervision from the Iron Gates to Galatz shall be drawn up by the European commission, assisted by delegates of the Riverain States, and placed in harmony with those which have been or may be issued for the portion of the river below Galatz.—56. The European commission of the Danube shall come to an arrangement with the proper authorities to ensure the maintenance of the lighthouse on the Isle of Serpents.—57. The execution of the works which have for their object the removal of the obstacles which the Iron Gates and the Cataracts place in the way of navigation is entrusted to Austria-Hungary. The Riverain States on this part of the river shall afford every facility which may be required in the interest of the works. The provisions of the 6th Article of the Treaty of London of the 13th March, 1871, relating to the right of levying a provisional tax in order to cover the cost of these works, are maintained in favour of Austria-Hungary.—58. The Sublime Porte cedes to the Russian empire in Asia the territories of Ardahan, Kars, and Batoum, together with the latter port, as well as all the territories comprised between the former Russo-Turkish frontier and the following line :—The new frontier starting from the Black Sea, and coinciding with the line laid down by the Treaty of San Stefano as far as a point to the north-west of Khorda, and to the south of Artwin, continues in a straight line as far as the River Tchoroukh, crosses this river and passes to the east of Aschmichen, going in a straight line to the south so as to rejoin the Russian frontier indicated in the Treaty of San Stefano, at a point to the south of Nariman, leaving the town of Olti to Russia. From the point indicated near Nariman the frontier turns to the east, passes by Tebrenec, which remains to Russia, and continues as far as the Pennek Tschaï. It follows this river as far as Bardouz, then turns towards the south, leaving Bardouz and Jönikioy to Russia. From a point to the west of the village of Karaougan, the frontier takes the direction of Medjingert, continues in a straight line towards the summit of the mountain Kassadagh, and follows the line of the watershed between the affluents of the Araxes on the north and those of the Mourad Sou on the south, as far as the former frontier of Russia.—59. His majesty the Emperor of Russia declares that it is his intention to constitute Batoum a free port, essentially commercial.—60. The valley of Alaschkerd (arranged in detail by commission, subsequently) and the town of Bayazid, ceded to Russia by Article 19 of the Treaty of San Stefano, are restored to Turkey. The Sublime Porte cedes to Persia the town and territory of Khotour, as fixed by the mixed Anglo-Russian commission for the delimitation of the frontiers of Turkey and of Persia.—61. The Sublime Porte undertakes to carry out, without further delay, the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Circassians and Kurds. It will periodically make known the steps taken to this effect to the Powers, who will superintend their application.—62. The Sublime Porte having expressed the intention to maintain the principle of religious liberty, and give it the widest scope, the contracting parties take note of this spontaneous declaration. In no part of the Ottoman empire shall difference of religion be alleged against any person as a ground for exclusion or incapacity as regards the discharge of civil and political rights, admission to the public employments, functions and honours, or the exercise of the various professions and industries. All persons shall be admitted, without distinction of religion, to give evidence before the tribunals. The freedom and outward exercise of all forms of worship are assured to all, and no hindrance shall be offered either to the hierarchical organisation of the various communions or to their relations with their spiritual chiefs. Ecclesiastics, pilgrims, and monks of all nationalities travelling in Turkey in Europe, or in Turkey in Asia, shall enjoy the same rights, advantages, and privileges. The right of official protection by the diplomatic and consular agents of the Powers in Turkey is recognised both as regards the above-mentioned persons and their religious, charitable, and other establishments in the Holy Places and elsewhere. The rights possessed by France are expressly reserved, and it is well understood that no alterations can be made in the *status quo* in the Holy Places. The monks of Mount Athos, of whatever country they may be natives, shall be maintained in their former possessions and advantages, and shall enjoy, without any exception, complete equality of rights and prerogatives.—63. The Treaty of Paris of March 30, 1856, as well as the Treaty of London of March 13, 1871, are maintained in all such of their provisions as are not abrogated or modified by the preceding stipulations.—64. The present Treaty shall be ratified, and the ratifications exchanged at Berlin within three weeks, or sooner if possible. In faith whereof the respective plenipotentiaries have signed it, and affixed to it the seal of their arms.—Done at Berlin, the thirteenth day of the month of July, one thousand eight hundred and seventy-eight.—(Signed), Beaconsfield, Salisbury, Odo Russell, V. Bismarck, Bülow, Hohenlohe, Andrassy, Károlyi, Haymerle, Waddington, Saint-Vallier, H. Desprez, L. Corti, Launay, Gortchakow, Schouvaloff, P. D'Oubril, Al. Carathéodory, Mehemed Ali, Sadoullah."

THE END.

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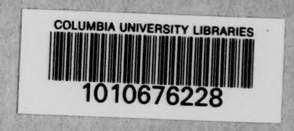
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